

USING THE NCD

LOVE PROCESS

TO DEVELOP LOVING
RELATIONSHIPS



When it comes to the eight NCD Quality Characteristics of healthy growing churches, the *adjective* is always the key.

And the Love Test process is specifically designed to address the *loving* in Loving relationships.



HOW DOES IT WORK

The missing ingredient.

Hundreds of thousands of church leadership teams try all manner of evangelical tricks and gimmicks to entice people through their church's front doors, paying little attention to just how many people are drifting out the back door, having failed to receive the love needed to heal, strengthen, protect and enrich their lives.

It's impossible to be known as the disciples of Jesus without being people who are loved and loving (John 13:35). It is the key ingredient to authentic witness. You can polish your outreach programs and welcoming processes to within an inch of their lives, but if newcomers join with you and don't encounter people learning to love each other as Jesus loves, you will end up doing more damage than good. And of course you will have limited ability to help undo the damage they have experienced in life before they arrived.

What love do you have to give?

Christians are intended to be channels of Jesus' love: all day; every day; in every circumstance; with every person. When your people enter the worship gathering, their small group, their living rooms, workplaces, social clubs, etc. they each, in some way, reveal the love of Jesus to the individuals in those spaces, and in other ways, very likely do some damage to those in the room, no matter how small that damage might be.

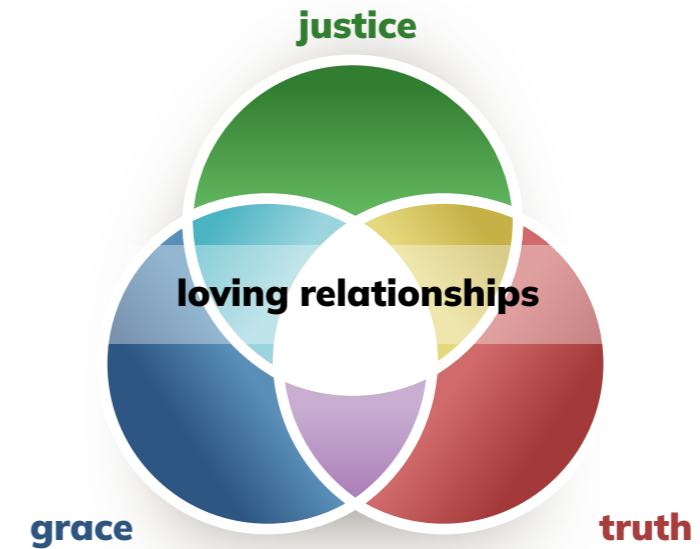


In fact, as human beings with inescapable God-given influence, we can't help but impact upon those around us in every interaction we have. The only question is whether that impact will be loving or damaging.

Loving relationships are the fabric of community. They are the net that "fishers of men" must keep in good order if any group is to come together and stay together.

Raising Loving Relationships to the ultimate level

By helping your people develop love in the everyday, you can fully expect your relationships with one another to be increasingly healed, strengthened, protected, and enriched.



As they grow in compassionate justice, trustworthy truth, and accepting grace, they will become genuine and transformative channels of God's love -those who in the practical circumstances of everyday life are learning to give love as it needed by any individual in any moment. They will be doing what loved and loving people like Jesus do all the time.

