

Building Community



4G Mentoring: Growing, Guiding, and
Guarding the Global Bride of Christ

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Foreword

This document has been designed for use with Christian leadership development trainings using cell-phones, tablets, computers, TV connections, or projectors. This document is not designed as a printed book or large group presentation but rather a discussion guide for small or medium sized multi-language training groups. The graphics on each page are designed to ease cross-cultural communication issues when using a translator or training in a second language. We hope that this document helps facilitate discussions with leaders in both formal training situations and informal mentoring sessions in homes and coffee shops around the world. The copyright on this document allows you to freely distribute and even modify the content (with the exception of the King's Witness symbols that are used by permission) to meet your needs.

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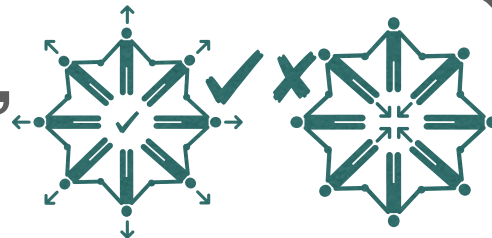


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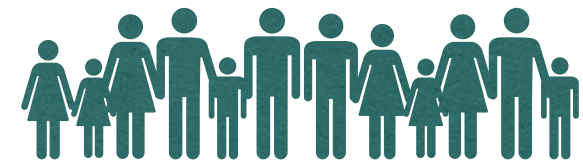
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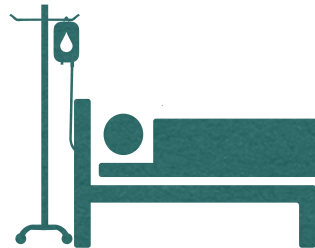


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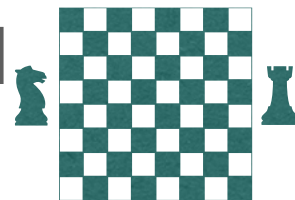
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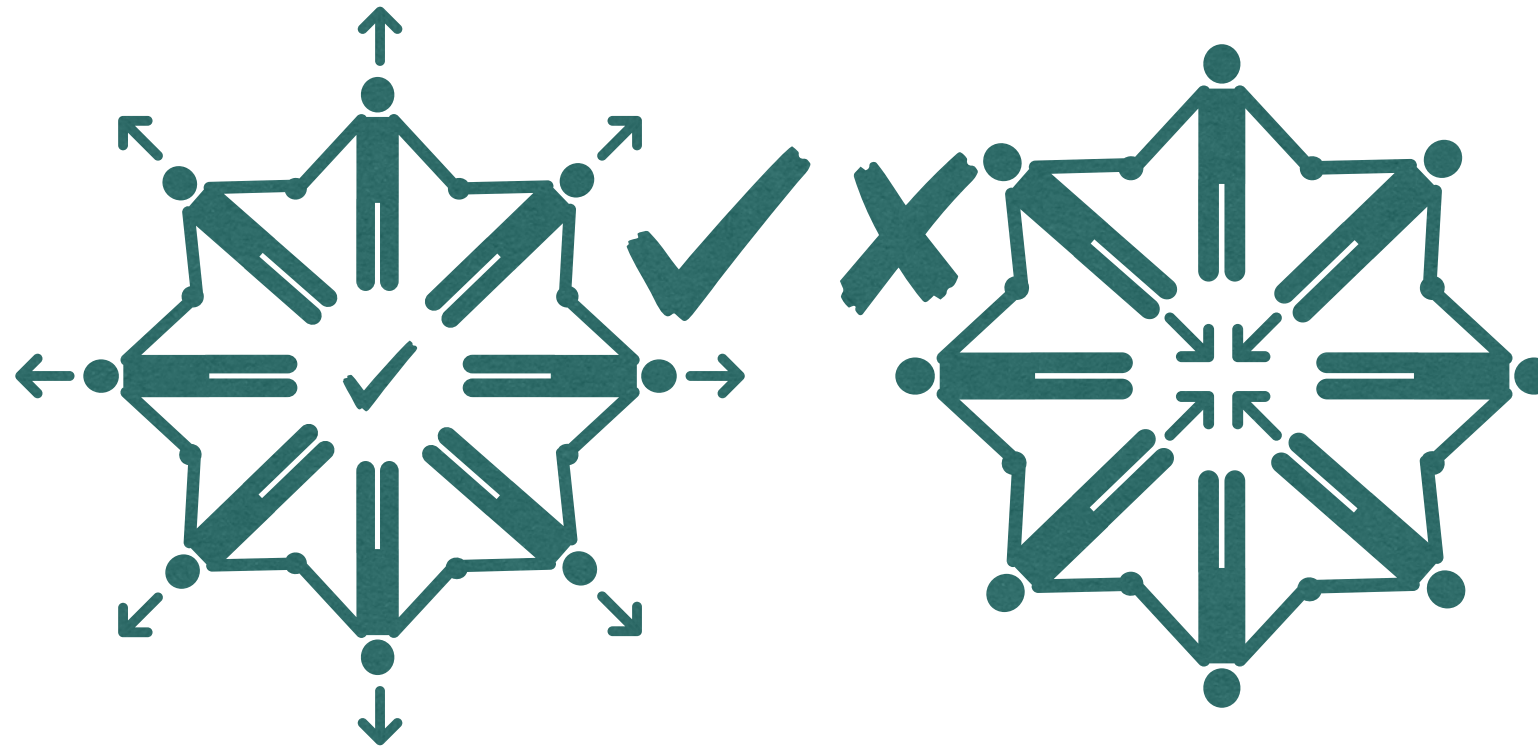
Provide a Healthy and Vibrant Community (of Jesus Followers)



