



The BIG WORLD of SMALL GROUPS

Introduction to
Small Groups
Workshop

S. A. Miller
2005

The Big World of Small Groups
Steve Miller

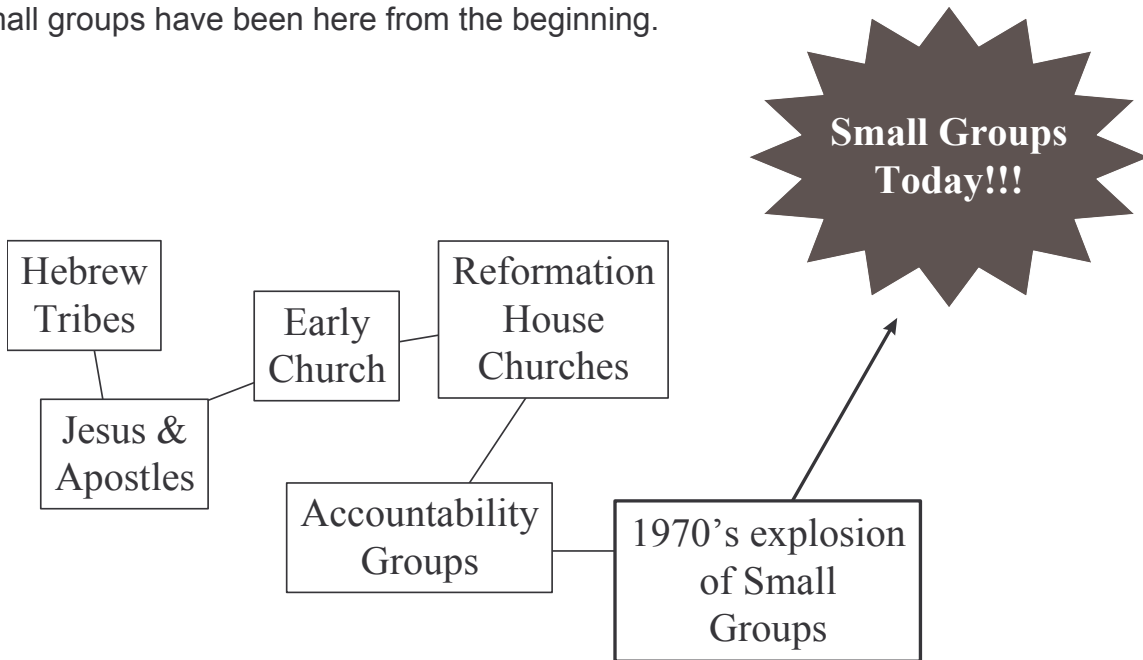
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Resources adapted and quoted from:

North Rock Hill Journey Groups Handbook by Bobby Austin
The Journey into Small Groups by William Bangham
Building Effective Lay Leadership Teams by George Barna
Making Cell Groups Work by M. Scott Boren
Cell Group Leader Training: Leadership Foundations for Groups that Work by M. Scott Boren
and Don Tillman
Leading Life-Changing Small Groups by Bill Donahue
Building a Church of Small Groups by Bill Donahue and Russ Robinson
Nine Keys to Effective Small Group Leadership by Carl George
Big Things Come in Small Groups: H.O.M.E. Group Leader's Training Seminar Handbook by
Phillip Lee
How to Reach Your City with Cell (Home) Groups by Mikel and Karen Neumann @
www.acquirewisdom.com.
Doctoral Project on Team Ministry by Dale Roach

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Small groups have been here from the beginning.



It is estimated that today as many as 75 million people are part of churches that base their lives on small groups. Churches around the globe are proving this.

Church Name	Location	# of Groups
Bethany World Prayer Center	Baton Rouge, LA	>900
Elim Church	El Salvador	>6,000
Faith Community Baptist	Singapore	>1,000
Family of God	Indonesia	>1,000
International Charismatic Mission	Colombia	>20,000
Love Alive church	Honduras	>1,000
New Life Fellowship	India	>1,200
Pantego Bible Church	Fort Worth, TX	>200
Victory Christian Center	Tulsa, OK	>1,000
Willow Creek	South Barrington, IL	>3,500
Works and Mission Baptist	Ivory Coast	>15,000
Yoido Full Gospel Church	Korea	>25,000

Cedar Creek Community Church in Aiken, SC has 60 small groups, approximately 1000 people, 125 leaders and 14 coaches. 85% of adults in the church are involved in Small Groups

Not Just Groups that are Small

“You Are Here”

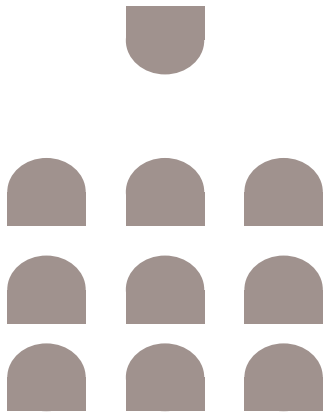
First let’s begin where we are. If I had a map of small groups, where would you stick your arrow, “You are here?”