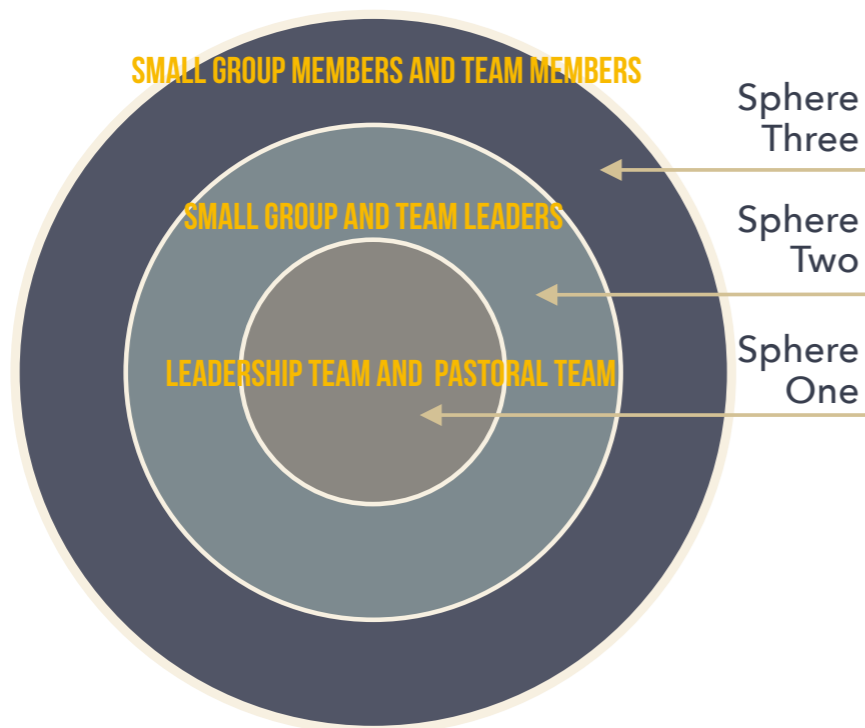
The NCD Love Process

The NCD Love Process has been developed to grow your people for a more loved and loving life in a way that builds upon the natural spheres of influence within your church (see the diagram).

Based on the personalised NCD Love Test, the step-by-step process begins with your Leadership Team and Pastoral Team (if you've not yet taken the test, perhaps try it out yourself). Once those key love leaders get the hang of things, the process then extends out to

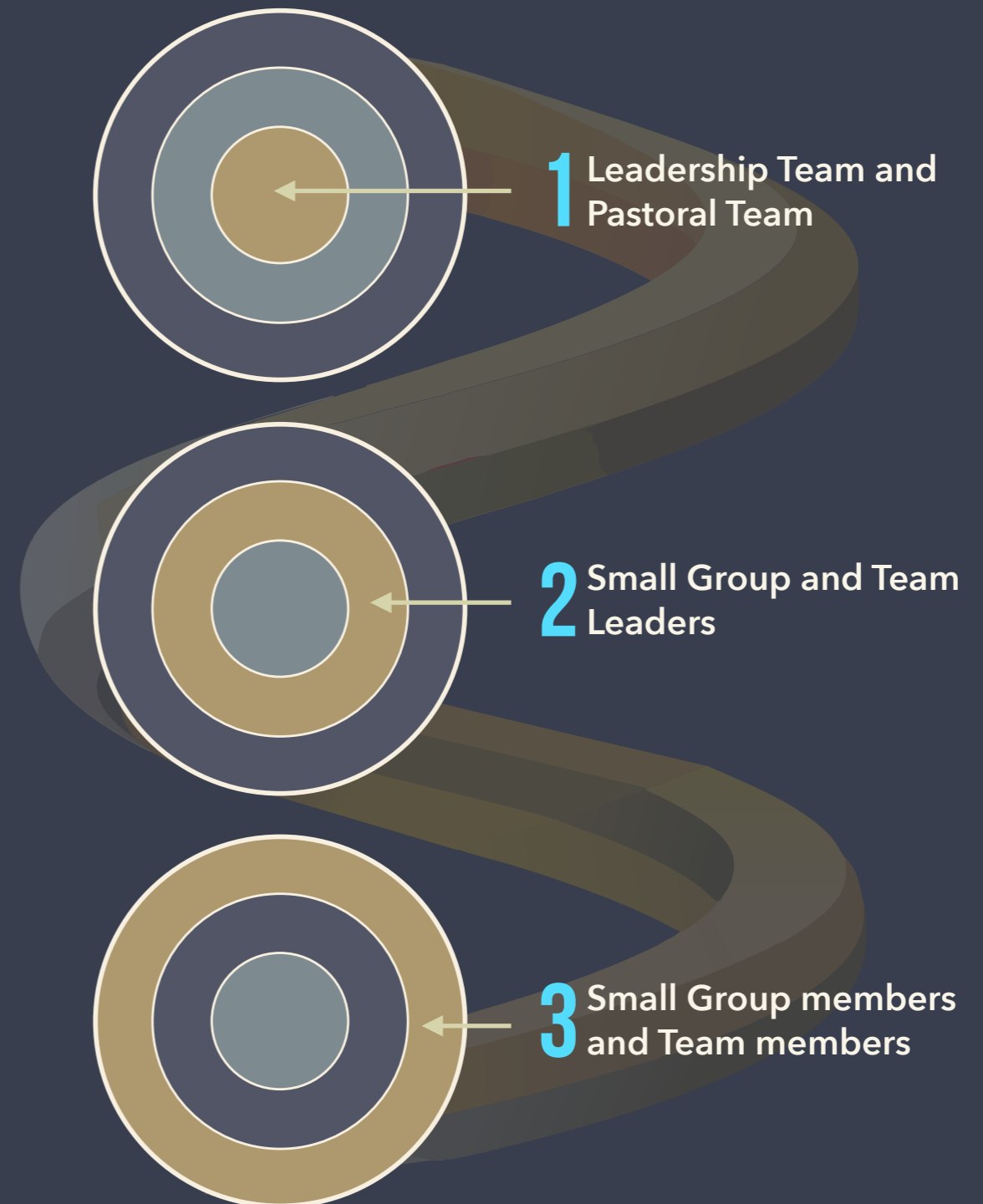
your Small Group and Team Leaders, and then onto your Small group members and Team members.