The Gospel is not just an individual call to salvation but an invitation to join a multi-ethnic community of Jesus followers. We were never meant to walk alone with Jesus but to walk with Jesus together as the Body of Christ. Asking people to risk losing their community when you are offering no alternate is neither biblical nor healthy.

Key Idea: Provide a healthy and vibrant Christ-Centered community to supplement or replace the one new believers risk losing by following Christ.

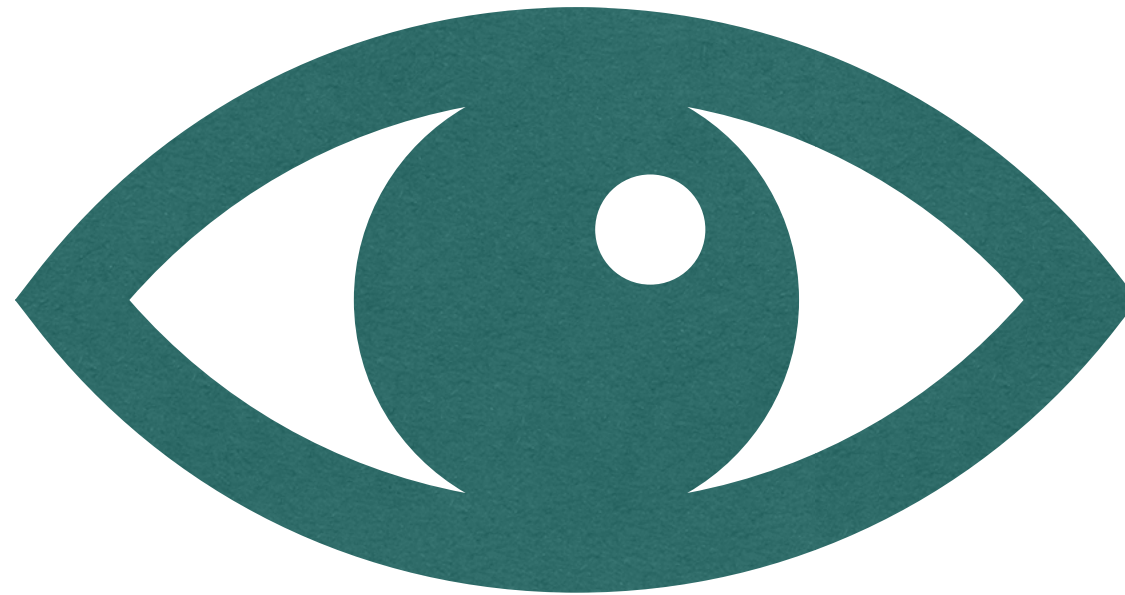
Focus Outward, Not Inward



One of the major purposes of the Church is community outreach. Although we want to build a close and trusted fellowship we need to make sure our group is always reaching out to the community with the Great Commission in mind rather than becoming closed to outsiders. Avoid the “What can I get from this?” attitude. Instead, instill a “What can we do to reach out to the community?” attitude.

