

[CITY GROUPS X]

GUIDE TO MULTIPLICATION

WHY MULTIPLY?

When asked to consider multiplication, group leaders often frown and become disheartened. This should not be the case. Here are a few reasons why multiplication might not be something group leaders would get excited about:

- “We like our group. We don’t want to split up.”
- “We feel like we are just finally really getting to know one another.”
- “We’ve put in a lot of time and effort into this group, and now it’s going to split up.”
- “I don’t feel like anyone in our group is capable of leading a new group.”
- “Our kids really get along well.”
- “We are just starting to make an impact in our Intentional Space.”
- “People in our group will have to pick sides, which could really hurt some relationships.”

Most of these objections can be dealt with practically, which we will do later in this document. However, most objections to healthy group multiplication stem from a misunderstanding of who we are and what we are called to do as followers of Jesus. Once we better understand this, we can more easily move forward with multiplication and carry out the mission of Jesus.

In Genesis 1, God created people “in his own image.” Then he told them to “be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth.” Basically God said, “I’m designing you to look like me, and I’m charging you with taking that image of me to every part of the earth.”

Jesus’ last words to his followers before he left the earth were, “Go and make disciples of every group of people.” (Matt 28:19)

Finally, at the end of the bible, we see a glorious scene where God, through his people, has accomplished his mission. The write says, “I looked and before me was a great multitude which no one could count, people from every tribe, tongue, people, and nation, gathered around the throne, worshipping the Lamb who was slain.” (Rev 7:9)

So, if you are a follower of Jesus, and you are still alive (I’m assuming you are if you are reading this right now), then that is what you are called to do! Follow Jesus, and teach others to do the same. It’s not always easy, but it’s always worth it.

Conway, AR 2016

Below is a map of Conway. On the map you will see the areas of influence, also known as Intentional Spaces, that City Church is investing in and around Conway.



As you can see, our City Groups are actively engaging many different areas of Conway in many different demographics. However, there is still a lot of work to be done and a lot of people left to engage.

This guidebook will help you to multiply healthy City Groups in order to fulfill the calling that God has given us to bring the good news of Jesus to every person we meet.

THE MODEL FOR HEALTHY MULTIPLICATION

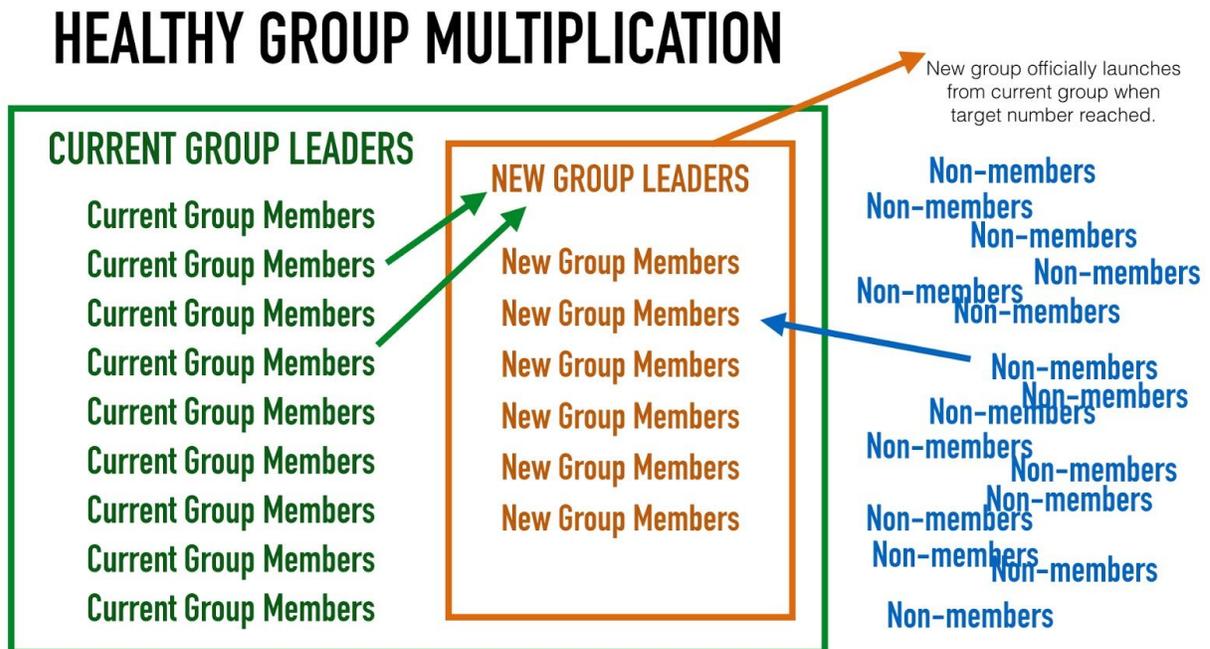
Understanding the following model for healthy multiplication will assuage many issues and anxieties that groups or group leaders may face.