This gradual process gives the leadership of your church time to gain confidence in the principles of love, learn how to live them out in their own lives, and how to guide others in those principles. Along the way, it also allows time to identify (sometimes surprising) people who may end up taking the lead on growing a more loved and loving culture in your church over the long term..



The following sections outline the steps you need to take through each sphere (if you already know who might help you with facilitating this process, share this page with them).

SPHERES OF LOVE





LOVE SPHERE 1

LEADERSHIP TEAM & PASTORAL TEAM

The Love Process begins with those who have greater responsibility for bringing about a loved and loving culture in your church.

1. Leaders will increasingly look forward to leadership meetings.
2. Repeated draining conversations & conflicts will start becoming a thing of the past.
3. Each person will feel more affirmed in their strengths and be more sober about their weaknesses.
4. Formal Pastoral Care will become less necessary as people take care of one another.
5. People will be more likely to want to meet together and work together, strengthening the work force with genuine and deep bonds.

10 THINGS

THAT WILL NATURALLY HAPPEN IF THIS GROUP GROWS IN LOVE

6. Long-term barriers to connecting with unsaved family members and neighbours will start to break down.
7. There will be more energy for outreach because the fruit of it will become much longer lasting.
8. This group will become increasingly energised about the future of the church.
9. These valuable, highly influential leaders will suffer less from their own, or others' lack of compassion, trustworthiness or acceptance.
10. Newcomers will be much more likely to make your church their spiritual home.

Who is included in the Sphere 1 group?



The senior leadership team of the church and those with specific responsibility for facilitating loving relationships (e.g. pastoral care team, etc).

What do we do?

1. Make a list of the Sphere 1 people based on the description above. If in doubt about whether to include someone as part of this group, just

leave them out for now. They will be included in the later spheres.

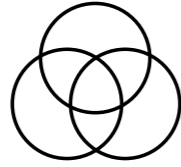
- 2. Invite those people to take the Love Test.** If you need more eTest tokens, they are available here (volume discounts apply).
- 3. Produce a Love Solidarity Profile of the Sphere 1 group.** The person who invited everyone to take the Love Test will have automatically had everyone's results shared back them, so they can now produce the Solidarity Profile via their results page.
- 4. Arrange to have the Sphere 1 group of people meet up three times for mutual learning about their results.** The first meeting should ideally be all together so that everyone can see the big picture of your collective Love culture. The second and third meetings can be held together, or can be held in the most

natural or convenient subgroups of the Sphere 1 group if that would be it easier for the meetings to happen. The meetings should include the following (along with anything else you believe would help make those meetings a loving experience for each person):

MEETING 1:

- 1. Share a summary of the Sphere 1 Love Solidarity Profile** (the last page of the profile provides a one page summary of the most important points) and invite feedback on how people see the group's love strength and growth area show themselves in everyday church life.
- 2. Invite each person to share what emerged from the Love Test as their Love strength** (the left-hand side of the last page of their personal results). After each person shares their strength, invite one or more other people to affirm how they are inspired by that strength within that person. Then move to the next person.
- 3. For homework,** encourage every person to:
 - read through their whole result profile (doing so again even if they have read it before since their understanding will now be at a different level).
 - meet with their spouse, or someone near and dear to them, who can be a dialogue partner as they go through page 23 of their results.

Send a reminder to the group about the homework sometime after the meeting.



