



conversation peace leader guide

This leader guide will help you facilitate an introductory session and six group sessions. Adapt these suggestions to the needs of your group and the time you have available.

Promotion

This study will interest women of all ages and lifestyles. Begin your publicity at least six weeks in advance of the first meeting. Graphics for posters, post cards, bulletin announcements and promotional items are available on the www.conversation-peace.com website.

Preparation

Consider enlisting an assistant leader to be responsible for reviewing and providing skills practice for each week's Tongue Tonics, or ask for volunteers within the group. Suggestions are provided in the downloadable Tongue Tonic Review Activities guide found at www.conversation-peace.com.

Have on hand an attendance sheet, extra Bibles, pens or pencils, and member books. For the first few sessions, supply name tags.

Prayer

Spend time praying for the study and participants.



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Introductory Session

1. As participants arrive, direct them to sign the attendance sheet and provide contact information, prepare a name tag, and pick up their copy of *Conversation Peace: The Power of Transformed Speech*. If members are paying for their books, collect money or explain the process for collecting money.
2. Introduce yourself and ask members to do the same. Then ask women to share what they find appealing about this study and what needs they hope will be addressed.
3. Ask the group to turn to the Contents page. Review elements of the study and share information about Mary and this study. Invite participants to turn through the pages of week 1 as you highlight and explain the icons representing each part of the week's study: daily lessons (coffee cup), Breath Freshener (candy), Quips and Quotes (light bulb), Word from the Word (open Bible), and Tongue Tonics (prescription).
4. Explain the value of completing the learning activities (**bold color**) to reinforce what they are learning. Since many activities involve reading Scripture from their own Bibles, women will be studying God's Word as they learn.
5. Draw attention to the "Talk It Out" questions, "Take Your Tonic" summary, and "It's Your Turn" journaling at the end of each week. Indicate that some questions are part of group sessions as well as personal follow-up. Or in emailing your group each week, you might select a question or concept to highlight. Encourage participants to use personal and group time to personalize and apply lessons.
6. Ask a volunteer to read the Breath Freshener (memory verse) for week 1 on page 6. Indicate that conversation cards are available at www.conversation-peace.com for women to memorize each week's Breath Freshener or carry it with them in purse or pocket. Alternately, have the pages printed and available for them.
7. Have a volunteer read the introduction to week 1 (p. 7). Explain that the first element of transformed speech is the Power of Navigation. Discuss the idea of the tongue as a steering mechanism. Ask: *How does where you sail today depend on what you say today?*
8. Assign week 1 in the member book for discussion at the next group session. Close by praying for openness to God as He reveals ways women can demonstrate transformed speech.

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Session 1 – The Power of Navigation

1. Ask members to sign the attendance sheet and wear a name tag. Provide member books, pencils or pens, and Bibles as needed.
2. Say together this week's Breath Freshener, 1 Peter 3:10-11. Ask: *How do these verses instruct us to steer our vessels in the right direction?* Ask someone to explain the power of navigation. Ask: *How is a tongue like a rudder or a horse's bit?*
3. Review week 1 daily lessons and guide discussion by leading group members to answer these questions or follow these instructions:

DAY 1: What was your response to the chart on page 9? on page 11? What is your reaction to the Emily Dickinson quote on page 11?

DAY 2: Silently react to the question, Will you use your tongue as a sword or as a plow? Pray silently for your commitment to Conversation Peace.

DAY 3: What are some various ways *word* is used in the Bible? Based on James 1:5, what are the sources and types of heavenly and counterfeit wisdom?

DAY 4: What are the benefits to following God's rules? How do they actually bring us freedom? What does emphasis on the letter *I* do to the pronunciation of communication? (see Word from the Word).

DAY 5: Name each of the daily lesson titles as a review of the five aspects of navigation. Did you complete the "Twenty Questions" self- assessment (pp. 30-31)?

TALK IT OUT: Ask: *What sort of circumstances trigger you to go "off course" with your speech?*

4. Review week 1 Tongue Tonics, or introduce your assistant for this activity. Ask group members whether they tried any of the Tonics and what difference it made this week.
5. Assign week 2 for the next group session. Close with prayer, asking God to empower members to better navigate their speech.