When a City Group is actively engaged in the process of DNA (members building into one another and growing together) then they are also equipped and freed to overflow spiritually into the lives of others outside the group, ie Intentional Spaces. When these things are happening, it is inevitable that Jesus will begin to draw people to himself, and many of these people will want to join a City Group.

The more this happens, the more groups we will need. Overly large groups are impractical for a number of reasons. Meeting the needs of a large group (food, space, schedules) becomes increasingly difficult. The larger the group, the more difficult it is to get to know people intimately. Most Intentional Spaces can't hold an infinite number of people either! And no one can have a conversation with 100 small children running around (which will eventually happen if it hasn't already)!

All of these things are *effects* of *not* multiplying, which actually work against the logic of the reluctant leader.

Though there may be other ways to multiply healthy groups, here is the default model we recommend:

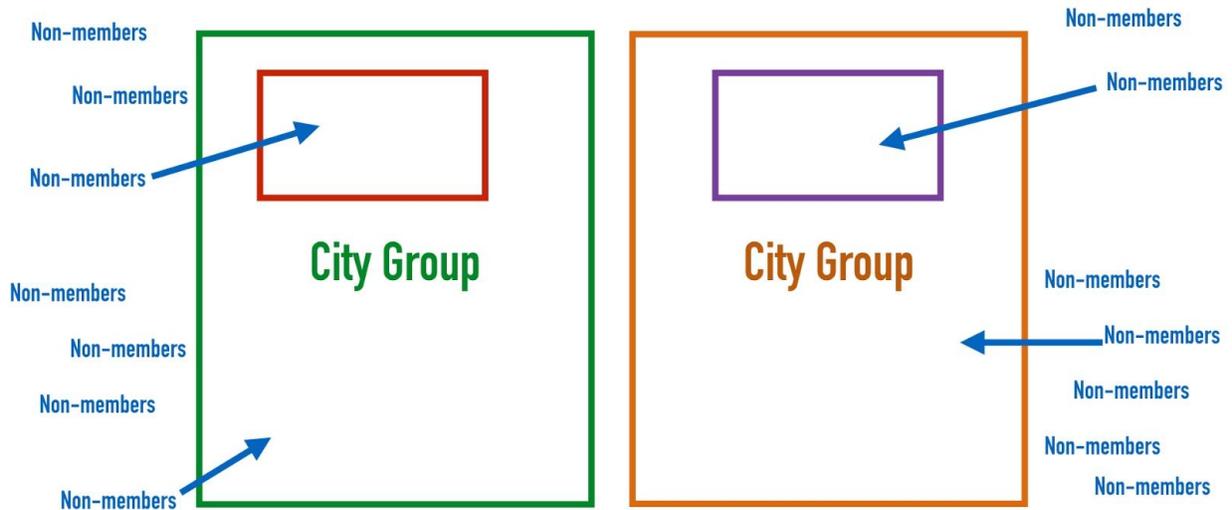


New groups can be grown inside of current groups. Once leadership has seen potential in current group member for leading a new group, new members can begin to be recruited into the new group, which still exists inside the current group. It is never a secret that a new group is forming. In fact, it is critical that it be announced very early on. Current group members should be enlisted in prayerfully supporting the new group's leaders, recruiting to the group, and the new group's eventual launch.