Key Idea: Keep the group focus outward and not inward in order to reach your community for Christ.

Clearly Communicate Common Vision



Key Idea: Clearly communicate a common vision every time you meet.

Help Everyone Participate



“What then, brothers? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up.” (1 Corinthians 14:26)

*“And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, **to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ**, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, **to mature manhood**, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. **Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped**, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in **love.**” (Ephesians 4:11-16)*

Key Idea: Help everyone participate by equipping everyone to use their spiritual gifts and natural talents within the group for the building up of the Body of Christ.

Pray Together



*“These all with one mind were continually **devoting themselves to prayer**, along with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.” (Acts 1:14)*

*“And **they devoted themselves** to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread **and the prayers**.” (Acts 2:42)*

Key Idea: Intentionally working to create a culture of serious prayer helps to build community in your group.

Show Hospitality



*“Be **hospitable** to one another without complaint.” (1 Peter 4:9)*

*“For **an overseer**, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, but **hospitable**, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined.” (Titus 1:7-8)*

Key Idea: Hospitality helps build community but being inhospitable not only hurts the growth of a group but disqualifies a leader.

Eat Together

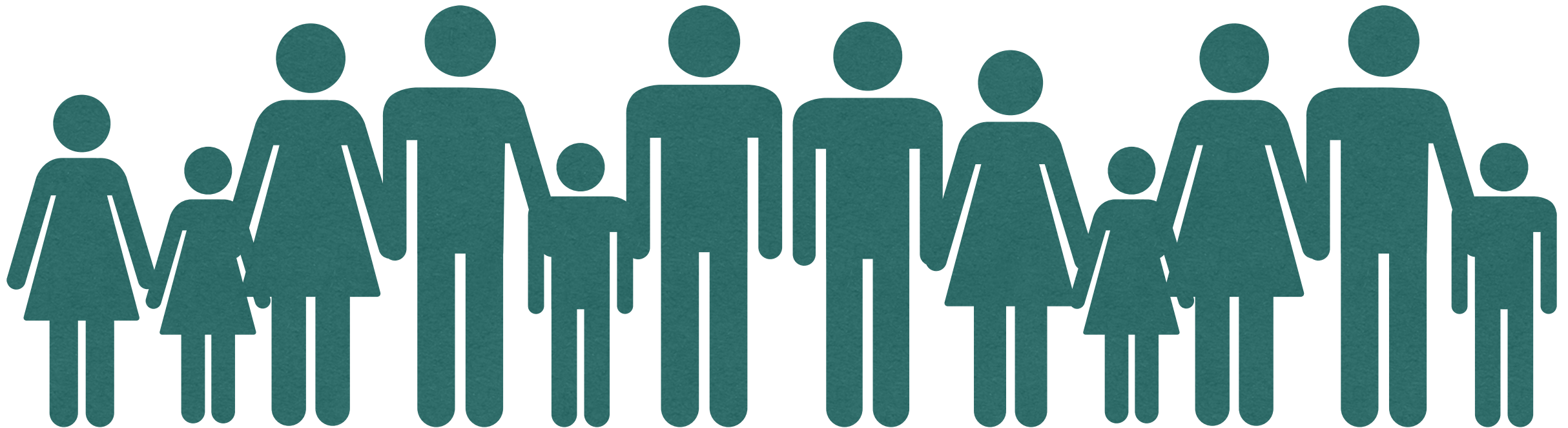


*“And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, **to the breaking of bread** and the prayers.” (Acts 2:42)*

*“And day by day, **attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts**, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.” (Acts 2:46-47)*

Key Idea: Having a simple meal together can help build community but is a suggestion rather than a requirement.

Treat People Like Family



*“So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but **you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God**, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you also are **being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.**” (Ephesians 2:19-20)*

*“A new commandment I give to you, that you **love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.** By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:34-35)*

Key Idea: Treat people like family and they will feel like they belong.

Hold Each Other Accountable



Accountability may be a formal or informal process within your group. One way to handle this in a formal way is to have appropriate accountability questions built into your weekly meeting structure.

*“And let us consider how to **stir up one another to love and good works**, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.” (Hebrews 10:24-25)*

*“Iron sharpens iron, and **one man sharpens another.**” (Proverbs 27:17)*

*“Therefore, **confess your sins to one another** and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.” (James 5:16)*

Key Idea: Accountability is an important aspect of building community.

