

girltalk™
..... taking it deeper

The Guide to Great Girltalking

GETTING STARTED

How to Kick Off A Girltalk... taking it deeper™ Get Together Group

So you have decided to jump in and take the powerful action of bringing together a group of women. Congratulations! You are officially part of a long line of women going back hundreds and hundreds of years. For centuries, women have gathered to share themselves and their wisdom. From the sophisticated salons started in the 1800s where great women thinkers on all subjects were invited into the home salons of other great women to the ancient red tents that women stayed in together during their monthly moon cycles. And now, as 21st century women, you will take that tradition and make it your own with Girltalk... taking it deeper™ (no corset required, thank goodness!)

Getting started is really very simple. It's only a few steps. And I know from practice that how something starts is exactly how it shows up, so I want you to have the best start possible.

So here is the 1-2-3 on the simple steps. And, the real success will come in how you do the steps, how you invite women in and get them excited, and of course how the get-together comes together. So I've included another section after the simple steps that give you some of the extras that go a long way, because while you may be totally excited and into this idea, your friends may have some resistance. Let's face it, if you are considering doing this, you are a leader and a go getter, someone who is open to growth and new adventures. Not everyone is that way. Most everyone really wants and needs those things, they sometimes just need help getting there.

So I encourage you to see yourself at least for the time being as a Chief Girltalker... the woman who has taken the stand to call these women together. I'm a Chief Girltalker too, so I'll do my best to share with you some of my best tools to get people through the door and talking.

The Simple Steps

1. Inform yourself on Girltalk... taking it deeper™
2. Pick a date, time and place.
3. Invite women to participate.
4. Send women the topic and truth/dare: The Topic Topline & The Personal Experiment.
5. Get RSVPs
6. Send a reminder one week prior.
7. Send a reminder the day of.

The Extras that Go A Long Way

ONE: Inform yourself on Girltalk... taking it deeper™

Clarity & Intentions

Informing yourself is more than just getting all the details straight on what Girltalk... taking it deeper is and how it works (although that is really important). You also want to understand why you want to embark on this adventure, because that clarity will translate into your passion for having these Get Togethers which will in turn ignite other women's passions to participate. Here are few questions to think about and/or journal on. They will help you get clear on the what, the who and the why.

- Why do you want to have a Girltalk... taking it deeper™ Get Together?
- What are the outcomes you would like for yourself? For the women who participate?
- If someone asks you, "Why should I come?" what is your answer?
- What is your commitment? How long do you want to try this out for? Is it a one time thing, or do you want to try something for three months, six months?
- Looking at all the to do's of the Get-Together, what will you do & what will others do?

Co-Leaders

Another great option is to find a co-leader who will co-host the event with you, Co-Chief Girltalkers. I find that these events work better when two women work together to pull it together, lead the conversation and handle the details. Plus it will widen your net to the women you can invite. In thinking about your co-leader, you want to spend some time thinking about who would be your best match:

- Shares a similar passion to you?
- Has a skill set you don't have?
- Is someone you really enjoy spending time with?
- Is someone you would work well with?

TWO: Pick a date, time and place

Date & Time

You'll never find a time that works for everyone all the time, and if you can pick a time from the beginning and stick with it, people find the date easier to schedule. The consistency also increases the likelihood that people will continue to come. Here are a few suggestions:

- Pick a week that is mid to late month. This gives people time to do their Personal Discovery Experience before the first session. So if you get the topic to them the first week of the month, since it comes out the first Monday, a date on the third week of the month works well.
- Pick a day that isn't likely to have conflicts for people. Friday and Saturday nights are usually bad, but Thursdays and Wednesdays are great options. Pick a day and stick to it. Note that your first get together may be a different date if you want to make it more special or longer.
- Pick a time that allows people who work to get there and people with families to do the handoff to a spouse or babysitter. Count on a 30-minute buffer for arrival. Even though we would like to think we all arrive on time, for the first one, count on people will be late. For an evening session the best time I've found is 6-9:30, starting the conversation around 6:45 and ending it around 9.

The Extras that Go A Long Way

Place

Space is super important as it sets the energy and the feel for the evening. Just like throwing a party, you want to create the right vibe. So think intimate, conversational, easy to connect, no distractions, warm and inviting. Your responsibility is to find a place that women can feel safe being honest and open. So...

- **If you have it in a home or some other private space:** Teenage kids or husbands walking through the space, not a good idea. Get a babysitter, send them out or find a place where no one else can enter except the women you've invited. Keep the TVs off, although background easy listening, low volume music is okay to start.
- **If you have it in public:** Public places can work for some of the topics as long as the space itself is conducive to conversation and connection. Nothing with TVs and loud music or even a restaurant can be distracting. You all have to be able to hear each other and talk to each other, not just the person next to you. All in all I really recommend you do these get-togethers in someone's home or if you do them during the daytime out in nature somewhere. All the busyness with the public places tends to be a distraction.