When new group leaders have been identified, they and other leadership should set a launch goal (critical mass) of the number of people they will have when they launch. This number should not be a full group, because once the new group launches, there should still be plenty of room for new members to join them once they are an independent group. For example, you might set a Critical Mass goal of 4 families.

The goal of healthy group multiplication is not to slip an existing group, but to birth a new group out of an existing one.

FAMILY GROUP



Once a new group has launched (we recommend an official Launch Party with the Current Group and the New Group), then the process starts over! New leadership is raised up within groups, and new groups continue to form. These groups are all tied together in what we call a Family Group.

FAMILY GROUP



In your personal families, you may not see everyone all the time. That's just how life works. People grow up, get jobs, move away, and start their own families. But, on certain, special occasions, families come together for a reunion. We recommend this for your Family Group as well. Maybe a birthday party, or a major holiday, or just a semi-annual cook-out and pool party.

When To Multiply

Let's be clear: multiplication isn't the goal.

The goal is as many people as possible, from all walks of life, in intimate, redemptive, missional relationship with Jesus and his people (Matt 28:19-20, Rev 7:9).

Often, group multiplication is the obstacle that keeps us from achieving that goal on a larger scale. Do we want to grow and add more people? Yes! We absolutely and unashamedly want more people to come into a missional, Jesus-following community. We don't believe that City Church is the only place people can do that, but we firmly believe it is what we are called to do as a group of believers, and so we are committed to doing everything we can to steward that calling as well as possible.

However, we are also equally committed to not doing things like group multiplication for its own sake. For this reason, we want to only multiply from health, not sickness.

For the record, sickness isn't the same as brokenness. We are all broken and Jesus is in the process of restoring us. We must multiply as broken people, because there are no other kinds of people on this side of heaven!

Sickness (as the opposite of health) simply means a group that is not actively engaging in **DNA** and **Intentional Space**.

So, how do you know if your group should multiply or not?

Multiply Health...Not Sickness

Do you enjoy your group and your leaders? One of the reasons to *not* seek to launch a new group is not enjoying your current group or current group leaders. As a family, we must be committed to one another, even when we don't get along. If we are in the habit of running from groups or leaders we don't enjoy, then we are not believing that Jesus is able to heal broken relationships or broken people. If you break a bone in your leg, you have to set it and give it a chance to heal; running on it only makes it worse. We're all broken, and running away from our brokenness doesn't heal us; it keeps our wounds from properly healing!

Rather than multiply groups because of disfunction, we want to multiply healthy groups that are actively engaged in helping people know Jesus better. We want to multiply groups that are active in their Intentional Space, and are meeting regularly as DNA groups. And we want to raise up new leaders from within groups who love their current groups so much that leaving them will be tough.

One of the primary signs that you should consider group multiplication is when your current group is actively engaging in multiple Intentional Spaces. Many groups love hanging out together, but because they live in different parts of the city, or just have different interests or natural rhythms among themselves, they end up spreading their missional efforts to many areas or people. This is a GREAT problem to have, and isn't discouraged! Rather, this should be a vision-casting element. We should begin asking our groups, "What could it look like if we had teams of people dedicated to serving each of these areas we are touching?!" Also, seeing which people are drawn to each area of service will also help determine who should lead new groups,