MEETING 2:

1. **Invite each person to share about their love growth area** (the right-hand side of the last page of their personal results) and any ways in which they have begun to see why it is important for them to grow in that area for the sake of a more loved and loving life.
2. **Ask each person to share** what might help them to make progress in their growth area.
3. **For homework**, put the last page of their results in a prominent place in their everyday life so that they and others can refer to it for the sake of affirmation and challenge (almost nobody will grow without this kind of reminder and accountability).

Send a reminder to the group about the homework sometime after the meeting.

MEETING 3:

1. **Invite each person to share** what has happened as a result of being reminded about their love strength and growth area each day.
2. **Ask for feedback and suggestions about expanding the Love Process to include the remaining small group and team leaders within the church.** Explain that it would typically involve those leaders going through exactly the same process as the Sphere 1 group has just gone through.
3. **Further develop your Love Process Team.** While many in the Sphere 1 group will be experiencing a more loved and loving life by this point, there will be some who are showing signs of being even more energised for raising the culture of love in your church. Invite those people to join you as part of the Love Process Team who will assist in working through the next stages of the process. Send each person a link to this page so they can orient themselves within the overall process.





LOVE SPHERE 2

SMALL GROUP & TEAM LEADERS

In bringing about a more loved and inspiring culture, the next most important people in your church will be all of your small group and team leaders of every kind.

Every time they meet with their groups and teams they are inspiring (and sometimes draining life from) those people. As leaders, their influence, and the state of love in their own lives, has a significant multiplying effect one way or another.

For their own sake, and for the sake of those in their care, it is very important that they make progress on the road to a more loved and loving life.

1. Less of these will people will drop out of leadership.
2. More people will be attracted to small group leadership and team leadership opportunities.
3. They will be much better able to love those in their care.
4. They will grow in confidence to face the interpersonal challenges of everyday ministry.
5. They will become more loved themselves, which will keep them fuelled for ministry.

10 THINGS

THAT WILL NATURALLY HAPPEN IF THIS GROUP GROWS IN LOVE

6. They will love potential leaders in their care and help them to step up to a higher responsibility.
7. More people will want to participate in small groups and teams led by these people.
8. They will spark confidence in their people to face the relational challenges of everyday life.
9. The families of these leaders will be more loved and be happier to support them.
10. The common problems of church life that filter through to leadership to be dealt with will more likely be resolved and healed as they occur.

Who is included in the Sphere 2 group?



All small group and team leaders who were not a part of Sphere 1 (if all such people were involved in Sphere 1, skip straight to Sphere 3).

What do we do?

1. **Make a list** of the Sphere 2 people.
2. **Invite those people to take the Love Test.** If you need more eTest tokens, they are available here (volume discounts apply).
3. **Produce a Love Solidarity Profile of the Sphere 1 and Sphere 2 group members combined** (to see the emerging overall love culture of your church). The person who invited everyone to take the Love Test will have automatically had everyone's results shared back them, so they can now produce the Solidarity Profile via their results page.
4. **Have the Love Process Team that began taking shape in Sphere 1 meet three times with the Sphere 2 group.** The first meeting should ideally be all together so that everyone can see the big picture of your collective love culture. The second and third meetings can be held together, or can be smaller group or one-on-one meetups between members of the Love Process Team and members of Sphere 2. The meetings should include the

following (along with anything else you believe would help make those meetings a loving experience for each person):

MEETING 1:

1. **Share a summary of the combined Sphere 1 and Sphere 2 Love Solidarity Profile** (the last page of the profile provides a one page summary of the most important points) and invite feedback on how people see the group's love strength and growth area show themselves in everyday church life. Make sure that the group understands that every person is represented in the group's strength and that every person has a part to play in developing the growth area: either through their own direct growth if their own growth area is the same as the group; or by playing a more supportive role within the group as a whole if the group's growth area is their own highest or second highest area.
2. **Invite each person (including the Love Process Team members) to share what emerged from the Love Test as their Love strength** (the left-hand side of the last page of their personal results). After each person shares their strength, invite one or more other people to affirm how they are inspired by that strength within that person. Then move to the next person.
3. **For homework**, encourage every person to:
 - put the last page of their results in a prominent place in their everyday life so that they and others can refer to it for the sake of

affirmation and challenge (almost nobody will grow without this kind of reminder and accountability).

- read through their whole result profile (doing so again even if they have read it before since their understanding will now be at a different level).

Send a reminder to the group about the homework sometime after the meeting.