THREE: Invite Women To Participate

Who you don't invite can be just as big of a deal as who you do invite. These get-togethers aren't about throwing a party for 25 of your closest friends. In fact, it's best to keep the number to between 6-12 plus you. Any more and you just can't all share and any less and there isn't enough energy to sustain the group.

Before you send out any invitation really think about who you want to invite to this group, starting with the broad view of what kind of women, without names, you want to participate?

- What are the qualities of the women you want in the group? What qualities don't you want?
- Who are these women in their lives everyday?
- And why would they want to be part of these get togethers? What would they give? Receive?
- What is the energy and feeling you want this group of women to have when they are together?

Then start listing out the actual women you would invite, thinking outside of your immediate friends to women you know might like to participate:

- Who will be open? And who would be closed?
- Who would be a great group person? And who would be a distraction to the group?
- Who has something they can really add to the group?
- Who would you love to spend time with?

Now go through the list and ask yourself:

- Who are you thinking of inviting strictly from obligation?
- Whose feelings are you afraid you might hurt if you don't invite them, even though you know they won't want to come or would be bad for the group.
- The challenge is to only invite women you really want to be there. You are not allowed to invite women out of obligation, guilt or fear. Either get over those feelings or don't invite them.

Like I said, who you invite is as important as who you don't, and when trying to create a great group of women the last thing you can afford to have is an energy sucker, a victim or a nay sayer. You want positive women who want to learn more and connect. If your sister in law or sister is a negative Nellie, don't invite her. Remember our mantra, be real. be wise. be you

The Extras that Go A Long Way

Extending the Invitation

Phone or email that is the question? It's really a matter of preference, but think about it this way, would you rather get a phone call or an email. I say do the phone call first and follow it up with an email including a link to the www.girlfriendcelebrations.com site. That way you can share your excitement, make a personal connection and give them more information so they can check it out. Since Girltalk... taking it deeper™ is all about connection, doesn't it make sense to do the invites in a way that is most personal?

When you extend the invitation, you can invite them to come just to check it out to see if they want to participate, no commitments until you finish your first get together. That way there is no pressure and they can have more of an attitude of exploration.

Feel free to use some of the copy from the website in your invitation or as a followup to phone invite.

FOUR, FIVE, SIX: Communication prior to the Get Together

Once you have the yes, I'd like to come, it's all about keeping the energy and connection between you and the women. The Get-Together starts from the moment they say yes I am coming, not when they walk in the door. So as Chief Girtalker, it's your job to make sure they feel connected from the get go. So your communication should go something like this:

- **Email to the Group with Topic:** Welcome the women to the get-together, give them all the details on the Topic Topline and give them the directions on the Personal Experiment. Be clear on what they should do prior to the get together. Also be specific about what they should bring to that evening. Another helpful thing to include is the place, directions, parking directions, and time it starts and ends.
- **Reminder One Week Out:** Send a reminder of the date, place and time and also a reminder on the Personal Experiment. Ask them how their truth and dares are going and invite them to ask questions if they have them. Seed a line in the email about the time it starts, being on time, and what to do if you are running late.
- **Reminder That Day:** Send a burst of excitement and energy to see these women. Remind them of what to bring and where to go, and by what time. Include contact phone numbers.

TIME TO GIRLTALK

How to Have a Fantastic Girtalk... taking it deeper, that keeps them coming back

The general flow of the get-together uses the tried and true Girtalk... taking it deeper™ conversation technology. I'm giving you a basic formula that you can use and apply to any of the topics you and your friends will dive into. Feel free to customize, add on and embellish as you like, and I guarantee if you stick to our proven be real. be wise. be you. format along with your special twists, you'll create an event worth girtalking about! In general the format works like this:

Arrival:

Women get food, drink and connect

Take a seat:

Everyone takes a seat

Welcome:

Chief Girtalker welcomes everyone with brief intro on the evening

Create the Connection:

String the Beads: go around the circle with everyone checking in

Kick off the Conversation:

Chief Girtalker talks about the topic and asks first question

Conversation:

Girtalk using be real.be wise. questions & insights from the month's Personal Experiment. Chief Girtalkers keep conversation flowing.

Be You Dare:

Each woman dares herself to take one action.

Wrap Up & Gratitude:

Share details for next get together. Give gratitudes to the Girtalkers.