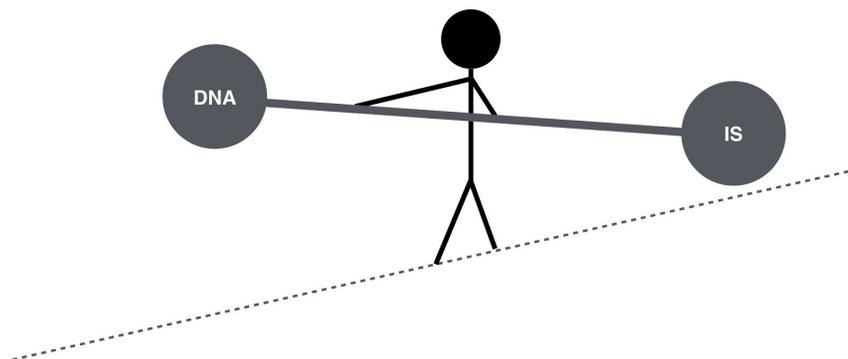
and who else should be members of those groups! This should be an exciting process as your group begins to dream and plan for maximum impact in the areas they care about and are involved in.

For example, a group may find itself engaged in several areas like these which could each eventually turn into their own separate city groups (all the numbers are random):

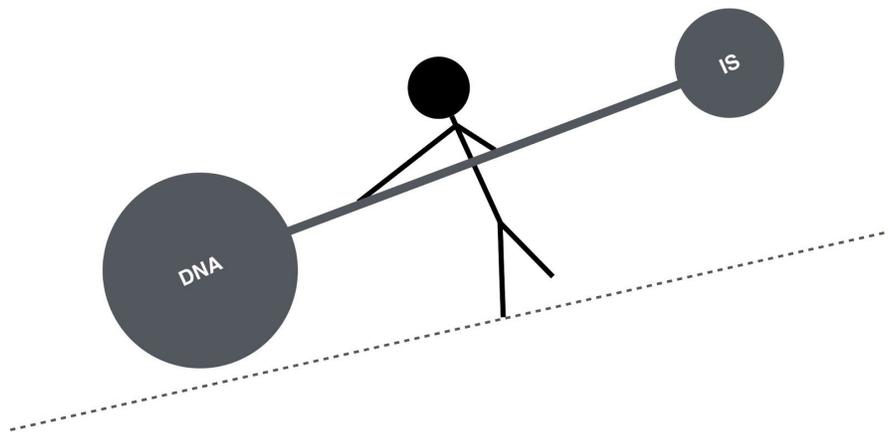
- 3 families all have kids at the same school
- 2 families have kids that play on the same soccer team
- A group may have multiple members that work in the same company
- There may be 3 families in a group that live in the same neighborhood
- 3 or 4 people in a group might be involved with the same non-profit
- Half of your group might already frequent the same coffee shop or pub
- 4 students from the same college dorm may be in your group
- 2 older couples with a heart for young married couples may be in your group

The other critical area to be healthy in before multiplying a group is DNA. If your current group isn't meeting in smaller DNA groups, and it becomes two groups, then you're just going to have two groups that aren't doing DNA instead of one! Again, we want to multiply from an area of health, not sickness. Healthy DNA groups are essential to healthy group multiplication. Often times a DNA group could be the foundation of a new group launch! If you're doing DNA right, then the men or women that you meet with know you as well as anyone else, and you're each speaking the gospel into each other's lives in a deep, intimate way, helping each other to grow closer to Jesus. Who better to team up with to start a new group!?

Being healthy in the areas of DNA and Intentional Space is critical to healthy group multiplication. And the truth is that it's difficult to truly be healthy in one of these areas without the other. There's a necessary tension that exists between these two practices, because DNA is inherently inward-focused while Intentional Space is inherently outward focused. It's really a balancing act.

