

# WHOLE PERSON HEALING THROUGH CHURCH SELF-HELP GROUPS:

## EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

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# WELLNESS IS WHOLENESS!



Wellness is *wholeness* or harmony between:

- aspects of the self (mind, body and spirit)
- self and God
- self and others, and in addition
- self and the natural environment

# A STRATEGY FOR ACHIEVING WHOLE PERSON HEALTH

- **MISSION**

Total healing for the whole person

- **GOAL**

Positive changes in values and behaviours

- **CONTEXT**

Small groups in community (“in-reach” and “out-reach”)

- **APPROACH**

Multi-disciplinary teamwork

- **ENABLEMENT**

The inner potential and gifts of members  
The creative and supernatural activity of God

# THE “SPEERS” GROUP MODEL

**S**mall group based

**P**eer managed for Promotion and Prevention

**E**nrichment oriented

**E**nabling in crisis

**R**econciling and healing

**S**elf-help support in philosophy



**S**mall group  
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and healing  
**S**elf-help

# Small group based: TYPES OF SMALL GROUPS

- **ROLE-RELATED GROUPS**

(gender, stage of life, marital status, responsibilities)

- **SPECIAL FUNCTION-RELATED GROUPS**

(Enrichment, crisis, anger management, recovery, rehabilitative, other special needs)

\* family, work, church etc

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# Small group based: WHY A SMALL GROUP?

- Basic unit of **productivity** (Moses, Nehemiah, Jesus, The Early Church)
- Best context for lifelong **socialization process** for the promotion of healthy lifestyles and relationships
- Most powerful human agency for
  - meeting **needs** (overcoming individualism, isolation, lifestyle and life problems)
  - providing social **support**
  - promoting whole person **growth and development**
  - healing, reconciliation and restoration**

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# Peer managed for Promotion and Prevention

- **PEERS:** Those with whom we identify as we share many things in common. Together, as a group, we will **focus on and manage:**
- **PROMOTION** of activities to maintain and improve wellness; and on
- **PREVENTION** of current needs and concerns from becoming crises



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# Enrichment oriented

- “Here-and-now” self and other awareness
- Promotion of whole person growth for the “abundant life” – a lifelong learning process
- Building mutual-aid for effective interpersonal relationships
- Fun, humour, play, laughter
- Enjoying nature and the environment
- Music, drama, poetry, art

## Primary Outcome Targets:

- ❖ Overcoming and Wellness
- ❖ The victorious “Spirit-filled” life



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# Enabling in crises

- **P**resence – be there!
- **P**rayer – “the prayer of a good person has a powerful effect” (James 5:16)
- **P**romises of God – “hold out the life line”
- **P**rotection – to meet *support, safety* and *security* needs
- **P**ro-action

# Reconciling and Healing

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**and Healing**  
**S**elf-help

- **Context:** Groups for a “healing community”
- **Purpose:** Enabling reconciliation and restoration to God and others
- **Pre-requisite:** Love and the Holy Spirit’s empowerment
- **Process:** Repentance, Confession, Forgiveness, Restoration (may involve reparation to others)
- **Outcome:** Healing, Health, Transformation

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    **R**estoring  
**S**elf-help

# Why **S**elf-help?

- Answers lie within the self
- Self discovery and answers enabled by the self-help group process
- Help and change most permanent when there is self-initiative and self-responsibility
- Most inexpensive and accessible form of whole person health care
- Local church has the power, through the Holy Spirit, to unleash self-empowerment and mutual support



# HEALING FACTORS IN GROUPS

- Universalisation (“I am not alone”)
- Ventilation of thoughts and feelings
- Empathy and solidarity
- Learning
- Altruism (helping each other)
- Acceptance and belonging (group bonding)
- Growth – personal and group
- Prayer

# The “Circle of Change”: Stages of Interaction

For any Small Peer Managed Self Help Group to function adequately, there needs to be specific stages of interaction.

A “CIRCLE OF CHANGE” is suggested in the diagram and description following. The group will naturally go back and forth as necessary between the different stages. Each group can make adaptations to these stages as necessary depending on its constituents, specific characteristics of membership setting or collective goals.

# The “Circle of Change”





# The “Circle of Change”: Stages of Interaction

1. Group members may begin by SHARING:
  - special concerns as well as
  - positive developments and
  - new learning.
  
2. Next, in response, members can seek AWARENESS BUILDING through sharing from their own:
  - knowledge base and research
  - insights
  - life experiences

# The “Circle of Change”: Stages of Interaction

3. Each person can engage in SELF EVALUATION relating to self awareness gained. Eg :
- Where am I now?
  - And where do I need to be?

Then, individuals and the group can engage in REFLECTION ON BLOCKAGES. Eg.:

- What has been preventing me from achieving my goal for change? (past blockages)
- What will prevent me from achieving my goal for change? (expected blockages)

4. To facilitate achieving goals for change, there can be a mutual ENCOURAGING OF ACCOUNTABILITY.

- Each person could commit to being accountable to the group in seeking to make specific action changes.
- The group can respond by holding members accountable and providing encouragement and congratulations.



5. In order to help each other deal with the pains and traumas related to their expressed concerns and the struggles of overcoming blockages to lifestyle and problem solving changes, the group can seek to become a **SUPPORTIVE FELLOWSHIP**.

This can involve:

- listening and empathy
- information giving
- moral support
- prayer

# DON'TS

The above elements in the Circle of Change as well as the enablement, enrichment and reconciling referred to will tremendously enable self help. In order to enable the most adequate self help, the following is discouraged:

- Giving advice - Each person needs to make their own choices
- Taking on solving the problems of others – One can give general information and suggest referrals.

Obviously, in many emergency situations the nearest persons need to act and everyone needs to be onboard.

# DON'TS

- Preserve Confidentiality  
The safety of sharing depends on it.



# KEY POINTS

- Congregations need to develop a strategy for achieving wellness/ wholeness.
- **Small, peer-managed, self-help groups** (The “SPEERS” model) provide the context and the foundation for building healing and healthy communities.
- Self-help groups are the best means for fostering **promotive** and **preventive** activities.
- Self-help groups provide for **enrichment**, **enablement in crisis**, **reconciliation** and **healing** in our relationship with (God and) others.

# KEY POINTS

- Self-help groups, when properly organized, have inherent healing properties
- Self-help groups are the best medium for enabling the “**cycle for change**”
- Self-help groups are **everybody’s business** – we all need to be a part of one
- Small, peer managed, self-help groups are what we need in our churches today; for the building up of each other and for bringing healing and reconciliation to our nation.

# Next Steps

- Identify types of groups needed
- Spend quality time in preparing for setting up such groups
- Seek professional guidance if necessary
- Do the necessary planning and organizing
- Adopt a participatory approach in all group activities
- Build leadership within the group
- Prayerfully seek God's guidance in all of the above



# *Reach out.....*

- *How can I be there for you?*
- *How can you be there for me?*
- *How can we be there for each other?*
- *There is no other way to be.*



*Thank You!*

*God Bless You.*