After Party:

Within 24 hours, send email with Dares & insights.

THE SET UP

Mission: to create a inviting, safe and fun space that inspires connection

Having a great get together does require some energy and planning up front, but it doesn't have to be the traditional toil and over planning too many of us women do. Nope, for Girltalk, it's all about energy and intention setting. If you've read the information on how to get started you are already $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way there. The rest of the setup involves how you invite the women into the space when they arrive. Your goal is to create a space in which they feel welcome, in which it's easy to share and in which laughter comes with ease.

How to Create Connection:

There are some simple things you will do each Girltalk to create the connection with the group. Although they may seem small, they are the foundation for every meaningful conversation. We recommend always doing them.

1. **Seating:** Sit in a circle as much as possible. This means that you can see the face of every woman there. It's fine if some women are on chairs, other on the couch, and others on the floor. It doesn't have to even be a perfect circle. Just make sure you can all see each other and hear each other.
2. **Check In:** This is also called Stringing of the Beads and it is how every Girltalk starts. Basically every woman says their name and checks in, going around the circle clockwise until every woman has said something. This helps get everyone get present as well as connect. With everyone coming from different places it's important to take time to land. Here's how it works:
 - Chief Girltalker starts & picks what everyone will check in on. I recommend checking in on how you did with your dare from the get together before. And if it's your first get together, make the check in question, "Why did you come tonight?"
 - When each woman is done talking, she says, "I am complete." And everyone says, "Thank you for coming tonight!"
 - Chief Girltalker: Let the women know to keep it brief, like 3 minutes or less or you will be there all night.

How to Create a Safe Space

1. **Set Girltalk Agreements:** At your first get together, share the Agreements for Great Girltalking (see page 11) and ask each woman to agree to them. The Chief Girltalker can read them aloud or make copies for everyone and pass them out and have each woman read one until they are all read. Once they've all be spoken, ask the women if there are any other agreements that are important to them to include. Add those. Then get a show of hands that everyone agrees. You only have to do this one time.
2. **New People:** If a new person comes to one of your get-togethers after you have all agree to these Agreements, give them a copy of the Agreements and when you kick off that month's conversation introduce the woman, tell the groups she's gotten the agreements and ask her to give the Girltalk hand sign that she is on board (aka say Yes).

THE CONVERSATION

Mission: create and lead a conversation that brings new truths forward and inspires wisdom and action in every woman in the room

Role of Chief Girtalker

The conversation and its power and impact is the responsibility of every Girtalker. And it is the Chief Girtalkers role to facilitate that happening. Here are some things you can do to be a great Chief Girtalker and get the conversation full of life:

- **Introduce the topic with a bang:** Start the conversation off with your personal passion and by being vulnerable and real about your experience with the topic and with the Personal Experience. Do some extra research on the topic. Share a story. Draw the women in by showing how real and wise Girtalk is done.
- **Share the Flow.** People like to know where they are going, so give them an outline for the evening, including what time the conversation will end, what they can do if they need to use the bathroom, get food etc. (I recommend not taking a break, let people take care of themselves as they need).
- **Use the Questions to Keep the Conversation Going.** Use the questions provided, starting with the Be Real questions, to start and keep the conversation moving along. It's your job to know when to throw the next question out there.
- **Pay Attention & Listen. To Timing. And to Time.** This is definitely a skill and I think one all of us can learn. It's not your job to force the conversation, it's your job to notice when the conversation is ready to turn to the next topic. Usually what happens is that because you know what the Be Real and Be Wise and Be You sections and questions are, you'll notice when people start to organically bring that part of the topic up. When that happens, throw in the next question. Or if the energy of the question runs out, stir it up with the next question. Also keep an eye on time so that you get to talk about all three areas. You are the time keeper, meaning you are holding the space for the conversation to start and end on time. Think of it like herding a flock and you are the Shepard, you just give a nudge to get them to move a certain direction.
- **Manage the Outliers.** You'll have some people who will talk A LOT, and others that won't talk much. I find it most helpful to throw that out in the beginning. State, "I know there are extroverts and introverts in the groups. Extroverts get their energy from groups so in situations like this they will talk a lot. Introverts get there energy internally so they tend to not speak too much but when there is a space they always say something really interesting. So Extroverts, notice how much you are talking and leave space for everyone else. And introverts, notice if you're not talking and encourage yourself to speak up. As the Chief Girtalker you may have to manage some of this, calling on the Introverts to talk and asking the Extroverts to bottom line what they are trying to say.

THE CONVERSATION

The Conversation Technology: Be Real. Be Wise. Be You. What & Why?