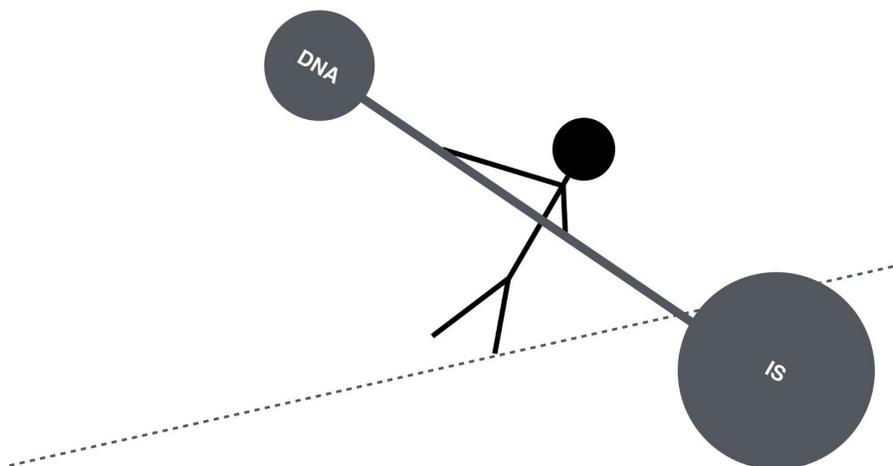


As long as both DNA and Intentional Space are happening, we can move forward together. But if we are only doing one or the other, we'll quickly either get burnt-out or become self-focused and stagnate.



A heavy emphasis on DNA groups, with little emphasis on Intentional Space leads to a group becoming self-focused. Not only is this a direct rejection of Jesus' command to "Go and make disciples," but it also creates a special club (not in a good way) where people are either in or out. It becomes an "us" and "them" scenario, and the group begins to selfishly schedule their time together around what they want to do rather than focusing on others. Over time, as this religious club forms, groups will begin to worship the ritual rather than Jesus. Even worse, anyone that happens to join the group along the way is then taught to also worship the ritual. Eventually this process becomes stale and the group becomes just another task on people's to-do list, which only leads to feeling trapped or feeling disillusioned.

On the other hand, if your group under-emphasizes DNA groups and over-emphasizes Intentional Space, you'll quickly develop a bad case of burn-out among your people.



DNA groups exist to bring spiritual growth to small groups of individuals. It should be from the overflow of these groups that we have the ability to engage in an Intentional Space. Without DNA groups, we can quickly get in the habit of "doing," and forget about "being." Jesus called his followers to come-and-be before he told them to go-and-do. By ourselves, we don't have the capacity to follow Jesus' command to make disciples of all people.

DNA groups are where people are spiritually nourished, and because of that nourishment, they are able to engage effectively in an Intentional space. Think of it like a flower. There are two distinct parts of a flower: the

part above ground, and the part below. Both are critical. Without the root system, the flower cannot be nourished and bloom. But without the stem and flower bud, then the root system is pointless. The world doesn't see the root system, but it recognizes the beauty of the above-ground flower. The same is true of DNA groups and Intentional Spaces. Without DNA, the Intentional Space effort will quickly dry up. And if there's no Intentional Space, then what exactly is the point of the DNA group's nourishment?

So, if you love your current group and leaders, and if you are actively engaged in DNA and Intentional Space, then your group is a potential candidate for multiplication. At the end of this document is a step-by-step checklist for how to multiply your group in a healthy way.

PRACTICAL RESPONSES TO COMMON OBJECTIONS

Before we hit the checklist and practical steps to multiplication, let's dive into some of the common objections and questions about group multiplication.

How do we identify new leaders?

New leaders are often self-selecting. If someone seems to have a passion or burden for a specific people or area of ministry, they might be potential group leaders.

Other times, current group leaders may identify things in group members that could signal potential group leadership: a shepherding spirit, teaching gifts, natural hospitality, and a spirit of entrepreneurship are some examples.

Of course, potential new leaders should have a teachable and humble spirit, a heart for people, and a knowledge of God's word. They should also be reliable and trustworthy to the people around them, and they should not be currently walking in perpetual sinful habits.

What happens to the people in our current group?

Some will go with the new group, especially if they share a passion for the new group's Intentional Space or are in a DNA group with the new group leaders. However, most members will probably stay in the current group.

...but we like our group. We've put a lot of time and effort into this group and we finally feel like we're really getting traction and getting to know one another.