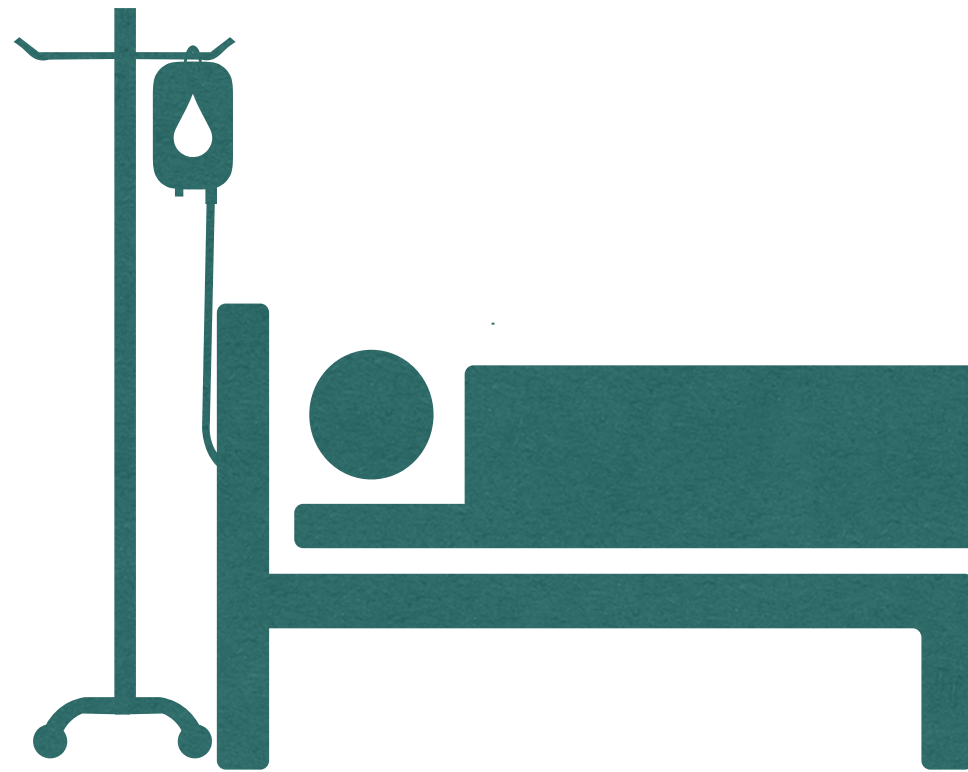
Create a Safe Environment

Create a Safe Environment



Key Idea: Create a safe environment where people feel comfortable sharing their hopes and struggles without fearing rejection or gossip.

Visit the Sick



“Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’” (Matthew 25:34-36)

“Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.” (James 5:14)

Key Idea: Having leaders and group members visit the sick helps build community among your group.

Comfort the Grieving



- Be present
- Listen
- Share comfort through scripture
- Pray together
- Get the group involved
- Provide longterm comfort (the grieving process)

