

R**RESPOND**

Encircle the number of the resolution you want to make in order to improve your capacity to share yourself.

1. I will overcome the fear of telling my life story.
2. I will be willing to listen to those who desire to share themselves.
3. I will communicate more with the people who are dear to me.
4. I will share more of my feelings to others.
5. I will be truthful and sincere when I talk about my feelings.
6. I will also dare to share even the unpleasant things in my life
7. Others: _____

E**EXALT****THROUGH SONG**

Father God Just For Today
 Father God just for today
 Help me walk the narrow way
 Help me stand when I would fall
 Give me the strength to hear your call
 May my steps be worship
 May my thoughts be praise
 May my words bring honor to your name
 Refrain

THROUGH PRAYER

Ask God for the courage to open up and share yourselves with the group, and the love to fully and unconditionally accept your group mates just as they are.

**EMBRACE****FELLOWSHIP | 01****COMMUNICATING SELF****Session Objective:**

To encourage self-disclosure among the members by discussing its value in their quest for a more fulfilling relationships.

C**CONNECT**

Each member shares to the group that single word that best describes him/her.

A**AFFIRM****THE WORD**

Study the following verses and discover the blessings of opening up to others. Write what you found on the blanks.

1. *So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him and they said, "You went into the house of uncircumcised men and ate with them." Peter began and explained everything to them precisely as it happened. "When they heard this, they had no further objections." --- Acts 11: 2-5, 18*

As in the case of Peter, doing our best to communicate, leads to better understanding and harmony in relationship. Have you ever been with someone who does not open up? Someone who remains silent about their issues, or who tends not to talk when something is wrong? Difficult, isn't it? You are left wondering about what's wrong or what's going on.

There are also those who speak a lot, but are actually far from revealing themselves. They hide in the very words they speak. Simon and Garfunkel sang about what they call as the "Sound of Silence."

"And in the naked light I saw
Ten thousand people, maybe more.
People talking without speaking,
People hearing without listening,"

They were describing a noisy mass of people that could only produce the "sound of silence." In the midst of the noise there was no communication because they failed to connect where it really mattered, which was on a personal level. Conflicts arise when someone is ignorant of the other person's sensitivities, personality and background. One can casually do and say something that offend the other. There ought to be a conscious effort to communicate oneself and to understand the other person as well.

2. *When I kept silent, my bones grew old through my groaning all the day long. --- Psalms 32:3*

The psalmist describes the sore and heavy feeling that results from the inability to open up. Sharing oneself soothes the ache that one can suffer when his feelings are kept unknown. Observe the loneliness of people today. It is not due to physical isolation. Many even live in the most crowded part of the city. They are lonely because no one truly knows them, not even their work mates, neighbors, or friends. They are lonely because they fail to communicate themselves.

Many people are afraid to communicate their real selves because they fear rejection. They would rather lie and hide their pains, pretending to be what they are not. In the end, they continue to remain anonymous even in the midst of their friends.

In the Care Group, people are encouraged to lay down their masks and pretensions. They need not fear rejection, for they are surrounded by people who promised to love and accept them just as they are.

3. *"Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." --- Galatians 6:2*

God desires that His children should help one another. There should exist a bond of love and a sense of community, and this can happen when we start communicating.

When we take the effort to open up, we tend to get closer to each other. Have you ever noticed that young girls become best of friends when they begin sharing their closely guarded secrets no matter how silly they may be? A person can only feel close to the person who he thinks understands him deeply.

THE LIFE

Let the group begin to establish a sense of community by doing an activity of self-disclosure. Fill in the blanks with the required information and share it to the group. The person can also share more than what is stated in the guide.

Hello, my full name is _____
But you can just call me _____
I was born in _____
I grew up in _____

My time and energy is presently absorbed by...

Some of my interests are...

I describe myself or my personality as (include some strong and weak areas)...

When it comes to relating or communicating with people, I am the type that...

