



OUR VALUES

LOVE FOR GOD.
LOVE FOR PEOPLE.
PURSUE EXCELLENCE.
CHOOSE JOY.

OUR VISION

LOVE GOD.
LOVE PEOPLE.
CHANGE THE WORLD.

OUR MISSION

KNOW GOD.
FIND FREEDOM.
DISCOVER PURPOSE.
MAKE A DIFFERENCE.



CONNECT GROUPS

SIMPLE — **SMALL GROUPS**

01
CONNECTING

02
CHANGING

03
CULTIVATING



**GOAL IS
HARMONY**

THREE PATTERNS



1 CONNECTING

The growing sense of connecting with an identified group of people who meet regularly.

2 CHANGING

The spiritual and relational renovation that transforms us into the likeness of Christ.

3 CULTIVATING

A missional lifestyle. An outward focus that engages their hearts into action.

* These are suggested “patterns” not “laws” for small groups. The goal is HARMONY - the inclusion of all three patterns in the group.

ACTS

2:42-47

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone who had need. Everyday they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

THREE PATTERNS



1 CONNECTING

The RELATIONAL pattern.
“Fellowship” is a shared connection.
“Breaking bread” - food has a kindling effect.

2 CHANGING

The spiritual GROWTH pattern.
They “devoted themselves” to the process.

3 CULTIVATING

The MISSIONAL pattern.
When God moves, word spreads.
The result was multiplication.



Today we will focus on CONNECTING and the following 2 monthly meeting we will discuss CHANGING and CULTIVATING.



5



SMART SMALL GROUPS

01 CONNECTING



CONNECTION KILLERS

IF YOU LOVE ME, YOU'LL LOVE THEM. – 1 John 4:20-21

Killers

1 TIME

“We’re just so busy right now.”
We need to prioritize connecting.
Learning to say “yes” to the right things.

2 RELATIONAL EXHAUSTION

Family knows our dark side, friends often share the same blind spots. Groups occupy a unique relational space. If they are willing to connect and take a risk, they can help each other grow. Risk vs. Reward!

3 WEIRDOS

EGR - Extra Grace Required
Admit that we are all slightly imperfect. We are all weird. The “weirdos” can become the catalyst to grow our group.

CONNECTION

3 POINTS

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE TO CONNECT?

1

Intimacy

Some groups connect like family and deep bonds develop. Other stimulate spiritual growth but would not describe themselves as intimate. Both are ok!

2

The Bull's Eye

Hope for more but celebrate that they are showing up. Some attend and participate, others bond relationally to an extent, and others become like family. The bull's eye is not a tiny target but a broad goal.

3

Dangerous Expectations

Remove the expectation that everyone in your group has to become close friends.



Creating a Safe Relational Space

So how can we help our participants connect on a level that works for your group? What can we do as group leaders to help build relational equity so that we can influence life change?

1

Create a Comfortable Place

If our members aren't comfortable - physically and emotionally - then they probably won't connect. Comfort pushes back boundaries of vulnerability.

2

Share Snapshots

Like looking through a photo album - sharing small details of our lives. We begin to connect with others as we find our common interests and experiences.



MEET

It is a meeting they attend, not a community they are emotionally attached to. The relational bonds are very vulnerable, and it's easy to get out.



COMMIT

They begin to show interest in each other's stories and connect both inside and outside of the group setting. Their connection no longer hinges on the "meeting".



BELONG

The relationship moves from a friendship to a family-like attachment - like spiritual siblings. They demonstrate a concern for each other that rivals that of close family.





CONNECT GROUPS

SIMPLE SMALL GROUPS

02 CHANGING



CHANGE

IS CHANGE —

SPIRITUAL FORMATION

EDIFICATION

DISCIPLESHIP

SANCTIFICATION



TRANSFORMATION

WE HAVE TO SURRENDER THE IDEA THAT
CHANGE EQUALS PERFECTION.

GETTING OFF TRACK



1

YOU NEED TO KNOW MORE

When a group becomes more intrigued with history, facts, and language than they are with becoming like Jesus, they have fallen into the need-to-know-more mentality.

2

PRIDE

Until we acknowledge that we need to grow and need others to help us, we will get sidetracked and will have a hard time changing.

GRIP CHANGE



HONESTY

We need to be honest with ourselves and with others if we want our group to help us change. We need to encourage our group to be as open and honest as they are willing to be.



APPLY SCRIPTURE

Change will inevitably occur as we open up Scriptures and apply them to day-to-day life.



LISTENING

Listening to others often challenges our perspectives. But if we want to help each other grow, it starts with the ears as we listen to each other's burdens and concerns. THEN we offer the encouragement needed to help them grow.

BILL'S CHANGE CONTINUUM



ROGER'S CHANGE CONTINUUM



WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP GROUP MEMBERS CHANGE DURING THE LEARN PHASE?



1

Learn Together

Pick a tool that makes learning simple and enjoyable.

- Leader Resources
- RightNow Media

2

Memorize Scripture Together

Pick helpful passages related to your subject matter.

- Give them a “How To” tool
- The Bible Memory App

3

Make It a Matter of Prayer

When group turns to prayer time, they share what’s really going on.