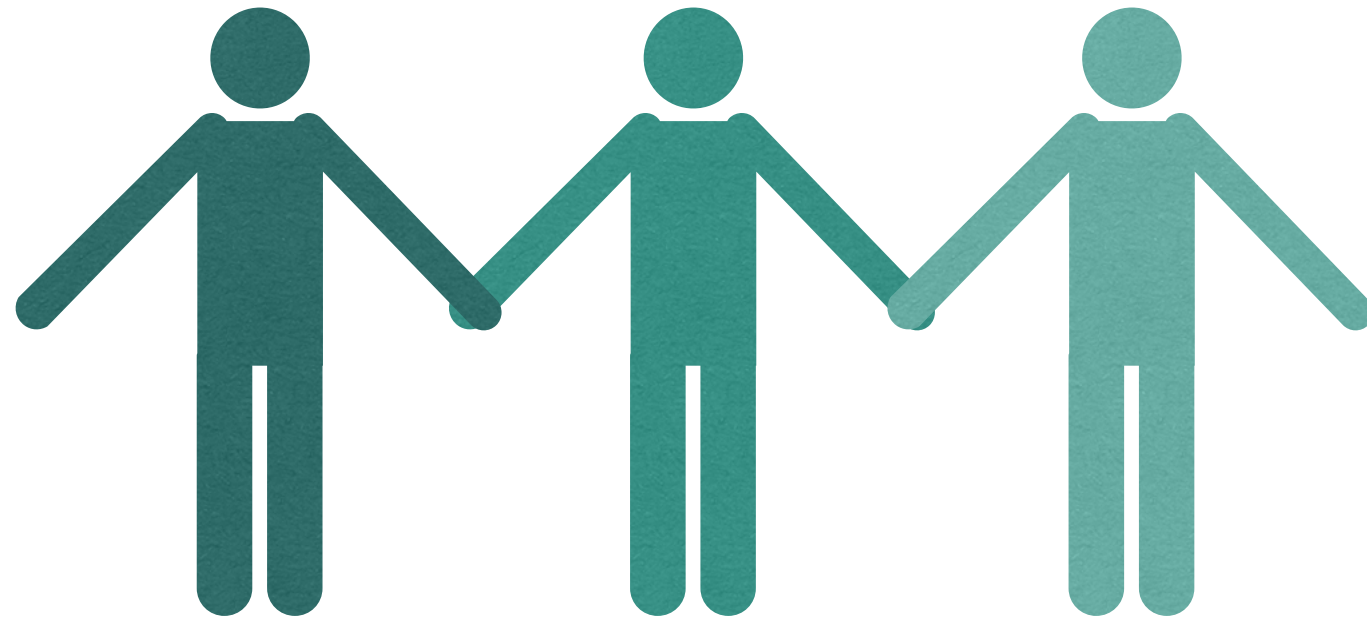
Key Idea: We need to pay special attention to those who are grieving and walk with them through that grieving process.

Support Those Facing Persecution



Key Idea: We need support and comfort those facing persecution. In some areas of the world physical persecution is a very serious reality. We need to learn to provide appropriate support and comfort for those facing both social and physical persecution for the name of Christ. If we are unwilling to stand with persecuted members of our group in times of trouble we will experience a lack of fellowship.

Deal With Racial and Social Inequalities



*“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”
(Galatians 3:28)*

Key Idea: Deal quickly and honestly with racial reconciliation and social inequality issues or your group will not have the flexibility to reach out to those who are different.

Pay Attention to Special Needs (Within the Group)



If we are sharing the Gospel with everyone then we will have all kinds of people coming into our group. We want our groups to be safe and fun places for everyone including those with special needs. There are times that people have needs that are beyond our ability as a small group to handle and we will need to look outside of our group for resources in those situation.

Key Idea: Pay attention to special needs within the group like the disabled or single parents.

