

# We All At Times Need An Open Mouth Check-Up

**[And I don't mean going to the dentist's]**

There is a saying that “*a closed mouth catches no flies.*”

“*Talk is cheap*” is another saying but at times our words may cost us dear, in lost friendships, trust or respect.

Everyone likes to talk, it is one of the most important ways to communicate.

But some people misuse their ability to talk, they forget to put their mind in gear before they open their mouths.

At times we may even use words as weapons to hurt people.

Below are listed six categories of conversation.

## **The Big Know-It-All**

Know-it-alls seldom if ever admit they are wrong. They constantly compete with everyone to be No.1.

They do this because they want people to notice them and like them.

This kind of person listens to your story then quickly says “*Hey that is nothing, let me tell you what happened to me last week.*”

If you find yourself dominating a conversation, stop and think, is my comment going to help or hinder the conversation? If in doubt, don't say it, just listen to the other person.

Being a good listener goes a long way to enhance friendships.

Remember you can know a lot and still not be a know-it-all.

**Proverbs 15:2** [Amplified Bible] “*The tongue of the wise utters knowledge rightly, but the mouth of the self-confident fool pours out folly.*”

## **Swivel Lips**

A swivel lips is the kind of person who doesn't seem to know when to stop talking. If you took a swivel lips person to the beach their tongue would get sunburnt.

This kind of person hasn't learnt to listen to anything except the sound of their own voice.

When you talk do your listeners yawn, tap their fingers or glance at their watches? If so, try not saying anything for five minutes several times a day so giving someone else a chance to speak.

## Tattletale Talkers

This kind of person loves to talk about people, the trouble is they don't tell the good things about others, only the bad.

Such people try to get attention for themselves by getting other people into trouble.

This makes them feel important and needed, because tattletalers don't have many friends.

There are many varieties of tattletalers, some are like spies, always watching for opportunities to tell on someone, others are finger pointers.

**Proverbs 18:7-8** [King James] *“A fool’s mouth is his destruction, and his lips are the snare of his soul. The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.”*

When you feel the urge coming on to expose another person's weakness or mistakes ask the question *“Is this going to seem as important to me a week from now as it does now, and would I like to have my weaknesses and mistakes exposed to others?”*

If the answer is no, then close your mouth.

If we cannot say something good about another person, don't say anything at all.

**1 Peter 4:8** [NIV] *“Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.”*

To be a tattletaler is **not** showing love.

## The Gossip

The gossip loves to tell stories about other people and sometimes the stories are not completely true. Often these stories grow and get bigger until they become outright lies. Gossips don't have friends because they cannot be trusted. They are unable to keep a secret or confidence. Gossips believe that the way to tell a good story is to spice it up a little. After telling the story several times, they have all spice and no real story.

Do you find it fun to talk about other people?

It is so easy to slide into the habit of generating or passing on gossip. **Telling good news is not gossiping**, but spreading misfortune is. One of the best ways to deal with gossip is to avoid it, simply refuse to pass on to others any rumour. If you really need to know the truth go right to the object of the rumour.

If you are the victim of gossip also seek the source of that rumour and confront them personally.

## The Smart Mouth

This kind of person uses words to embarrass people and make them feel little. Such people probably think they will look bigger if everyone else is made to look small.

All of us at some time have sounded like a smart mouth. We all say mean things about others. Hurting other people by what we say about them purposely is **not** showing love.

**Proverbs 8:6-8** [Living Bible] “... everything I say is right and true, for I hate lies and every kind of deception. My advice is wholesome and good, there is nothing evil in it.”

Here is a good reminder that we should choose our words carefully so as not to hurt others but to be uplifting in all we say.

### **The Dustbin Mouth**

Some people use stinging swear words in an attempt to impress others. They somehow believe that using foul words will make them appear macho, cool or tough.

Some swear in order to shock those around them.

Some people use raunchy language because it seems like the acceptable thing to do.

Probably the most common environment for swear words is caused by simple anger.

When our emotions turn red, we tend to unleash language we would not usually use.

Since most of profanity is taking God’s name in vain, how do you think God views it?

**Matthew 12:34, 36** [Message Bible] “You have minds like a snake pit! How do you suppose what you say is worth anything when you are so foul-minded. It’s your heart, not the dictionary, that gives meaning to your words.” ... “Let me tell you something. Every one of these careless words is going to come back to haunt you. There will be a time of reckoning. Words are powerful, take them seriously. Words can be your salvation. Words can also be your damnation.”

Take a good look at your conversations. Are they laced with dustbin talk? Now is the time to clean up your act.

If you are on the listening end of a string of expletives, tell the person spewing verbal pollution where you stand, preferably out of range of such talk.

What you say can do a lot of good in encouraging and helping. Remember the ability to speak is a gift from God, and we will be judged on how we use it.