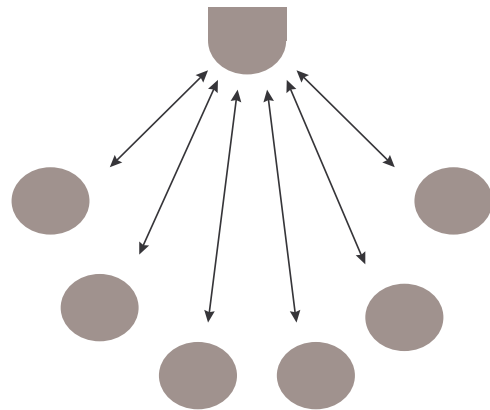
Various Kinds of Small Groups
Task Groups
Mission Groups
Choir Groups
Bible Study Groups
Worship Groups
Fellowship Groups
Discipleship Groups
Care Groups
Recovery Groups
Evangelism Groups
Leadership Development Groups
Intercessory Prayer Groups
Sports Groups
Sunday School Groups

The Difference with Small Groups

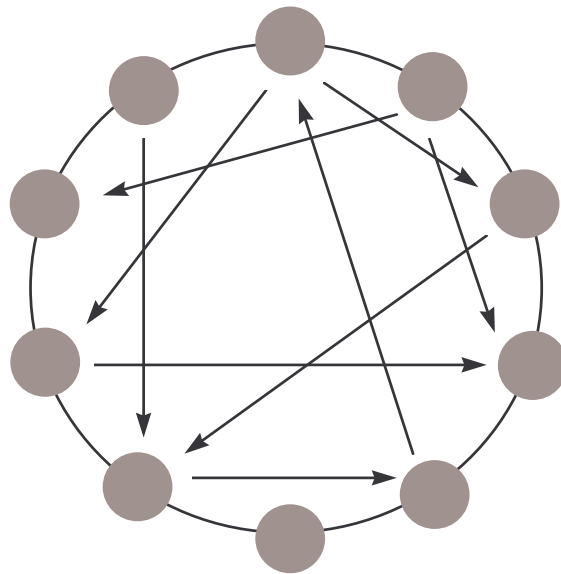
Sunday School was originally created around 1780 to educate the poor and control children's activities during their free time. So the environment was set-up on the Teacher-Student Model. Even today, we carry over that model in our knowledge-based curriculum and our seating arrangement, with columns and rows. And even when the chairs form a circle for some discussion, the lines of communication are rarely interactive among the students.



Teacher-Student Arrangement



Modified Teacher-Student Arrangement



Small Groups Arrangement

Navigational Tools

Vision

The destination for small groups is :

Biblical _____.

Definition of Biblical Community:

“The life and message of Christ dynamically expressed among a group of believers, building up one another and redeeming the world for God’s glory.”

Acts 2:42-47 (NKJV)

⁴² And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and **fellowship**, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. ⁴³

Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.

⁴⁴ Now all who believed were **together**, and had all things in common, ⁴⁵ and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. ⁴⁶ So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from **house to house**, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, ⁴⁷ praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

A new kind of community was formed on the Day of Pentecost. The believers immediately began functioning in small groups. These groups wholeheartedly devoted themselves to:

1. Learning about God
2. Fellowship
3. Sharing
4. Caring
5. Praying
6. Communion
7. Ministering

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Characteristics of Biblical Community in the Early Church:
❖
❖
❖
❖
❖

The Small Group Goal:

“The goal of the small group system is to develop a model for people to be connected to God, to be connected to one another, and to raise up disciples.”

Great Commandment

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ ...‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself. (Mt 22:37,39 NKJV)

- Connected to _____
- Connected to _____

Great Commission

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you. (Mt 28:19-20 NKJV)

- Raise up _____

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Values

1. **Spiritual _____**: Spiritual Transformation means life change. This means more than learning information about the Bible or ourselves. It is Christ transforming the whole person through the Spirit abiding in them.

"Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." (Colossians 1:28, NKJV)

"As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving." (Colossians 2:6-7, NRSV)

2. **Deepening _____**: Small groups are not about small talk. They are about relationships. Relationships should be growing in such a way that the members can freely share true emotion and let down guards.

