

Off The Beaten Track

A FRESH APPROACH TO YOUTH WORK AND CHURCH
BASED ON JESUS' TRAVELS

Youth work, Church and mission
in a post Christian society

By Richard Passmore

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My Journey

In working with young people do not try to call them back to where they were and do not call them to where you are as beautiful a place as that may seem to you. You must have the courage to go with them to a place that neither you nor they have ever been before.

• Vincent Donovan Christianity Rediscovered

- Where are you?
- Would you call yp to that place?
- What beautiful or good things can hinder you from going to a new place?

Motivating Theologies

Contextualisation	v	Imperialism
Incarnation	v	Distance
Relational	v	Presenational
Caught	v	Taught
Good news	v	The Good News
Mission	v	Evangelism
Journey	v	Decision
Evangelical	v	Liberal
Protestant	v	Catholic
Literal	v	Figurative

Motivating Theologies

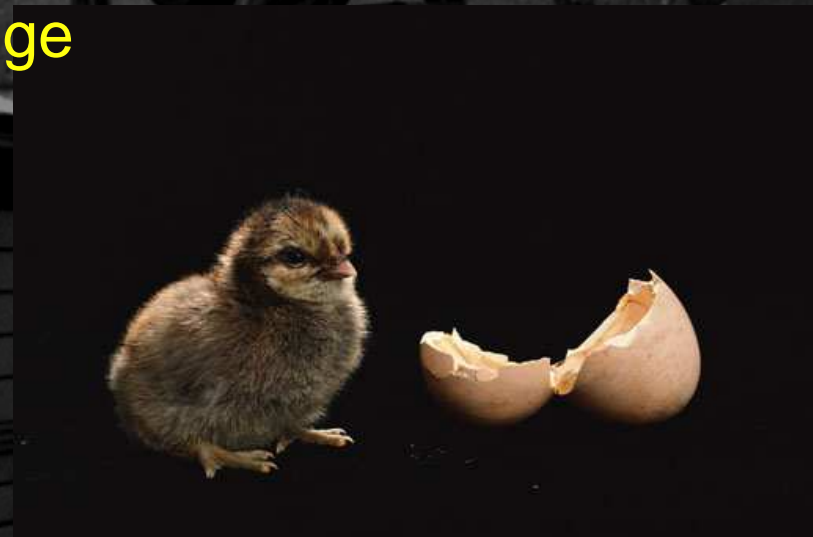
- My Motivating Theology

- Vincent Donovan In working with.....
- Full relationship restoration
- Incarnation
- John 10 v10
- Amos 5 v 21 – 24
- Generous Orthodoxy
- Process Ecclesiology

**What's
Yours?**

Sub culture and fortress church

- Culture as semiotic fluid
 - Enlightenment – Post modernity
 - Globalisation
 - Truth is less fixed
 - Decades of rapid social change
 - Paradigm Shift



Shifting Sands



- Apocalyptic paradigm of primitive Christianity (New Testament)
- Hellenistic paradigm of the Patristic era (to approx. 600)
- The medieval Roman Catholic paradigm (to approx. 1500)
- The Protestant Reformation paradigm (to approx. 1750)
- The modern Enlightenment paradigm (to approx. 1950)
- The emerging post modern and post Christian paradigm (now emerging)
- Patristic
John 3:16
- Medieval Catholic
Luke 14:23
- Protestant Reformation
Romans 1:16
- Modern Enlightenment
Acts 16:9, Matt 24:14

What is Church?

- Church is Mystery (Eph 5 v 31 and 32)
- Described analogically e.g. body, vine, etc
- Images suggest '*attitude and a course of action*'
- John 10 v10

What is Missional youthwork?

- Process and Outcome
- Kingdom Centred
- New place
- Ontological Imperative

Two sides of the same coin

- Church

- Church is Mystery (Eph 5 v 31 and 32)
- Described analogically e.g. body, vine, etc
- Images suggest *'attitude and a course of action'*
- John 10 v10

- Mission(al) (Youthwork)

- New place
- Kingdom Centred
- Process and Outcome
- Ontological Imperative

Blended Approach



Process and Outcome

attitude and a course of action

Ontological Imperative

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A new way of thinking about Church

