

DNA Groups Strategy

March 5, 2023 edition

Why DNA?

At Oikos, we want to experience church as family, around the table. Groups, then, are our primary expression of church life. Our mission and values take shape in groups. We seek deeply transformed lives of discipleship to Jesus that are Spirit-led, focused on identity, lived as a family, and engaged in ministry. All of this happens together in groups.

However, there are depths of intimacy that are hard to cultivate, even in group life. The mixing of genders, the presence of children, and the rhythm of our groups can make deeper levels of conversation difficult. And yet we thrive in these trusting environments. The deepest transformation often happens in the smallest spaces. We need trusting, closed environments where spiritual friendship can be cultivated over time. We need something like a DNA Group.

What is DNA?

DNA Groups are opt-in, gender-specific groups of 3-5 adults who meet at least once a month for spiritual friendship. They're closed groups, organized within Oikos Groups for those who have the desire and capacity to participate. These environments are designed to provide DNA—discipleship, nurture, and accountability.



DISCIPLESHIP

Discipleship is following Jesus together. Jesus' call is, "Follow me" (Matthew 4:18; 8:22; 9:9; 10:38; 16:24; 19:21). A disciple seeks to be with Jesus and to do what he did in order to become like him. In DNA Groups, no one is *discipling* the others; Jesus is discipling all of us. We aim for mutuality, not hierarchy. In DNA Groups we seek to practice discipleship to Jesus through a rhythm of life based on the GRACES.

NURTURE

To nurture is to care for and encourage the growth or development of something. It carries the unique combination of feeding and cherishing. Nurturing brings to mind a gardener who delights in the beauty and care of a *nursery* of plants, or a hospital *nurse* who tends to a patient's wounds and pains. Nurture recognizes, as Jesus said, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick" (Matthew 9:12). In DNA Groups, we aim to nurture through a culture of honor, active listening, and speaking messages of gratitude and grace.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability is accepting responsibility for yourself. It is giving an *account* for something, a statement of what or why something is. Jesus often said that when he returned, he would "settle accounts" (Cf. Matthew 12:36; 18:23; 25:19). So, accountability is the gift of helping one another prepare for the Great Day when we'll all answer for what we have done and not done. In DNA Groups, we do this with shared check-in questions. We give one another the opportunity to share the good, the bad, and the ugly. We respond in prayer, honor, and mercy. We follow-up on God moments and prayer requests.

DNA Group Format

DNA Groups follow a rhythm based on the Transforming GRACES. There is no group leader, so participants take turns facilitating the discussion using the guide to the right.

DNA Group Launch

FORMATION

DNA Groups are set to launch in April 2023. They will initially be set-up with the help of a male and female point person in each of the Oikos Groups.

- DNA Groups are opt-in, so not everyone will be able to join. Those that do join are asked to make a commitment to regular participation. Schedule a consistent time and place.
- Groups are for adults, not children, so meeting times must adapt to family needs. An evening may be best for some, while an early morning or lunch may be best for others.
- Groups are designed for deeper relationships within an Oikos Group. We do not imagine adding men or women to the group unless they are part of their Oikos Group first.

MULTIPLICATION

DNA Groups are designed more for trust than multiplication. We aim for spiritual growth rather than numerical growth. Still, over time, many Oikos Groups will add new people into DNA Groups. We celebrate this. However, it is critical to the design of DNA Groups that they do not overgrow the size of 3-5 people. Once groups reach 6 with consistency, they should multiply into two groups.

DNA Group Goals

We're praying to launch 10+ DNA Groups by June of 2023. By the end of the year, we are praying for each Oikos Group to have a DNA Group for men and women.



DNA Guide

DNA Groups are 3-5 men or women seeking spiritual friendship through discipleship, nurture, & accountability.

- Follow the GRACES guide
- Rotate who asks & answers
- Share the 60-90 minutes

Give thanks.

Speak gratitude.

- Say to each: "I'm glad to be with you today because ____."

Reflect on the Word.

Read a Psalm together.

Ask deeper questions.

Ask up, in, and out questions.

- "How is your rhythm of life?"
- "How are your key relationships?"
- "How have you shared the gospel in word or deed?"

Commune with God.

Confess sin and speak mercy.

- "Is there anything you need to confess?"
- Pray and confess sin to God.
- Respond with truths of who God is: "God is ____."
- Share words of identity in Christ: "You are ____."

Eat together.

Share a table.

Serve your neighbor.

Pray missionally.

- "Who are 3 people in need of God and the gospel?"
- Pray for God to move and to move you for His kingdom.