"And may the Lord make your love grow and overflow to each other and to everyone else, just as our love overflows toward you." (1 Thessalonians 3:12, NLT)

"Share each other's troubles and problems, and in this way obey the law of Christ. If you think you are too important to help someone in need, you are only fooling yourself. You are really a nobody." (Galatians 6:2-3, NLT)

Five Practices for Building Authentic Relationships	
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

3. **Pursuing _____**: God designed you for a purpose. Small groups ministry encourages people to pursue the purpose their creator placed within them.

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2:10, NKJV)

"Long before he laid down earths foundations, he had us in mind, and settled on us as the focus of his love, to be made whole and holy by his love." (Ephesians 1:4, MSG)

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4. **Supportive** _____: Scripture commands all of us to support one another. Ministering to one another is not just for the pastoral staff, it is for every believer.

"So encourage each other and build each other up, just as you are already doing."
(1 Thessalonians 5:11, NLT)

"Two people can accomplish more than twice as much as one; they get a better return for their labor. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But people who are alone when they fall are in real trouble. And on a cold night, two under the same blanket can gain warmth from each other. But how can one be warm alone? A person standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back-to-back and conquer. Three are even better, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken."
(Ecclesiastes 4:9-12, NLT)

5. **Expanding** _____: A small group does not exist only for itself. It focuses on welcoming to Biblical Community those who are not yet part of the group.

"You have heard me teach many things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Teach these great truths to trustworthy people who are able to pass them on to others." (2 Timothy 2:2, NLT)

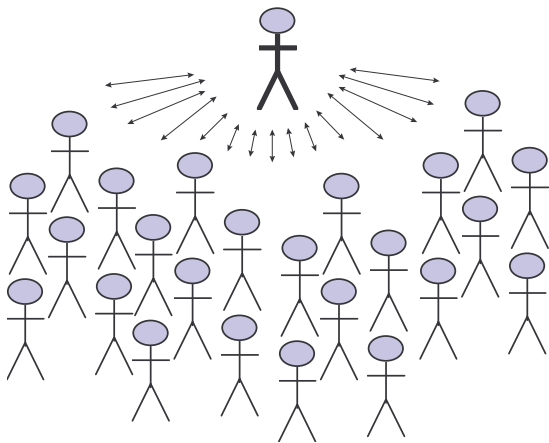
"And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching."
(Hebrews 10:24-25, NRSV)

Three Reasons Why Small Groups are Well Equipped for Evangelism	
1.	Prior _____
2.	Relaxed _____
3.	Lifestyle _____

Vehicles

1. Span of _____

The principle is:
Decreasing the numbers of people any one person has direct responsibility over, while increasing the level of community within the small group environment.



Exodus 18:14, 17-22 NKJV

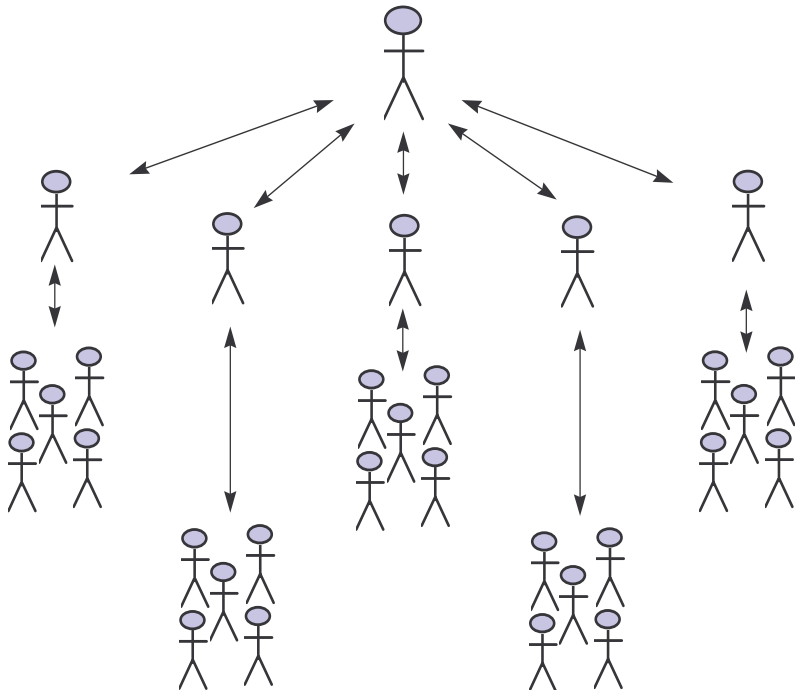
So when Moses' father-in-law saw all that he did for the people, he said, "What is this thing that you are doing for the people? Why do you alone sit, and all the people stand before you from morning until evening?"

