

## Developing Community Through Small Groups

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Eran Holt & Ryan Kick

### Summary

This video discusses the importance of utilizing small groups to foster a healthy community within youth ministries. Key points include: small groups teach students to share their lives, confess struggles, and support one another; they expose students to diverse perspectives and backgrounds, helping them learn to love those different from themselves; and they provide an entry point for reaching unchurched students by offering community. The discussion emphasizes creating an environment of openness, vulnerability, and mission focus in small groups. Practical tips like the 'BLESS' rhythm and using food to break down walls are shared. The book 'The Search to Belong' by Joseph Myers is recommended as a resource for building community through small groups.

### Main Points

#### Small Groups Teach Sharing Lives

Small groups allow students to share their lives, confess their struggles, and support one another. This counters the epidemic of loneliness and isolation in our culture. Practices like communal confession, prayer, and offering new perspectives foster vulnerability and growth are discussed.

#### The 'BLESS' Rhythm

The speakers share the 'BLESS' rhythm (Begin with prayer, Listen, Eat, Share your story, Serve) as a practical framework for structuring small group meetings. Eating together, in particular, helps break down walls and create a comfortable environment for sharing.

## Loving Those Different from Us

Small groups expose students to diverse backgrounds and perspectives, teaching them to love those different from themselves. This contrasts with the tendency to surround ourselves with like-minded people, creating echo chambers. Jesus intentionally chose disciples from various walks of life as an example.

## Pursuing the Lost

Small groups provide an entry point for reaching unchurched students by offering a community that is often lacking in their lives. The focus should be on the mission rather than just shared interests, as the mission unifies despite differences.

## Action Items

- In small group meetings, experiment with the 'BLESS' rhythm (Begin with prayer, Listen, Eat, Share your story, Serve).
- Intentionally form small groups with students from diverse backgrounds to foster understanding and love for those different from themselves.
- Frame small groups around a shared mission (e.g., reaching friends for Christ) rather than just shared interests.
- Model and encourage practices like communal confession and offer new perspectives to create an environment of openness and vulnerability in small groups.
- Utilize food and meals to break down walls and create a comfortable atmosphere for sharing in small groups.
- Read 'The Search to Belong' by Joseph Myers for insights on building community through small groups.