

## Gossip

### Chalice Lighting

As surely as we belong to the universe,  
we belong together.  
We join here to transcend the isolated self,  
To reconnect,  
To know ourselves to be at home,  
Here on earth, under the stars,  
Linked with each other

--Margaret A. Keip

### Sharing of Joys and Sorrows

**Silence, holding ourselves and each other in silent support.**

### Shared Readings:

The things most people want to know about are usually none of their business.

--George Bernard Shaw

Gossip is just news running ahead of itself in a red satin dress.

--Liz Smith

Show me someone who never gossips and I'll show you someone who isn't interested in people.

--Barbara Walters

So live that you wouldn't be ashamed to sell the family parrot to the town gossip.

--Will Rogers

What Peter says about Paul tells us more about Peter than it does Paul.

--Anon

If you reveal your secrets to the wind, you should not blame the wind for revealing them to the trees.

--Kahlil Gibran

### Deep Sharing/Deep Listening

**Round I** Take a minute to write in the blank boxes on the front of your bulletin words or phrases that come to mind in response to the central word, "GOSSIP." Take turns reading the words to each other without comment. Don't worry about duplications.

**Round II** Gossip, for better or worse, appears to be entrenched in human interactions. Based on your homework or experiences you might recall during this exercise, give a few examples (without divulging too much) of stories told about others that fall at different points along the scale.

*Wholesome* *Vicious*  
*Conversation*-----|-----*Gossip*

Questions to consider in discussing the scale:

- 1) What are the differences between "wholesome conversation" and "vicious gossip?"
- 2) What is it like to be gossiped about?
- 3) How do you feel about cultural gossip that features celebrities and politicians?

**Round III** What did you discover about yourself and gossip? What has been most meaningful to you?

### Closing Words and Song "Go Now in Peace"

May the quality of our lives be our benediction, and a blessing to all whom we touch.

--Philip Randall Giles

### Group Business

Pass out homework for the next session.

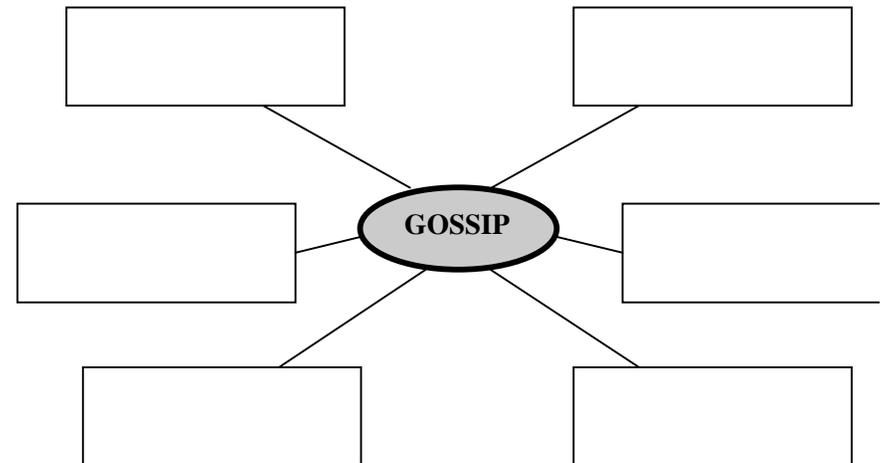
## Covenant Groups

### Gossip

#### The Covenant

I commit myself:

- to come to meetings when I possibly can, knowing that my presence is important to the group.
- to honor the group by letting the leader know if I will be absent.
- to avoid cross talk, giving feedback or trying to fix anyone
- to share with the leader the responsibility for good group process by watching how much time I take to speak and noticing what is going on for others.
- to not gossip about what is shared in the group, and not tell other people's stories.
- to listen to what others share with an open heart, and to share deeply in my turn.



## Leader's Notes for Gossip

This session focuses on the presence of gossip in our lives and asks group members to consider three aspects of gossip:

1. When is talking about others wholesome, when is it vicious?
2. What is the personal effect of being gossiped about (to raise the issue of empathy) and how can it be personally managed?
3. If gossip is an inevitable part of human interaction, how do we deal with its existence?

### Chalice Lighting: (2 Min)

Ask someone to read the chalice lighting reading found in the bulletin

### Sharing of Joys and Concerns: (10 Min)

Ask group members to tell in one or two sentences...How you are today? Share information about absent members.

### Silence: (3 Min)

### Shared Readings: (10 Min)

Go around your group, letting each person in turn read from Shared Readings found in the bulletin until all readings are finished.

### Deep Sharing/Deep Listening:

Do your rounds of deep sharing/deep listening. Pay close attention to the time allotted each person to ensure all get to share at least once.

### Round I (10 min)

Take a minute to write in the blank boxes on the front of your bulletin words or phrases that come to mind in response to the central word, "GOSSIP." Take turns reading the words to each other without comment. Don't worry about duplications.

### Round II (40 min)

Gossip, for better or worse, appears to be entrenched in human interactions. Based on your homework or experiences you might recall during this exercise, give a few examples (without divulging too much) of stories told about others that fall at different points along the scale.

*Wholesome Conversation*

*Vicious Gossip*

-----|-----  
Questions to consider in discussing the scale: 1) What are the differences between "wholesome conversation" and "vicious gossip?"; 2) What is it like to be gossiped about?; 3) How do you feel about cultural gossip that features celebrities and politicians?

### Round III (10 min)

What did you discover about yourself and gossip? What has been most meaningful to you?

### Closing Words and Song "Go Now in Peace"

Read the following: May the quality of our lives be our benediction, and a blessing to all whom we touch.

Philip Randall Giles

### Group Business (5 min)

Pass out Q and Q (homework) for next time.