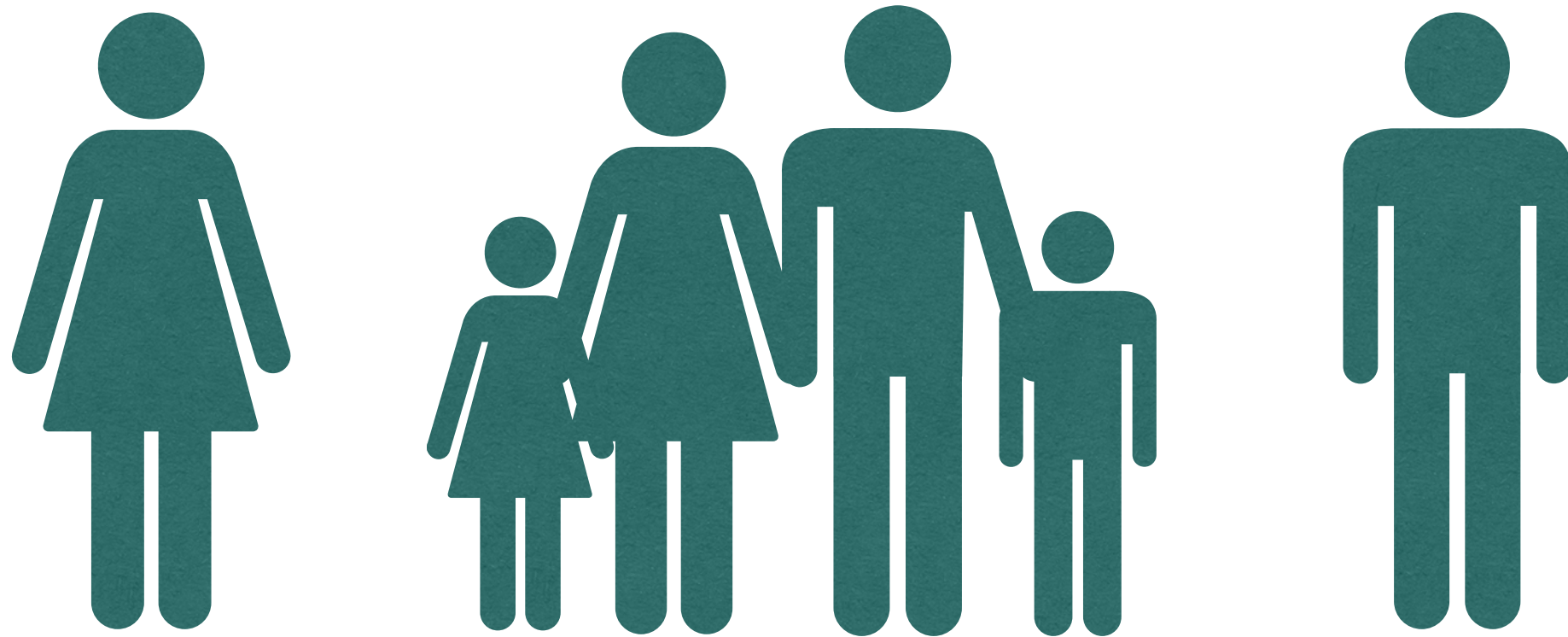
Consider Providing Childcare



Parents with small children may be hesitant to join a small group because they fear their children will disrupt the group. When children feel comfortable in a group this helps build fellowship and makes the parents feel more at home. Work with group members to provide childcare or ask members from another group for help during your weekly meetings. For safety reasons, both for children and adults, it is best to have either two women or a couple handle childcare. This provides accountability for adults, protects children, and also protects everyone's reputation.

Key Idea: Make your group a welcoming and safe place for parents with children.

Include Singles in Family Activities



Key Idea: Singles often feel left out so take special care to include singles in family and group activities.

Be Creative

Be Creative



Some ideas:

Game night

Movie night

Celebrate birthdays

Cook together

Play sports together

Go on an outing

Key Idea: Outside activities build fellowship. Be creative. There is no limit to the kinds of activities you can devise to help build community in your group. But make sure activities build up and don't tear down!