MEETING 2:

1. **Invite each person** (including the Love Process Team members) to share about their love growth area (the right-hand side of the last page of their personal results) and any ways in which they have begun to see why it is important for them to grow in that area for the sake of a more loved and loving life.
2. **Ask each person to share** what might help them to make progress in their growth area.
3. **For homework**, encourage every person to meet with someone close to them who can be a dialogue partner as they go through page 23 of their results.

Send a reminder to the group about the homework sometime after the meeting.

MEETING 3:

1. **Invite each person** (including the Love Process Team members) to share what has happened as a result of being reminded about their love strength and growth area each day.
2. **Ask each person** how they could imagine using the Love Process with their group, team or family, and what they hope might happen as a result.
3. **For homework**, ask those who have expressed interest to send you a list of the names and email addresses of those in their group, team or family who they would like to invite to take the Love Test. Also, send a link to this page to those leaders and encourage them to read Sphere 3, especially the outlines of the 3 meetings.

Further develop your Love Process Team.

Identify any people in your Sphere 2 group who seem to be showing signs of being especially energised for raising the culture of love in your church. Invite those people to join the Love Process Team who will assist in working through the next stages of the process. Send each person a link to this page so they can orient themselves within the overall process.





LOVE SPHERE 3

SMALL GROUP MEMBERS & TEAM MEMBERS

To see the greatest level of love flow out from your congregation into the families and communities associated with it, and to experience the greatest inflow of love into your worship services when the doors open, you need to expand the Love Process into the third sphere.

This includes members in your existing small groups and teams. It also includes those who might be interested in being part of a new group of two or more people exploring love in their lives together. This could be best friends, spouses, families or newly formed groups open to anyone interested in the topic.

This sphere includes anyone who is a Christian and, since the Love Test itself makes no assumptions about a person's faith starting point, it includes any non-Christians who long for a more loved and loving life. In short, this sphere potentially extends from your existing groups and teams out to the ends of the Earth. Take it as far as you like.

1. These people will increasingly come to formal activities as contributors, not consumers, and be much clearer about what love to give.
2. Sincere love will be at work from the moment people gather for any activity without a need to conjure up pleasantries.
3. People will want to arrive early to gatherings and linger afterwards in order to connect.
4. They will be much more receptive to biblical instruction as they become hungry to grow.
5. There will be far fewer complaints about trivial matters and much more intentional concerns raised about matters of import.

10 THINGS

THAT WILL NATURALLY HAPPEN IF THIS GROUP GROWS IN LOVE

6. The barriers to deeper relationships with each other will dissolve away as you increasingly become of one Spirit.
7. The value of everyone connected to your church community will be seen more clearly and more responsibility taken to care for one another.
8. Their families and friends will be drawn to the God who is love.
9. The love of God will be flowing out of your church and into the community around it in natural ways.
10. Together, you will encounter God in ways, and to a level, beyond anything you have experienced before.

Who is included in the Sphere 3 group?



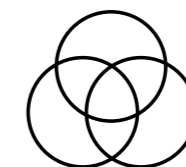
Anyone and everyone connected with your church community (though perhaps starting with the existing small group and team members who have not yet been part of the process).

What do we do?

1. **If you haven't done so already as part of Sphere 2, ask those group/team leaders who have expressed interest in taking their people through the Love Process to send you a list of the names and email addresses of those in their group, team or family who they would like to invite to take the Love Test.** If anyone is looking to facilitate a short term group just to go through the Love Process, be sure to also ask them for the names and email addresses of those in their group. Be sure to list all the participants under the name of their respective leader so you remember later on who is connected with who.
2. **Send a link** to this page to those group/team leaders and encourage them to read Sphere 3, especially the outlines of the 3 meetings as part of their preparation.
3. **Determine which Love Process Team members will provide support for which group/team leaders.** In Sphere 3, the main role of the Love Process Team members is to check in at least

weekly with the group/team leaders before and during the process to see if they have any questions or if there is anything they need in terms of assistance.