That's great! The goal of healthy multiplication isn't to destroy relationships that you've worked hard to build. We would encourage you to continue to pursue those relationships, whether or not it's inside the context of a City Group. The goal is as many people as possible, from all walks of life, in intimate, redemptive, missional relationship with Jesus and his people. In order to accomplish this, multiplication is necessary. The relationships you've worked to build should help you to reach out to others and to multiply your group in a healthy way. You can go forward as a team (or as two teams, or three or four, etc) and bring others into the depth of relationship that you enjoy. For those that you join with to create a new group, your relationship will only deepen. For those who remain in the current group, you'll be able to come back together with them over time and cast an even greater, more compelling vision for multiplication and Kingdom advancement in our city.

Besides, this is actually a really natural thing. Imagine if you raised your kids (or imagine you're the kid in this scenario), but they continued to live with you into adulthood. Grandparents know the joy that comes with a growing family; but they would never experience it if they didn't allow their kids to go out into the world on their own.

If you understand Jesus' command to "Go and make disciples," then you'll understand why healthy multiplication is a must. Even if you don't get to always hang out with the friends you've made, the sacrifice with worth it, and it's what we're called to as followers of Jesus.

However, we're all still part of the family. Just because you're not in the same City Group as someone doesn't mean you can't hang out with them, eat a meal together, or visit their home!

...but our kids really get along.

Have you ever moved? Have you ever changed social circles? Going somewhere new, whether it's a new town, job, or school, is difficult. And the less people you know there, the more difficult it becomes. If your kids grow up to live at least a semi-normal life, they will experience these same difficulties. But what if you started

training them now in how to navigate those times, helping them to be able to make new friends and to endure transition, so that one day they can embrace the changes along the path that God has for them. How would your life have been different if you parents had intentionally taught you how to transition social environments and to excel at making new friends?

It could actually be a blessing in disguise! Again, just because you're not in the same City Group as another family doesn't mean you can't get together other times and let the kids play together!

HEALTHY MULTIPLICATION CHECKLIST

If *each* of the statements below are true for your situation, then group multiplication should be a top priority.

For Current Group Leaders and Leadership

- The current group is growing, and will soon outgrow viable space options when everyone meets together.
- The current group is growing, and scheduling a time to meet together is nearly impossible.
- The current group is actively engaged in at least one intentional space more than once per month.
- The majority of current group members are actively engaged in DNA groups on a weekly basis.
- Current group members are consistently growing closer to Jesus and to each other.
- No major tension exists in the current group between its members and leaders. The group is not splitting because people can't get along.

For New Group Leaders

- Our current group is growing and we see the need for more groups to accommodate the numerical growth.
- We are burdened for a specific area or group of people.
- We are actively engaged in an Intentional Space more than once per month.
- We are actively engaged in a DNA group that meets on a weekly basis.
- We are consistently growing closer to Jesus, and not walking in perpetual sinful habits.
- No major tension exists between us and our current group or leaders. We are not starting a new group in order to get away from our current one or its leaders.

Assuming all of the above statements are true, and under the approval of other leadership, a new group can be planned and launched out!

STEPS TO HEALTHY GROUP MULTIPLICATION

1. Current groups is growing, healthy, and actively engaged in DNA and Intentional Space.
2. Leadership, group leaders, or potential new group leaders propose the need for a new group.
3. Leadership, group leaders, and potential new group leaders agree that all parties should move forward with group multiplication.
4. Current group leaders, along with new group leaders should announce to their current group the intention to launch the new group. It should be clearly stated the reasons for the new group, as well as what the reasons are not (see above). Have an open discussion with the group. Take questions and cast vision for the positive kingdom impact of launching new groups.
5. Leadership, current group leadership, and new group leaders should work together to set goals about launch dates, critical mass, and possible intentional space for new group. As soon as goals are set, update the current group.
6. The new group will continue to meet with the current group and grow inside of it until it reaches critical mass.
7. When the new group reaches critical mass, throw a Launch Party with both groups to celebrate new opportunities for people to come into mission, gospel-centered community. The new group will begin to meet independently after the launch party.
8. Plan a “family reunion” for both groups between 1 and 4 months after the launch party.