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Session 2 – The Power of Cause and Effect

1. Begin with a check-in time to review members' progress on completing daily lessons. Encourage women to keep up with their reading and learning activities.
2. Say together this week's Breath Freshener, Psalm 19:14. Ask: *Why are the psalmist's names for God appropriate when we talk about godly speech? What are two types of soil our words grow in? In your own words, what is the power of cause and effect?*
3. Review week 2 daily lessons and guide discussion by leading group members to answer these questions or follow these instructions:
 - DAY 1:** Explain your description of overflow on page 39. What is the meaning of *good* from Word from the Word? How do we store up good in our hearts?
 - DAY 2:** What was the meaning of *clean* and *unclean* to the Jews of Jesus' day? Why wasn't Jesus pleased by the Pharisees' standards? Read Matthew 23:25-26 and explain Jesus' meaning.
 - DAY 3:** Explain how you compared words to leaves/fruit, root, and soil (p. 48). What insights did you gain from completing the chart on pages 50-51?
 - DAY 4:** How did you complete the learning activities on page 54? Based on Psalm 51:6, what does God want us to cultivate in the deepest part of our hearts? Explain what you learned about the Devil and his activities from "Word from the Word" (p. 55).
 - DAY 5:** How did you describe the speech and the heart of David's companions, based on Psalm 55? (p. 58). What is the relationship between confessing our sins and purifying our speech? (p. 60)
- TALK IT OUT:** Discuss the question "Consider the last time you had a hissy-fit, blew up, or stormed off. What were the root attitudes and false beliefs underlying your words and actions?" Call for volunteers to share circumstance and root attitudes and false beliefs. Direct group members to download the "Digging up Some Dirt" handout or have it available. Encourage them to use the chart in the upcoming week.
4. Review "Beginning a Relationship with Jesus" (p. 61). Explain that you will be available after the session to talk with anyone who would like to pray to receive Christ.
5. Review the content of the week 2 Tongue Tonics, or call on your assistant to review—for example, enlist five volunteers to give one example each of the five barriers to active listening. Additional suggestions are available at www.conversation-peace.com. Ask group members if they have tried any Tonics yet. Ask: *What difference have you seen?*
6. Assign week 3 for the next group session. Close with prayer that women's speech would be transformed from the ground of their hearts.

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Session 3 – The Power of Exchange

1. On a tear sheet or marker board, draw a vertical line and label the left column “Words I will put off” and the right column “Words I will put on.” Place several markers on the floor below the chart. As members sign in, ask them to write responses on the chart.
2. Say together this week’s Breath Freshener, Ephesians 4:22-24. Read the responses listed on the chart as a confirmation of this Scripture. Select a volunteer to explain in her own words the power of exchange.
3. Review week 3 lessons, and guide discussion by leading group members to answer these questions or follow these instructions:
 - DAY 1:** Share with the group some of the lies you struggle with. What is the best way to buckle truth in place? (Reading and memorizing Scripture.)
 - DAY 2:** What are the effects of a focus on scarcity? On abundance? React to this statement: Our ability to give good to others springs from the abundance of good we receive from God. Explain how the parable in Matthew 18:21-35 illustrates our relationship with God.
 - DAY 3:** From “Word from the Word,” what is the meaning of *grace*? Illustrate the grace of God by sharing a personal experience. How does grace affect our conduct? Our speech?
 - DAY 4:** From “Word from the Word,” explain the meaning of *thanks*. Explain “a sacrifice of praise.” What is the only reliable source of gratitude? (God.)
 - DAY 5:** What is the P-48 test? Can you repeat it from memory? How did you complete the chart on page 91?
- TALK IT OUT:** Ask: Do you have an attitude of gratitude? Are you the type of person who is grateful for what is given or resentful about what is withheld? How does this impact your relationships?
4. Review the content of week 3 Tongue Tonics, or call on a volunteer. One activity is to enlist someone to carry on a conversation with you as you demonstrate echo and inquire. Ask how the Tonics are impacting women’s relationships and words.
5. Assign week 4 for the next group session. Pray that members would fill empty spaces of their hearts with goodness.

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Session 4 – The Power of the Open Gate

1. Assign members in pairs to review the key points of weeks 1-3. Allow five minutes for discussion.
2. Say together this week's Breath Freshener, Proverbs 17:19. Ask: *What is a high gate? Why does it bring destruction?* Select a volunteer to explain the power of the open gate.
3. List the names of gates on a tear sheet or marker board as you review week 4 daily lessons and guide discussion. Lead group members to answer these questions or follow these instructions
 - DAY 1: Why do we battle? Describe a peacemaker. How do we pursue peace?
 - DAY 2: What are the two ways we tear down the gate of control? (p. 106)
 - DAY 3: How does a lack of understanding show up in communication? Describe the communication of a person with understanding.
 - DAY 4: Name the three signs of haste. From "Word from the Word," describe a person who practices biblical patience.
 - DAY 5: List reasons Christ is our model of servanthood. Why might we hesitate to follow His example?

