

GROUP DISCUSSION

COPING WITH THE GROUP MEMBER WHO TALKS TOO MUCH

IF YOU LEAD A GROUP FOR ANY LENGTH OF TIME, YOU WILL PROBABLY HAVE THAT GROUP MEMBER WHO SIMPLY TALKS TOO MUCH. TO MAKE MATTERS WORSE, THE GROUP MEMBER PROBABLY DOES NOT REALIZE THAT HE OR SHE IS TALKING TOO MUCH.

SOME OF THE TIPS BELOW COME FROM THE EXPERIENCES OF OTHER GROUPS AND RESOURCES.

- **SET THE EXPECTATIONS, IF NECESSARY.** Provide guidelines for your group members that their answers should follow the 3 B's Rule: Brief, Biblical, and Beneficial.
- **BE ASSERTIVE DURING THE DISCUSSION.** Be clear and blunt with the group during the discussion that it is important to hear from everyone, not just one or two individual group members.
- **BE ASSERTIVE AFTER THE DISCUSSION.** Pull this group member to the side after the group meeting, and, with love, ask him or her to allow more time for others to participate in the discussion.
- **MANAGE YOUR EYE CONTACT WITH THE PERSON.** If someone is simply talking too much, make continual eye contact with them. The group member should be able to pick up on your body language that they are talking too much.
- **MANAGE THE GROUP SILENCE.** One very practical way to manage the group is to implement rules that everyone must wait at least 10 seconds before answering the question. This allows everyone time to think about their answer and then gives everyone an opportunity to participate.