"This is not good!" his father-in-law exclaimed. "You're going to wear yourself out—and the people, too. **This job is too heavy a burden for you to handle all by yourself.** Now let me

give you a word of advice, and may God be with you.

You should continue to be the people's representative before God, bringing him their questions to be decided. You should tell them God's decisions, teach them God's laws and instructions, and show them how to conduct their lives.

But find some capable, honest men who fear God and hate bribes. Appoint them as judges over groups of one thousand, one hundred, fifty, and ten. These men can serve the people, resolving all the ordinary cases. Anything that is too important or too complicated can be brought to you. But they can take care of the smaller matters themselves. They will help you carry the load, making the task easier for you."



2. Leadership _____

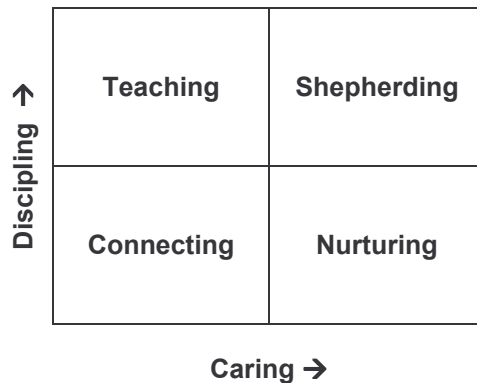
The principle is:
Decreasing spectator ministries, while increasing
responsible church membership.

3. Group _____

The principle is:
Decreasing inwardness and stagnation
while increasing healthy reproduction.

4. Intentional _____

The principle is:
Decreasing superficial ministry, while increasing
personal member care and discipleship.



Small Group Structure: Inside the Cell

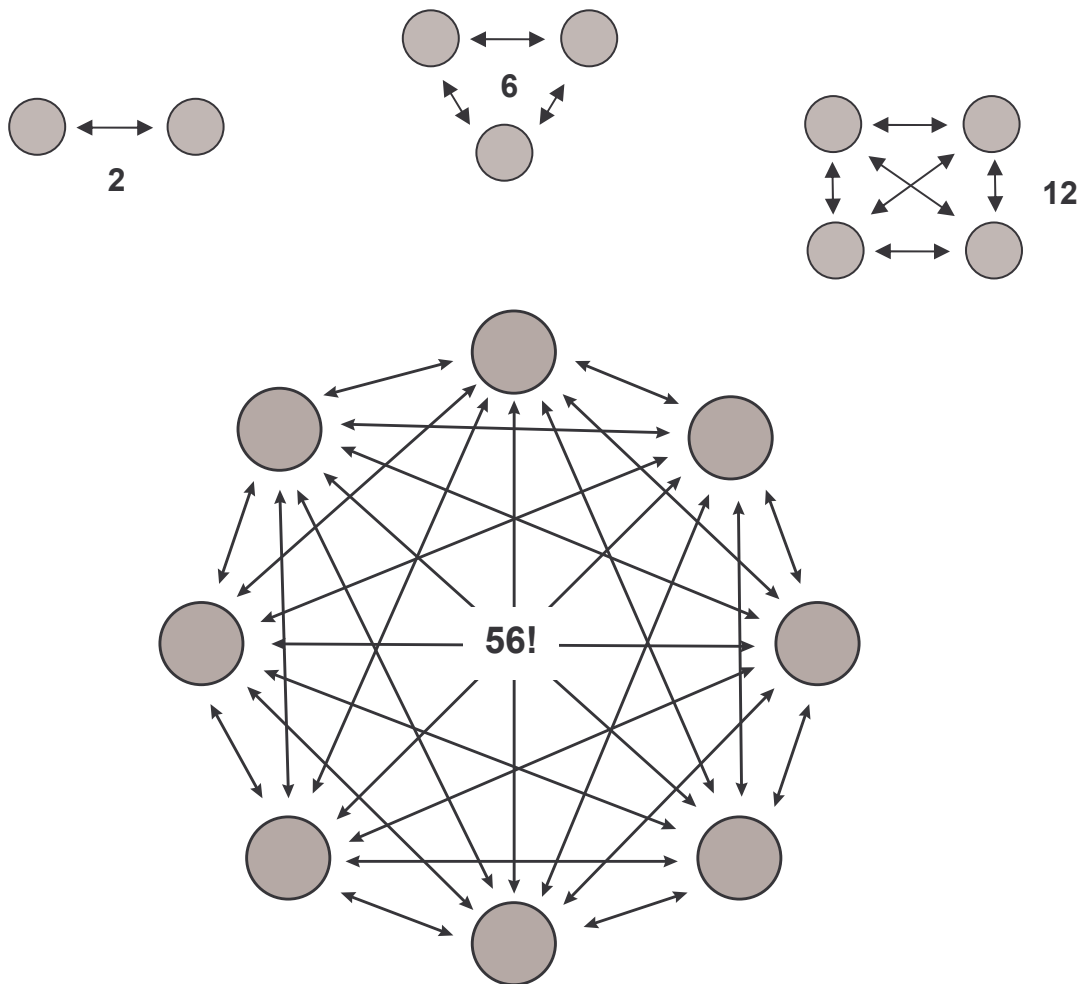
Basics

Title:

Cell Groups
H.O.M.E. Groups (Homes Open for Ministry and Encouragement)
Journey Groups
Community Groups
Life Groups

Size of Groups: Groups should consist of approximately four to ten people.

Possible lines of Communication:



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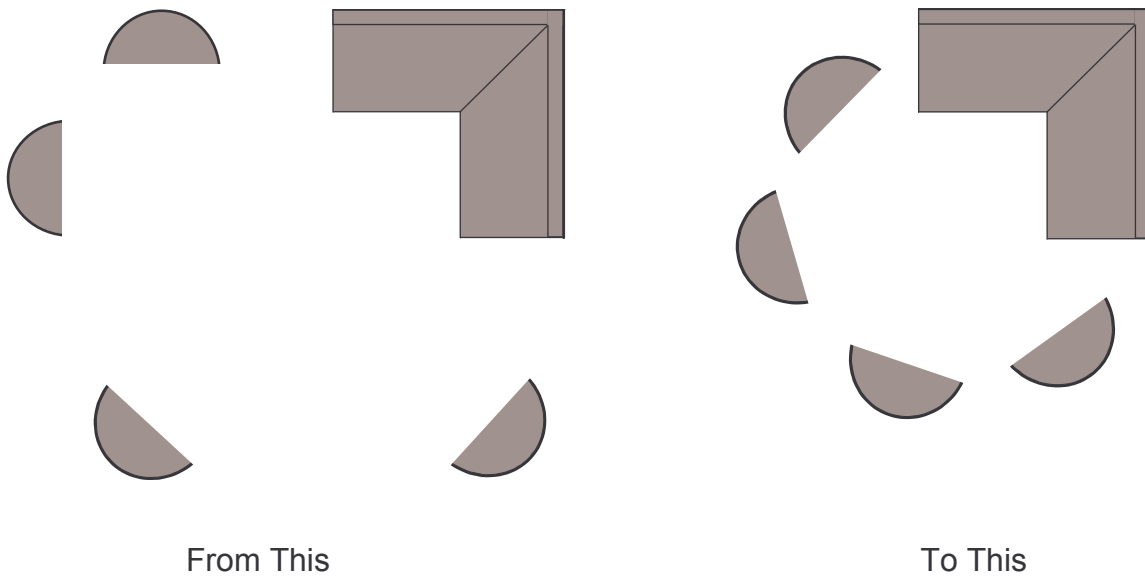
Meeting Times:

Two Parts to Small Group Life	
Inside the Meeting	Outside the Meeting
1.5 – 2 hours	_____ days and _____ hours

What happens in the personal interaction of a small group from minute 90 to minute 1 is just as important as what happens from minute 1 to minute 90.

Meeting Place: Groups meet in homes of their members. Some groups always meet in the same house while some rotate from house to house.

Conversational Seating



Types of Small Groups:

Traditional Reasons People Group Together
1.
2.
3.
4.

Group Covenants

Keys to Forming Covenants

1. Generated by the group, not _____ by the leader
2. Formulated in “we” statements and _____ by each individual
3. Must be _____ on a periodic basis so that commitments are refreshed
4. Created around _____ and _____

Logistics

Values

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ where and when we will meet ❖ how often we will meet ❖ who is responsible for leading ❖ attendance expectations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ acceptance ❖ accountability ❖ openness ❖ confidentiality |
|--|---|

5. Formed over time through a _____ that involves everyone

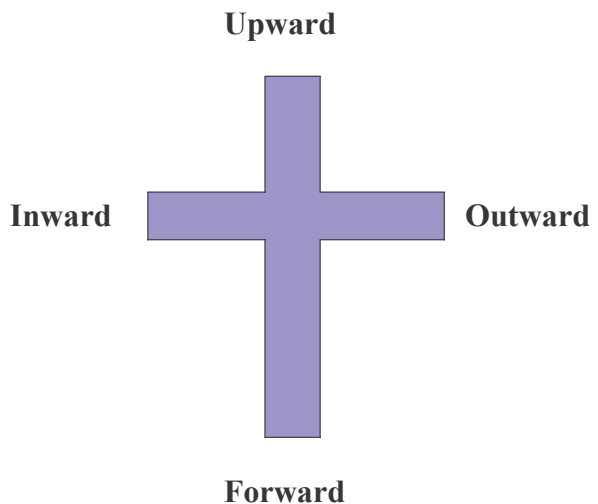
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Holistic Groups: Small groups ministry doesn't want to focus on just one aspect of life in the church such as Bible study, fellowship, or service. Holistic small groups seek to create the full experience of basic Christian community.