4. **Invite the Sphere 3 participants to take the Love Test.** If you need more eTest tokens, they are available here (volume discounts apply).
5. **Keep each group/team leader (and the associated Love Process Team member) informed about who has or hasn't completed their Love Test.** This will help them with the timing of when to meet with their people about their results.
6. **Produce a Love Solidarity Profile of the Sphere 1, 2 and 3 groups combined** (to see the emerging overall love culture of your church). The person who invited everyone to take the Love Test will have automatically had everyone's results shared back them, so they can now produce the Solidarity Profile via their results page.
7. **Have the Sphere 3 group/team leaders gather their group three times to explore their results together.** These may be at their usual meeting time or a special time if that will allow them to not be rushed. The meetings should include the following (along with anything else you believe would help make those meetings a loving experience for each person):



MEETING 1:

1. **Share a summary of the combined Sphere 1, 2 and 3 Love**

Solidarity Profile (the last page of the profile provides a one page summary of the most important points) and invite feedback on how people see the church's love strength and growth area show themselves in everyday church life. Make sure that the group understands that every person is represented in the group's strength and that every person has a part to play in developing the growth area: either through their own direct growth if their own growth area is the same as the group; or by playing a more supportive role within the group as a whole if the group's growth area is their own highest or second highest area.

2. **Invite each person to share what emerged from the Love Test as**

their love strength (the left-hand side of the last page of their personal results). After each person shares their strength, invite one or more other people to affirm how they are inspired by that strength within that person. Then move to the next person. The group leader should also share about their love strength at some point in the discussion.

3. **For homework**, encourage every person to:

- put the last page of their results in a prominent place in their everyday life so that they and others can refer to it for the sake of affirmation and challenge (almost nobody will grow without this kind of reminder and accountability).

- read through their whole result profile (doing so again even if they have read it before since their understanding will now be at a different level).

Send a reminder to the group about the homework sometime after the meeting.

MEETING 2:

1. **Starting with the group leader**, invite each person to share about their love growth area (the right-hand side of the last page of their personal results) and any ways in which they have begun to see why it is important for them to grow in that area for the sake of a more love and loving life.

2. **Ask each person to share** what might help them to make progress in their growth area.

3. **For homework**, encourage every person to meet with someone close to them who can be a dialogue partner as they go through page 23 of their results..

Send a reminder to the group about the homework sometime after the meeting.

MEETING 3:

1. **Starting with the leader, invite each person to share** what has happened as a result of being reminded about their love strength and growth area each day.
2. **Ask each person how they could imagine using the Love Process** with their friends or family, and what they hope might happen as a result.
3. **For homework**, (if appropriate) ask those who have expressed interest in taking their friends or family through the Love Process to send you a list of the names and email addresses of those people and then follow the instructions near the beginning of the Sphere 3 explanation above for inviting those people to take the test. And be sure to send a link to this page to your group members so they can be guided by the Sphere 3 meeting outlines when they meet with their friends or family to discuss the results.

Alternatively, if the people in your group would like to facilitate the process with their friends or family independently, send them a link to this page and invite them to work through "Love Sphere 3". (If you want to, you can sponsor the process for them by sending tokens to the leader. In these cases, if you would still like to produce a church-wide Love Solidarity profile that includes those people, you can ask them to share their results once completed to the church's main account on the web site. This can be done from their results page.)

Further develop your Love Process Team.

Ask your group/team leaders about anyone in their group who seems to be showing signs of being especially energised for raising the culture of love in your church. Invite those people to join the Love Process Team who will assist in continuing to develop a more loved and loving culture in your church. Send each person a link to this page so they can orient themselves within the overall process.

Finally, be sure to direct everyone in your Love Process Team to carefully study the "Loved and loving into the future" section below.





LOVED AND LOVING INTO THE FUTURE

Love is a principle of life. It applies to everyone, everywhere, at all times. Every day, for as long as your church exists, your people will need to celebrate and solve things related to a loved and loving life. If you have expanded the love process out through the three spheres of love in your church, you have made an incredible start. It is now up to your emerging Love Process Team (or whatever they may decide to call themselves) to keep that momentum going, to support the ongoing growth of those who have started the journey, and to help many more people in and around your church community to learn how to breathe in the breath of God and breathe it out into the world around them.



THE TEAM'S THREE MAIN TASKS

1

STARTING NEW PEOPLE ON THE LOVE JOURNEY:

If the group of people in your church who have already embarked on the love process make even just a little progress in living out a more loved and loving life, you can be sure that more people are going to be drawn towards your church community.

Others will want to know what your people have that perhaps they don't. You will need to keep an eye out for such people who might be open to better understanding love in their own life. These might be friends or family of those already involved in the process, or complete newcomers to the church community.