Make It Fun, But Gospel Focused

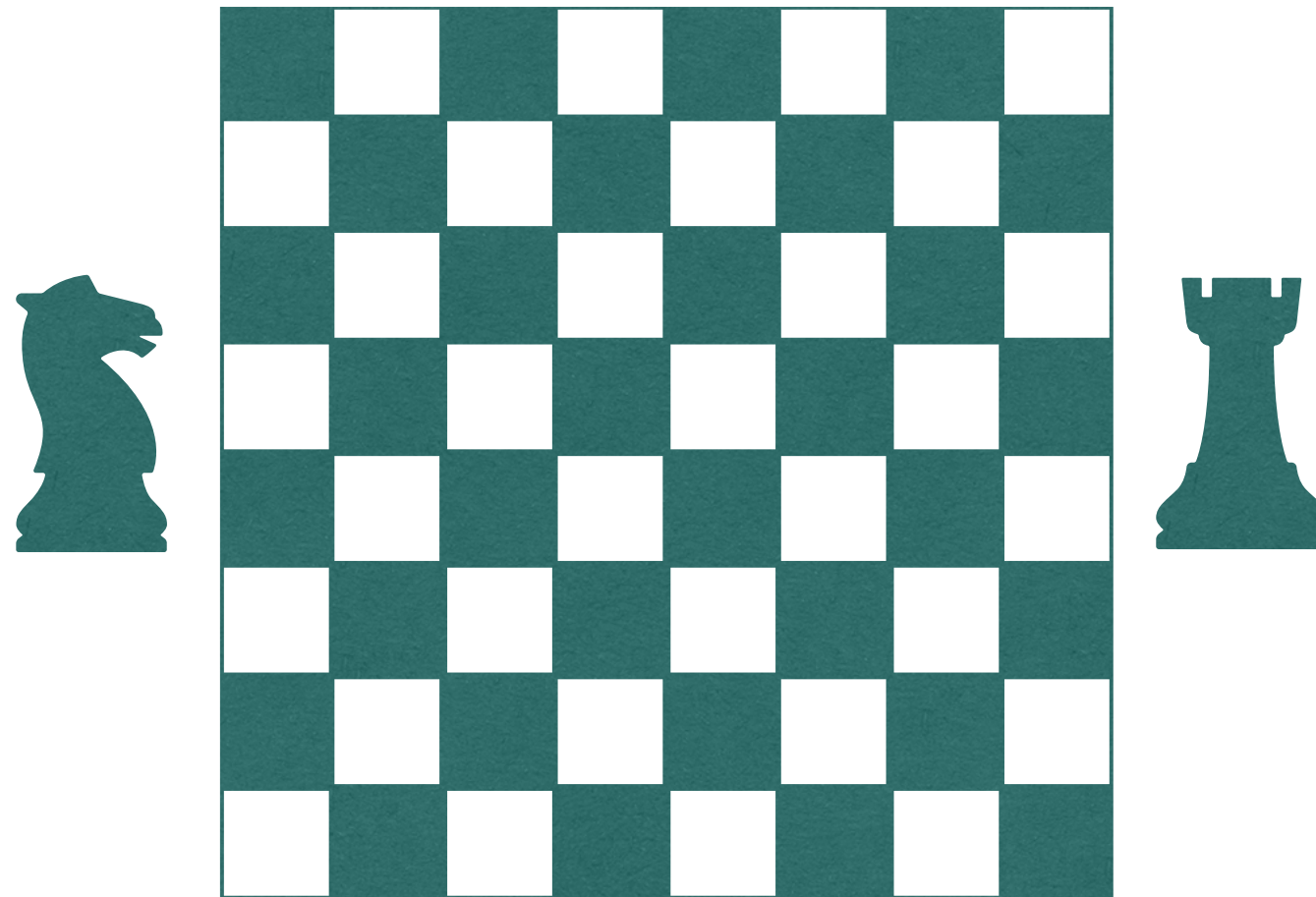


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Key Idea: Make your group fun but keep the focus on the Gospel.

Have a Game Board Sitting Around



Key Idea: Have a chess, checkers, backgammon, or other board game sitting around as people arrive. This helps shy people engage with group members without having to think of a topic of conversation.

Form Groups Around Common Interests (Cautiously)



Key Idea: Consider forming a group around common interest and hobbies as people naturally group around common activities, especially in busy urban areas. Make sure the group focuses on Christ and not the activity..