Singular Focus	Holistic Focus
Groups are a function of the church	Groups experience church life
Groups are a ministry option	Ministry flows through the groups
Groups are a church-growth mechanism	Groups are a Kingdom-growth organism

Effective small groups are holistic when they involve all dimensions of our lives with Christ

- ❖ reaching upward to _____
- ❖ reaching inward to build _____
- ❖ reaching outward to the _____
- ❖ moving forward to multiply _____



When all dimensions are well-balanced in the small group setting, we truly become disciples as we obey the Great Commandment and Great Commission:

Great Commandment

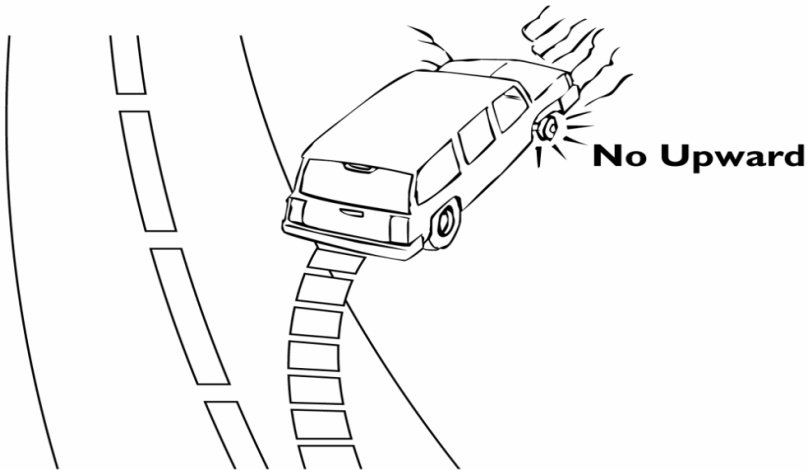
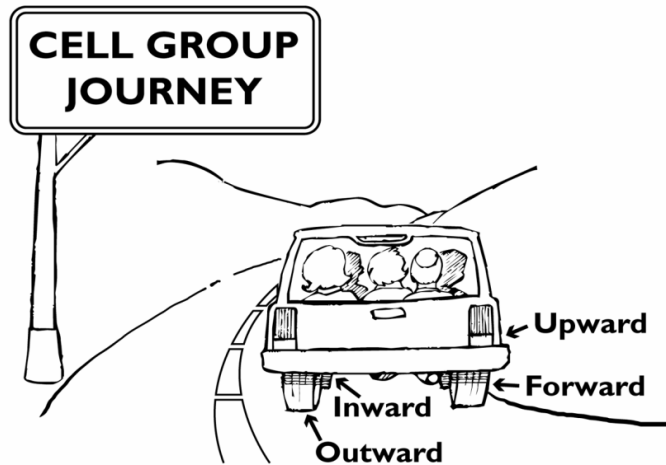
- Upward — Love God
- Inward — Love People

Great Commission

- Outward — Preach the Gospel
- Forward — Make Disciples

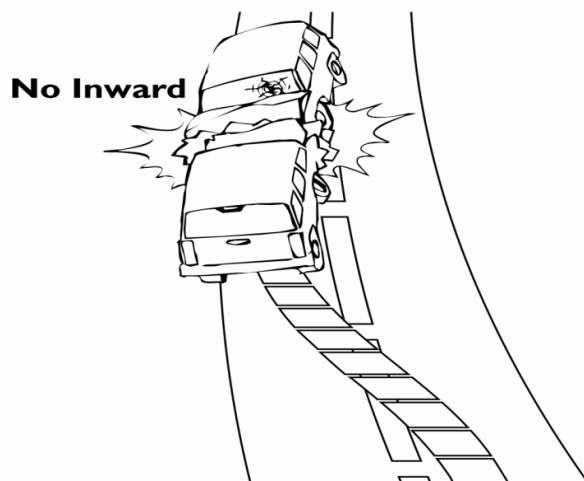
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Small groups are on the journey to Biblical community. Like a car, a holistic group runs on four wheels.