Perhaps you could even include the Love Test as part of your "welcome pack" for newcomers (though be sure to share your own results with them so that they know mutual learning is an important value of your church). You can use the steps in Sphere 3 above as a general guide for helping any of these new people get started.

2

ENCOURAGING PEOPLE TO REPEAT THE LOVE TEST TO TRACK THEIR PROGRESS:

If a person is paying attention to their growth area and receiving some support from others, they will grow. Their current growth area will have moved higher, and it might even be that a different aspect of love becomes their growth area, meaning there is now a different growth question they should be asking themselves.

For this reason, it is valuable for them to get a fresh read on their love tendencies with the help of a repeat test. There is no magical timing for this, but its advisable to not leave it any longer than about 6 months after the last test.

The new test will either show progress that can be celebrated, or it will show that greater focus is needed by the person and those supporting them.



PROVIDING ONGOING INSPIRATION COACHING:

At its most basic and important level, love coaching involves affirming people in their progress and asking them their love growth question on a regular basis.

If you do both of those things consistently and engage in the conversations that flow from them, you will be making a profound difference in people's lives.

From time to time, you might find it helpful to bring groups of people together with the same growth areas for mutual learning. Along the way, you might come up with all sorts of creative approaches to coaching others as your own experience grows.

But all you need to get started is transparency about your own growth areas, a knowledge of each person's strength and growth area, and discussion questions like the ones found in each person's result profile.



THE TEAM LEADER'S ROLE

The Team Leader should be someone with a reasonable degree of influence in the church who is passionate about the principle of love and has personally benefitted to a significant extent from the Love Process.

They may or may not be a member of the regular worship team to begin with, but should probably go on to be considered part of the worship team of the church given that the worship gathering is the place where love dynamics play out in the most concentrated way.

The following are the main responsibilities of such a person (though the details should be worked out and agreed upon in discussion with the person).



LOOKING FOR NEW TEAM MEMBERS:

As more and more people get involved in the love process, some will continue to appear who are especially energised by the topic of love and

who may be great additions to the Love Process Team. As more people grow in love, the need for a growing team to support that growth will also increase. From the harvest will come workers for the harvest. Keep an eye out for such people and also check in with the other team members in case they have seen people who should perhaps join the team. Be especially on the look out for younger people to join the team who can help the whole group with how to communicate the principles of love to the emerging generations.



REGULARLY REVIEWING EACH TEAM MEMBER'S ENERGY:

One of the practices of very healthy churches is to make sure that every person's ministry has an agreed upon end date. When that date comes, you meet with the person to share about the season of ministry just past, celebrating and reflecting on what has happened. Then, because the ministry has officially ended as of that date, the person is free to either walk away and explore some other

life-giving opportunity, or you may decide together to embark on another period of love ministry with a new agreed-upon end date.

This deliberate stoppage and review is the best way to keep everyone's involvement fresh and to make sure they are contributing, not out of obligation, but as a result of a free, mature, and responsible decision.

SUPPORTING THE TEAM MEMBERS AND BRINGING THEM TOGETHER:



- **The main thing you need to provide** your Love Process Team members with is a link to this page so they can orient themselves in the overall process and have access to the links and suggestions that will help them on their way.

- **You should also discuss** with your team members how you will approach the provision of the tokens needed for people to take the Love Test—whether you will leave it up to them to acquire the tokens themselves, or will leverage the bulk discounts available by having one person purchasing the tokens and distributing the tokens either directly to the people taking the test, or to Love Process Team members who will invite others to take the test.
- **Logistics aside**, the most important attribute of an Love Process Team is that they are people who are themselves growing a more loved and loving life. Dealing on a daily basis with the growth

areas of other people can be draining. So it is important that your team has the opportunity to meet up from time to time to share the reasons for celebration and to help each other bear the burdens picked up along the way. Each of your team members are like glowing coals warming the love atmosphere around them wherever they go. But coals can gradually grow cold. Bringing them together can fan them into flame and reheat them so that they are able to burn brighter and longer than if they are on their own. When and how you meet up is entirely dependent on the needs of your team. Just make sure it happens before someone really needs it.

YOU'RE NOT ALONE

As your team works to transform the culture of love in and beyond your church, know that there are teams around the world, just like yours, in all kinds of different churches, working alongside you to see the love of God bring justice, truth and grace into his Kingdom places. We're in this together.





The Love Test is a part of NCD.Life

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