TALK IT OUT: Ask: *Which battle tactic do you most often use? Why is this tactic an unsatisfactory way to resolve conflict? Say: Every lesson this week has addressed the opposing attitudes of pride and humility. As a group, review the primary characteristics of each as it affects our speech.*
4. Review week 4 Tongue Tonics, or call on a volunteer. One option is to divide into three groups and assign each group one of the following: the question, the statement, and the forecast.
5. Assign week 5 for the next group session. Close with prayer that women will unleash the power of the open gate by cultivating humility.

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Session 5 – The Power of Construction

1. Secure five pieces of model railroad track, or draw tracks on five separate pieces of heavy paper. Label each piece of track with one of these words: Nourishment, Faithfulness, Honesty, Tenderheartedness, and Discretion. Form five groups or assign five individuals, pairs, or threes one each of the pieces of track. Give this assignment:
 - a. Describe this quality.
 - b. Explain how this quality affects our speech.
 - c. Explain how we cultivate this quality.

Allow 5-7 minutes for small-group discussion. Call for group reports. Continue with the “Talk It Out” section and following content.

2. Ask several volunteers to repeat this week’s Breath Freshener, Ephesians 4:29. Draw a vertical line on a tear sheet or marker board. Label the left column “Unwholesome” and the right column, “Helpful.” As a group, brainstorm characteristics of each type of speech. List responses in the appropriate column. Ask: *What are some ways we overcome barriers? What kinds of words lay track to connect with others?*
3. Review the week 5 daily lessons and guide discussion by leading group members to answer questions or follow instructions:

DAY 1: What are some obstacles to encouragement? What are some ways we can encourage others?

DAY 2: Contrast unfaithfulness and faithfulness.

DAY 3: Contrast dishonesty with honesty. Explain your response to the Proverbs 3:3 activity on page 103.

DAY 4: Contrast hard-hearted with tenderhearted attitudes. Explain how you filled in your chart on page 147.

DAY 5: What are examples of timely and untimely words? Give some examples of “building each other up.”

TALK IT OUT: Ask: *Can you think of a time when an aptly spoken word made a difference in your life?*

4. Review the content of week 5 Tongue Tonics or call on a volunteer. You might discuss conflict resolution tools, including identifying the crux of the problem, bypassing the bait, and resisting manipulation.
5. Assign week 6 for the final group session. Close with prayer that participants would lay tracks of love.

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Session 6 – The Power of Instruction

1. Assign members as pairs or threesomes to review the key points of weeks 4 and 5 and talk about their progress. Suggest they refer to the overview page of each lesson. Allow a few minutes for discussion.
2. Say together this week's Breath Freshener, Isaiah 50:4. Ask: *What sustains the weary? Which is more important—listening or talking?* Ask: *What is God's unique guarantee to students who enroll in His School of Speech Arts?* Select a volunteer to explain how we harness the power of instruction.
3. Review week 6 daily lessons and guide discussion by leading group members to answer these questions or follow these instructions:

DAY 1: What is God's process by which we are being made perfect?

DAY 2: Why was Jesus the perfect student? The perfect teacher?

DAY 3: React to this statement: (p. 171): "Your behavior is the best indicator of your desire for transformed speech."

DAY 4: React to this statement (p. 175): "Disciples welcome discipline." What do you think is the problem when disciples react negatively to discipline? Why do mockers reject discipline? How does God discipline us?

DAY 5: What is God's guarantee to us? (p. 179).

TALK IT OUT: Ask: *Which aspect of your speech has God wanted you to work on? Have you seen growth and improvement in this area? How has your speech changed over the course of this study?*

4. Review the week 6 Tongue Tonics, or call on a volunteer. Ask: *What are some pointers for giving constructive feedback?* Ask women to indicate which Tonics they considered most helpful.
5. Review the diagram "The Power of Return," on page 186, Discuss how the seven elements of transformed speech connect to one another and how the process of speech transformation is like a farmer who annually sows and reaps a harvest.

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