Avoiding the

“Awkward Silence”

(Ideas taken from “How to Start a Conversation and Make Friends,” by Susan Rabin and Don Gabor)

**Directions:** *Write the 10 ideas for “Avoiding the Awkward Silence” and a brief description of each in your journal. Star the* ***THREE*** *you think are the most important to remember.*

***1. prepare before hand:*** Give yourself topics to discuss by thinking before the party about movies you’ve seen or about your favorite computer games.

***2. INTRODUCE YOURSELF:*** Introduce yourself early in a conversation. Then ask what the other person’s name is and use it as you’re speaking., You’ll be more likely to remember his or her name that way.

***3. TALK WITH YOUR BODY:*** When talking, smile and make eye contact. Keep your arms open. If you fold them, you’ll look unfriendly to others.

***4. TRY TO RELAX:*** Take a breath before you talk. Start by complimenting the surroundings or the other person’s outfit. The more relaxed you are, the more relaxed others will be around you.

***5. KEEP THINGS MOVING:*** If you flub the punch line to a joke, laugh it off. If you forget someone’s name apologize. Next, move forward with the conversation. Everyone makes mistakes. It’s no big deal.

***6. ASK ESSAY QUESTIONS:*** Ask questions that require more than yes or no answers. You’ll draw out the conversation and make it more

 interesting.

***7. ANSWER IN ESSAY FORM:*** The other person doesn’t want one-word answers

 from you, either. Opening up to people shows you’re interested in their questions.

***8. PROMOTE YOURSELF:*** If someone asks you about yourself, he or she is interested in something about you. So talk about yourself, and discuss the things you like to do.

***9. PAY ATTENTION:*** A conversation is a two-way street. Ask questions based on what you hear from the other person, so he or she knows you’re listening.

***10. EASE INTO AN ENDING:*** Don’t end conversations abruptly. Instead, let the other person know you’ve enjoyed talking with him or her. If you meet again, you can start conversation on a good note.