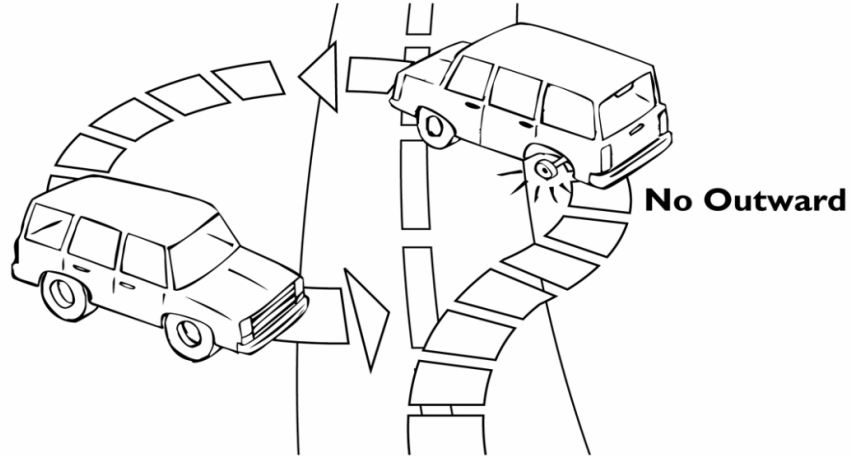
When a group fails to focus on God through prayer, intercession, and worship, it will lose its Upward wheel, causing the car to veer to the right and stall out in a ditch.

When a group fails to join together in unity, each member brings hidden agendas. These competing agendas cause the Inward wheel to spin off and the cell group will collide with other priorities.

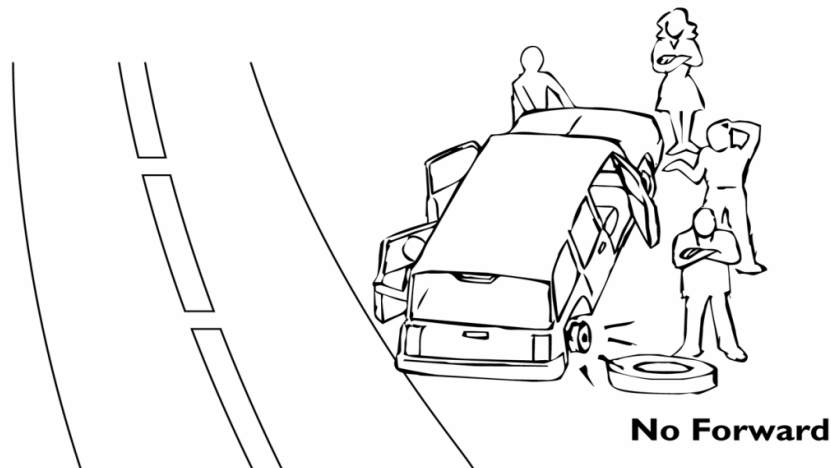


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When a group resists others and does not reach out to those who need the Lord, it will enter a stagnation loop. Groups without the Outward wheel will meet week after week, month after month with the people remaining in the same spiritual state.



When a group does not disciple and mentor people within the group, it will pull over to the side of the road and wonder what to do next. Groups that lose their Forward wheel have no propulsion to go anywhere and without disciplined, equipped, and mentored leaders, there is no one who knows how to take the group anywhere. This happens many times in groups that grow very large because of the excellent leadership of one person. But if there are no new leaders who have been mentored and developed, there is no future for the group.



Essential Elements: The 4 W's

Dr. Ralph Neighbour developed a common pattern for small group meetings that is being used around the world. It includes four basic parts, called the 4 W's.

Segment	Approximate Time	Focus	Flow
WELCOME	_____ Minutes	Icebreaking	You to Me
WORSHIP	_____ Minutes	Jesus	Us to God
WORD	_____ Minutes	Discussion and Ministry	God to Us
WITNESS	_____ Minutes	The Lost	God through Us

Welcome:

Icebreakers:

- ❖ Shift the focus off of the _____ behind
and on to the group _____ ahead
- ❖ Prepare people to share _____ in the group
- ❖ Connect people and bridge _____
- ❖ Warm up the atmosphere and ease _____

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Worship:

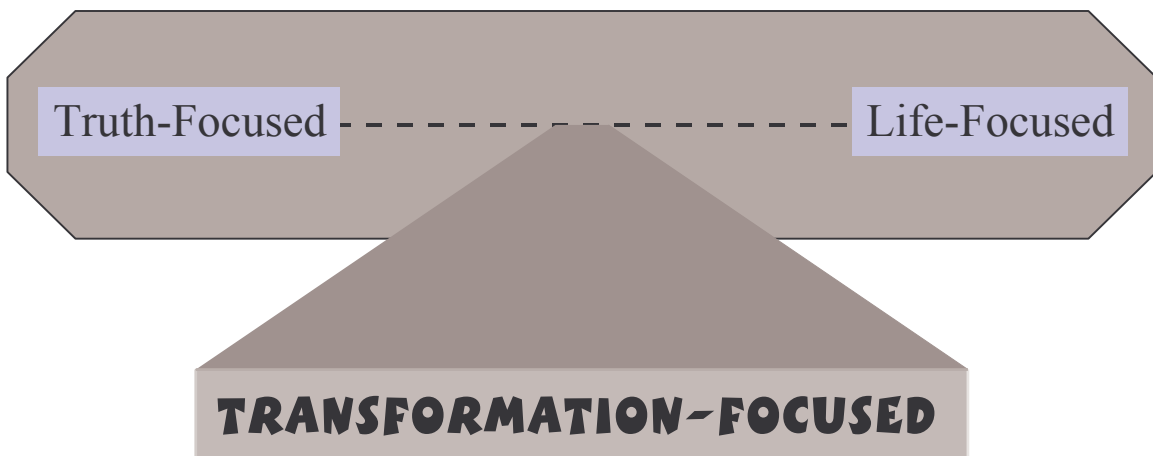
“When Jesus becomes the agenda, all other agendas are realized.”
~Bill Beckham

Acts 2 records that believers met in their homes daily and praised God.(Acts 2.46-47)
And the Apostle Paul wrote to the Colossians "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." (Colossians 3:16, NKJV)

Simple Ways to Worship in Small Groups (without an instrument)
worship _____
read _____
share _____
guided _____

Word:

More than most believers, North American Christians are inundated by biblical wealth. Yet our culture—even the Christian subculture—remains biblically illiterate. As on truism puts it, “To know and not to do, is not to know.”



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Truth-Focused Groups	Life-Focused Groups	Transformation-Focused Groups
Know the answers to the questions	Know the answers to personal problems	Know the truth about God and me
Focus on information— What does it mean?	Focus on introspection— How do I feel?	Focus on transformation— How am I becoming like Christ?
Reward members for being right	Reward members for being real	Reward members for being honest with God and others
Community is built on principle of agreement	Community is built on principle of acceptance	Community is built on principle of authenticity
The goal is a well-informed student	The goal is a well-understood self	The goal is a well-ordered heart.

Witness:

Jesus prayed: My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one... May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me...May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me."
(John 17:20-23, NKJV)

When the body is _____, the message will be clear

Where there is Biblical Community, evangelism flows _____

True _____ leads to the desire to share it with others

"Every small group or church needs to have some form of evangelism going on in order to maintain health."
 ~Steve Sjogren

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Group Dynamics

Stages of Group Life

Stage	Formation	Exploration	Transition	Action	Birthing	Legacy
# of Meetings Per Stage	4-6	6-10	4-8	12-24	4-8	2-6
Member's Questions	Who is in the group? Do I like my group? Will the group be worth it?	Do I fit here? How is our group doing?	Are we opening up? Am I growing?	How will we do this? What can we accomplish together? Will we take the risk?	Will we survive the transition? How will we change?	Did we grow? Was the group worth the time? Will I join another group?
Member's Role	Learn and share personal stories Learn and share expectations for the group	Share information about self Accept others as they are	Provide feedback Express frustrations and concerns to leader	Express feelings Use my gifts Take ownership Accept Challenges	Express and discuss concerns Accept reality Discuss changes Give blessing	Show love Express thanks Affirm relationships
Leader's Role	Communicate vision Promote sharing Define goals	Generate trust Discuss values Facilitate relationships Create covenant	Provide self-disclosure Re-examine covenant Stay flexible Be patient	Provide service opportunities Begin seeking 2 nd apprentice Celebrate results	Cast vision Pray for birth Create sub-groups Communicate with apprentice	Celebrate Give Gifts Communion Bring closure

Facilitate! Facilitate! Facilitate!

Keys to facilitating:

1. _____

An effective facilitator will speak only about _____% of the time in a small group meeting.

2. _____

Other responsibilities that may be delegated in group life:

Prayer, Outreach, Hospitality, Babysitting

3. Embracing the _____

Vision:

Biblical Community

connecting to God
connecting to one another
raising up disciples

Values

- Spiritual Transformation
- Deepening Relationships
- Pursuing Purpose
- Supportive Ministry
- Expanding Evangelism

Vehicles

- Span of Care
- Leadership Development
- Group Multiplication
- Intentional Shepherding