

## Session 2: How You Say The Things You Do

### OPEN

**What's one of your favorite places you've visited? What makes that place special?**

It's easy to identify our favorite places—they're often beautiful, personally significant, or safe. But if we're honest, talking with our spouse isn't always like our favorite places. It can be painful, ugly, and stressful. But there are things we can do to keep our discussions from becoming destructive. Les and Leslie are going to talk about how to identify and work with our specific needs in conversations.

### VIEW

Watch Session Two: *How to Say the Things You Do* (20 minutes)

## REVIEW

Les and Leslie began by talking about conversational autopsies, or analyzing why and how a conversation with your spouse goes south. They said more often than not, discussions could become heated because we feel fearful and unsafe. **In what situations is it more likely for you and your spouse to have a conversational meltdown?**

As Les and Leslie discussed, we need to feel emotionally safe to have good conversations with our spouse. Describe a time when you felt emotionally safe with your spouse. **How did you treat your spouse? How did the conversation go?**

Les and Leslie walked through four possible needs we could have to feel emotionally safe. They spelled out the acronym, T.A.L.Q., which stood for:

- Time—You need to feel like your time is being used well.
- Approval—You need to feel the approval of your spouse.
- Loyalty—You need a predictable routine.
- Quality—You need a careful process

**Which of the four needs do you resonate with the most? In what ways have you seen that need play a factor in your marriage?**

In the story, Fred felt ignored and insecure when Elizabeth let her workaholic tendencies take over. Describe how they misunderstood each other. **What strategy eventually worked to help them reconnect?**

Les and Leslie gave four questions to help identify which T.A.L.Q. needs are related to us. They are:

- How do you tackle problems?
- How do you influence each other?
- How do you react to change?
- How do you make decisions?

What could you as a couple do this week to discuss these questions together? What could it look like for you to create a safe conversation space for your spouse?

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## **BIBLE EXPLORATION**

Read Proverbs 16:24.

This verse talks about how gracious words can bring healing to someone. **What do gracious words sound like? What are some examples of grace-filled words you've heard before?**

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**What makes gracious words have the power to help someone heal? When have someone's words brought you healing?**

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In this session, Les and Leslie talked about the importance of discovering your safety needs in conversations. **In what ways could gracious words help create a safe place for you and your spouse?**

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**What are some gracious words that you could say to your spouse this week?**

Our conversations don't have to be destructive. We can actively work to create a safe space for communicating with our spouse. This week, talk over the questions Les and Leslie posed as a couple. Try to figure out which of the T.A.L.Q. safety needs apply to you. Remind yourself of your spouse's safety needs and pray God would help you speak graciously to him or her this week.

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## **APPLY WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED**

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*Select an activity from the list below to begin applying the lessons of this session to your life.*

**Pray:** Pray with your spouse this week about your safety needs. Ask God to give each of you grace to learn how to navigate conversations in a way that makes each of you feel safe, known, and loved.

**Read:** Read chapters 4–9 of Les and Leslie's book *Love Talk*. Talk about the chapters with your spouse.

**Asses:** Take Les and Leslie's Better Love Assessment. Discuss your results with your spouse.

**Practice:** Spend some time with your spouse this week talking through the T.A.L.Q. needs and the four questions from Les and Leslie. Tell each other what you need to feel emotionally safe and try to put it into practice this week.