Your overall conversation on the topic will likely last an hour or two and if you use the questions and format provided each month, you're likely to get a great conversation. I've tested it over and over with groups of women and it always works. It works because it's based on three simple principles:

- **Be Real.** We all really want to be honest, it's just that there is so much against us to being truly honest – fear, conditioning, societal norms, you name it. So at Girltalk... taking it deeper™ we break down those walls and start off the conversation getting as real as we can. Your goal during this part of the conversation? Get the truth on the table. Give voice to the unspoken. Say what needs to be said, but too often isn't. Here in this circle there are no rights, wrongs or judgments so finally we can all just say what's on our mind. The result? LIBERATION!
- **Be Wise.** Every woman has wisdom inside of her, it's just that a lot of it has been hijacked by rational thinking, practical necessity and an unimaginative culture. Women have always been the holders of wisdom and in this Girltalk circle you are inviting every woman to share hers. One of the biggest reasons we still have the same challenges, fears and problems as generations before us is that the wisdom doesn't get passed down or around, so we all end up learning it the hard way. Your goal during this part of the conversation? Get every woman to share her unique wisdom – her insights, aha's and perspectives. Again no right or wrong – just her take. The result? CONNECTION and LIBERATION!
- **Be You.** Talk without action is useless, so at Girltalk... taking it deeper™ we always end our conversations with an action, taking all we've talked about and transmuting it into actions we can take to make our lives the best! Your goal with be you? Dare each woman to dare herself to take one daring action related to the topic of the month. A dare is something that is uncomfortable, risky, something that pushes your edges. Don't let people get away with mamby pamby goals. Encourage them to stretch! The result? LIVING & GROWING vs EXISTING & STAGNATING.

THE WRAP UP

You've got to close the circle just like you ended it or else you will have what a teacher of mine calls 'twiggy danglers'. Here is how I recommend ending each circle:

- Before the BE YOU part of the conversation, thank everyone for a great girltalk and let them know it's time to close the circle.
- BE YOU. Go around the circle and ask each woman to state for the group her dare. Have one person write down all the dares (you will email them they day after).
- NEXT TIME. Give the time and place for the next get together and name who the Chief Girltalkers will be. Mention that the topic will be ready the first of the month, and remind people that they'll get to do their next Personal Experiment. Give Gratitude however you want. It's a great way to end the evening. One big dose of Gratitude!

THE AFTER PARTY

Adults learn in adult ways, and it's a fact that we are more likely to do what we said we would do if we are reminded within 24 hours. Within 24 hours the Chief Girltalker sends an email with a recap of all the Dares each woman took as well as her personal insights from the conversation. Also include the details for the next get together, and a link to www.GirlfriendCelebrations.com so women can sign up for the Girltalk Monthly Topics.

Agreements for Great Girltalking

What Happens at Girltalk, Stays at Girltalk.

We share the wisdom and inspiration we received, not people's names or personal stories.

It's All About the Love

We don't judge, gossip or negative talk about ourselves or any other Girltalker, and we call each other out if it happens.

Do What I Say, Say What I Mean

We follow through on what we say we will do... we say things because we mean them, not to be nice, out of guilt or obligation. We are authentic in every interaction at Girltalk.

We Share

We all share... as much or as little as we want... but we share. And we do it openly and honestly, and always from our hearts.

We Are All Good

We don't fix... we don't problem solve... and we don't take pity on each other. We act in service of each other holding each other in as our most magnificent selves, women who are both strong and vulnerable and capable of creating the life we each want.

We Take Responsibility For ME

We are each responsible for ourselves, our actions and our experiences. We ask for what we need. We never play the victim or the martyr. We don't come here looking for a therapy session. We treat this time together as a time to connect, to be witnessed and to empower ourselves. We are self empowered.

We See What's Possible

We don't bitch and complain. We inspire, we see the positive and lift each other up, and never tear ourselves or each other down. Negative energy is checked at the door. That doesn't mean we aren't real, because we always are... it just means we don't wallow, suffer or complain.

We Honor Time, Each Other and Ourselves

We arrive on time and we end on time. If we need more time, we ask. If we are going to be late, we call. I treat myself with respect and I treat every other woman in this circle with respect.



**For more information on
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You can also visit Christine at her websites

www.Daretoliveyou.com

see christine on tv, learn about her coaching programs and events worldwide

www.mebeforewe.com

*learn about Christine's book
Choosing ME before WE, Every Woman's Guide to Life and Love*

www.MadlyinLoveWithMe.com

*download a FREE Madly in Love with ME Guide, full of daring ideas on how to fall
even more in love with YOU! Also celebrate Madly in Love with ME Day with us on
February 13th.*

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