- Keep it small
- Give it time
- Guide it well



When a group learns together, they enter a joint journey that celebrates new knowledge. Just remember, knowledge puffs, loves lifts up (1 Cor 8:1)

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP GROUP MEMBERS CHANGE DURING THE GROWING PHASE?



1

Discuss the Bible

Discussion means exploring what the text meant in the original setting and what it means to us today.

- Intended Message
- Application to daily life

2

Mirror Time

“Carefrontation” is when we care enough about the person and their spiritual well-being to talk to them about the truth.

- Do you like who you see?



Consider

- Discussion is mutual opportunity to offer insight and personal discovery and not dominated by a “teacher”.
- Mirror time may work best during break out times as with prayer.



You’ve got to build the relational bridge strong enough to hold the weight of truth.
The Gospel spreads best on the bridges of existing relationships.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP GROUP MEMBERS CHANGE DURING THE TRANSFORMING PHASE?



1

Set Personal Spiritual Goals

Setting personal goals encourages each person to take more control of their spiritual development.

2

Confession

Confess your sins to each other and pray (James 5:17).
-Keep it in the group
-Relational Bridge capacity
-Lead by example
-No unsolicited advice



Consider

-Have a special goal-setting meeting. Use the SMART approach.
-Consider times of confession with same gender and in a smaller group setting.



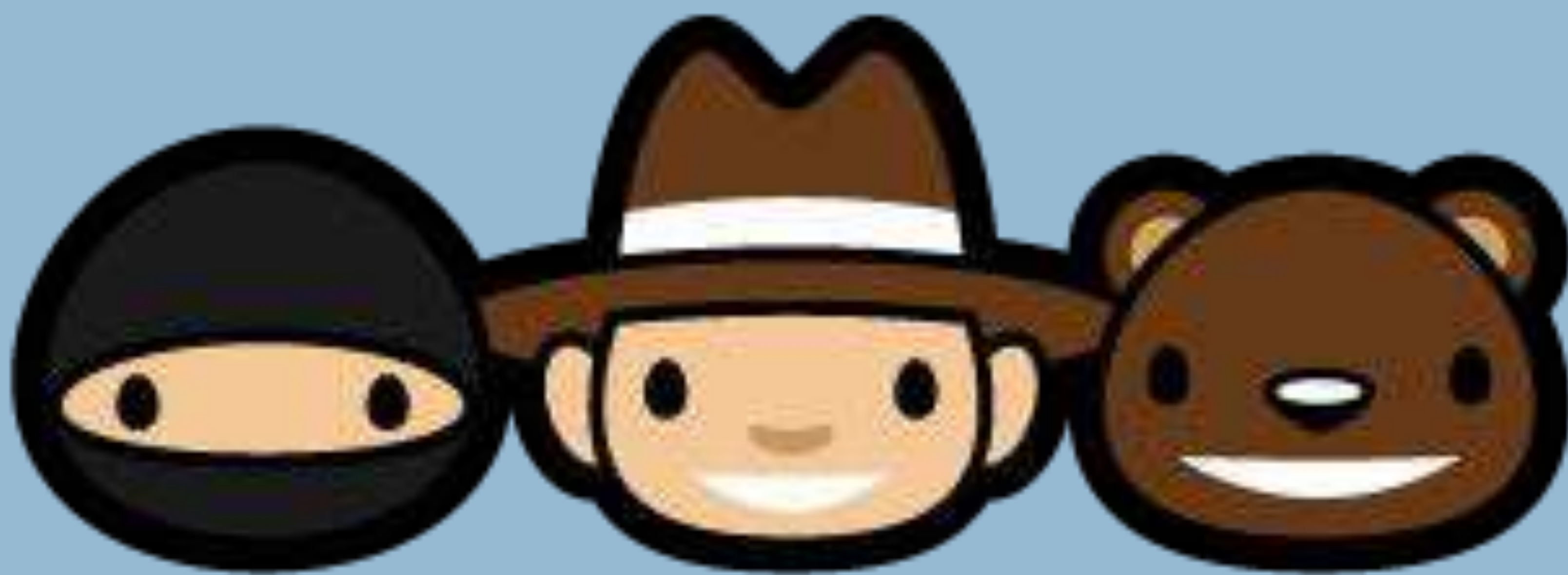
We can not ask people to set spiritual goals if we are not doing that ourselves.
What are your spiritual goals and how are you accomplishing them?

SUMMARY

When we talk about the pattern of change, let's free ourselves from the fantasy that we can help people quit sinning, completely understand complicated doctrine, live contentedly, and master all the spiritual disciplines in four weeks or less! Instead, let's celebrate each small effort that leads to a life focused more on Jesus.



CONNECT GROUPS



NINJA COWBOY BEAR



NINJA
BEATS
COWBOY



COWBOY
BEATS
BEAR



BEAR
BEATS
NINJA





SIMPLE **SMALL GROUPS**



03 CULTIVATING

CULTIVATING

Cultivating missional lives means that we serve others and share our faith. Clear and simple, cultivating is formed through giving outside of our group and not inward.