Practical Advice

Keep Rules and Regulations to a Minimum



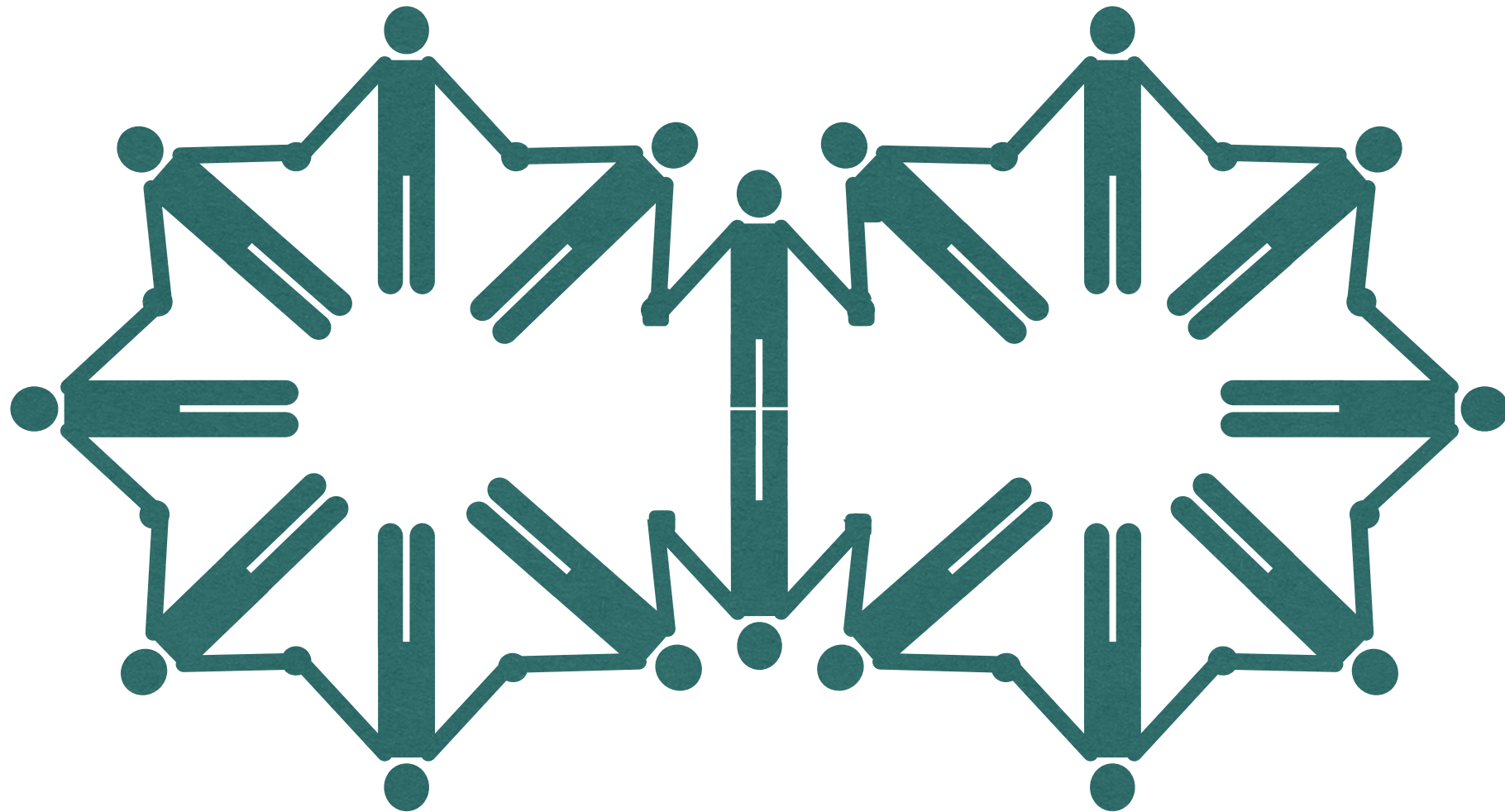
Key Idea: Keep rules and regulations to a minimum or people will begin to feel suffocated and group dynamics will become overly complicated.

Form a Chat Group



Key Idea: Form a chat group to communicate times and places for meetings, share prayer requests and insights into daily Bible devotions, and to help members keep in touch on a daily basis.

Partner and Fellowship With Other Groups

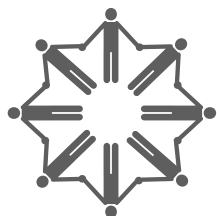


Key Idea: Partner and fellowship with other groups as every group is a part of the larger body of Christ and needs the resources and fellowship of other groups.

Case Study 1



You have been leading a small group for several years but you feel that this group is really struggling with fellowship issues. The members only get together to study the Bible but do not seem to interact outside of the group. What are some things you might do to help build closer fellowship among the members?

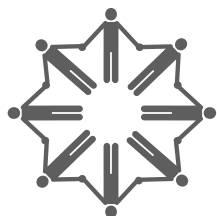


**Break up into groups and discuss.
(suggested time - 10 minutes)**

Case Study 2



Someone in your group has just called to let you know that one of their parents just died. How should your group respond?

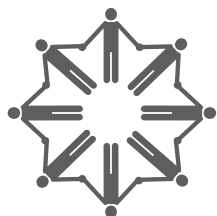


**Break up into groups and discuss.
(suggested time - 10 minutes)**

Case Study 3



You are leading a new group of believers from a non-Christian background. Several members of the group are experiencing a backlash from family members and friends who are very unhappy that they have become a believer. How will your group provide community for these members during this time of persecution?

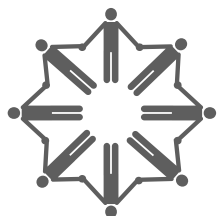


**Break up into groups and discuss.
(suggested time - 10 minutes)**

Case Study 4



You are leading a group of 5 people that has been meeting for 2 years. The fellowship is strong and the trust is really high among all 5 members. One of the members of the group recently tried to bring an unbelieving friend into the group but several people in the group were hesitant to allow anyone else to join the group for fear of losing the close fellowship and trust. How should you handle this situation?



**Break up into groups and discuss.
(suggested time - 10 minutes)**