Missional living means that we are focused on the “mission” of loving those outside of our community as Jesus loves them.

WHAT DOES CULTIVATE MEAN TO YOU?

Build Up Faith
Share Our Faith
Demonstrate Our faith

HELP US CULTIVATE

Cultivating missional lives is not an event but a way of life.

The group engages each member to keep an open ear and eye to watch for ways to serve and share your faith at work, home, your neighborhood, and school.



Break the Ice:
Softening Hard Hearts



They is You:
Get in the Game



Keep Moving:
Surviving the Roadblocks



Be Real: Avoiding the Veneer
of Compassion



Action First: Mission That
Leads to Community

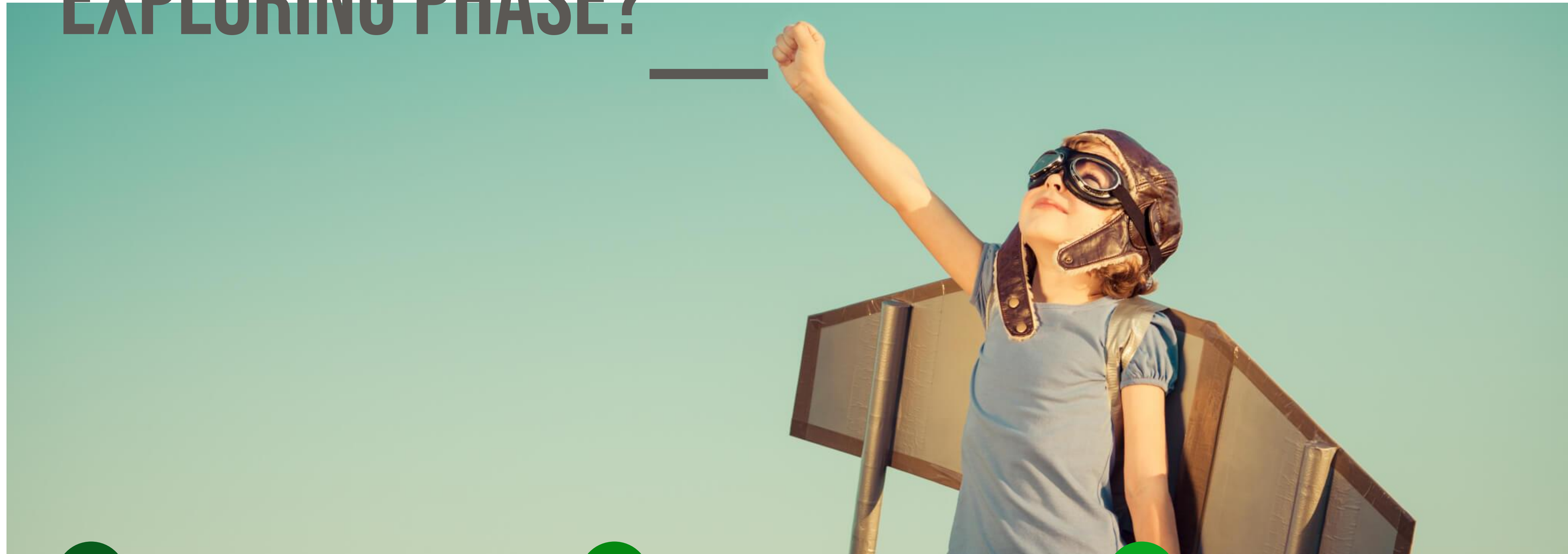
IMAGINE

A community that firmly believed
that each person needed to impact
the world around him or her.

CULTIVATING CONTINUUM



WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP GROUP MEMBERS CULTIVATE DURING THE EXPLORING PHASE?



1

Discuss Spiritual Gifts

gifts.churchgrowth.org

spiritualgiftstest.com

Who, Me? Gifted? RightNow Media

S.H.A.P.E. by Erik Rees

2

Discuss Evangelism

There is no silver bullet.

Evangelism discussion nudges us
towards open hearts for lost
people.

3

Investigate Where God Is Working

Live like Jesus and look around for
evidence of God's work and join in.
-Who around you is struggling or in
need?
-What can YOU do to help?

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP GROUP MEMBERS CULTIVATE DURING THE APPLYING PHASE?



1

Serve Together a Few Times a Year

- Serve Saturdays
- Serve App
- Community Project

2

Adopt A Missionary

- Are there missionaries that you or someone in your group already has a connection with?
- Promote missions giving

3

Adopt A Ministry

- Here at Hope City
(A student group, hospitality, etc)
- Within your community
(Food Bank, Shelter, etc)

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP GROUP MEMBERS CULTIVATE DURING THE IMPACTING PHASE?



1

Acts Of Regular Kindness

- NOT random but Regular, purposeful and planned.
- See a need and commit to helping
- We create our own serve projects

2

Become a Serving Team

- Serving together at HC as a Dream Team.
- Coordinators, Coaches, Connections area, Growth Track

3

Support Each Other in Individual Ministries

- Sharing stories of sharing
- Sharing stories of life change
- Nurturing and encouraging the missional pattern



CONNECT GROUPS