The City on the Hill

The Journey to the City On the Hill

Authentic church that expresses the Attitude and Course of action

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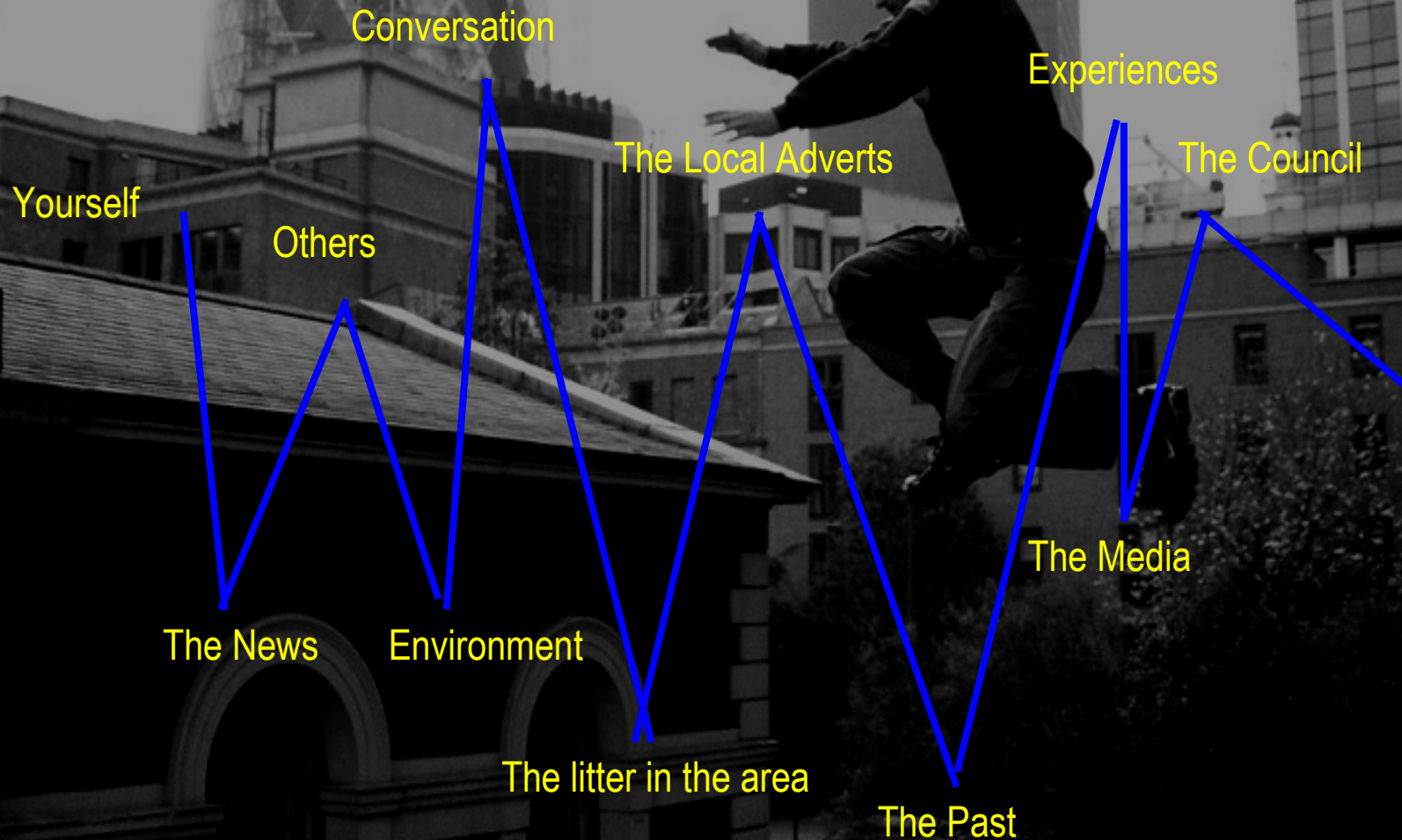
Tacking towards the City

- Tacking – a zigzagging process to enable a sailing vessel to progress forward into the wind
- Tacking - helping young people and society become more fully human, by a process of purposeful, deliberate and informal interactions

Tacking towards the city

- The city on the hill is lit by the ethics of Christ
- The journey helps you recognise the light
- You may loose sight of the city from time to time and can only see the distant glow
- You are always moving even when alone but at some point you will need to travel with others

Tacking Everyday



Jesus and Tacking

Calling the
Disciples

Zak the
taxman

Conversations
whilst walking

Feeding of the 5000

Being Alone

Water into
Wine

Challenging the
Pharisees

Who do you say
I am?

Mary's Anointing

Woman at the
well

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Tacking with Christ

**Personal
Development**

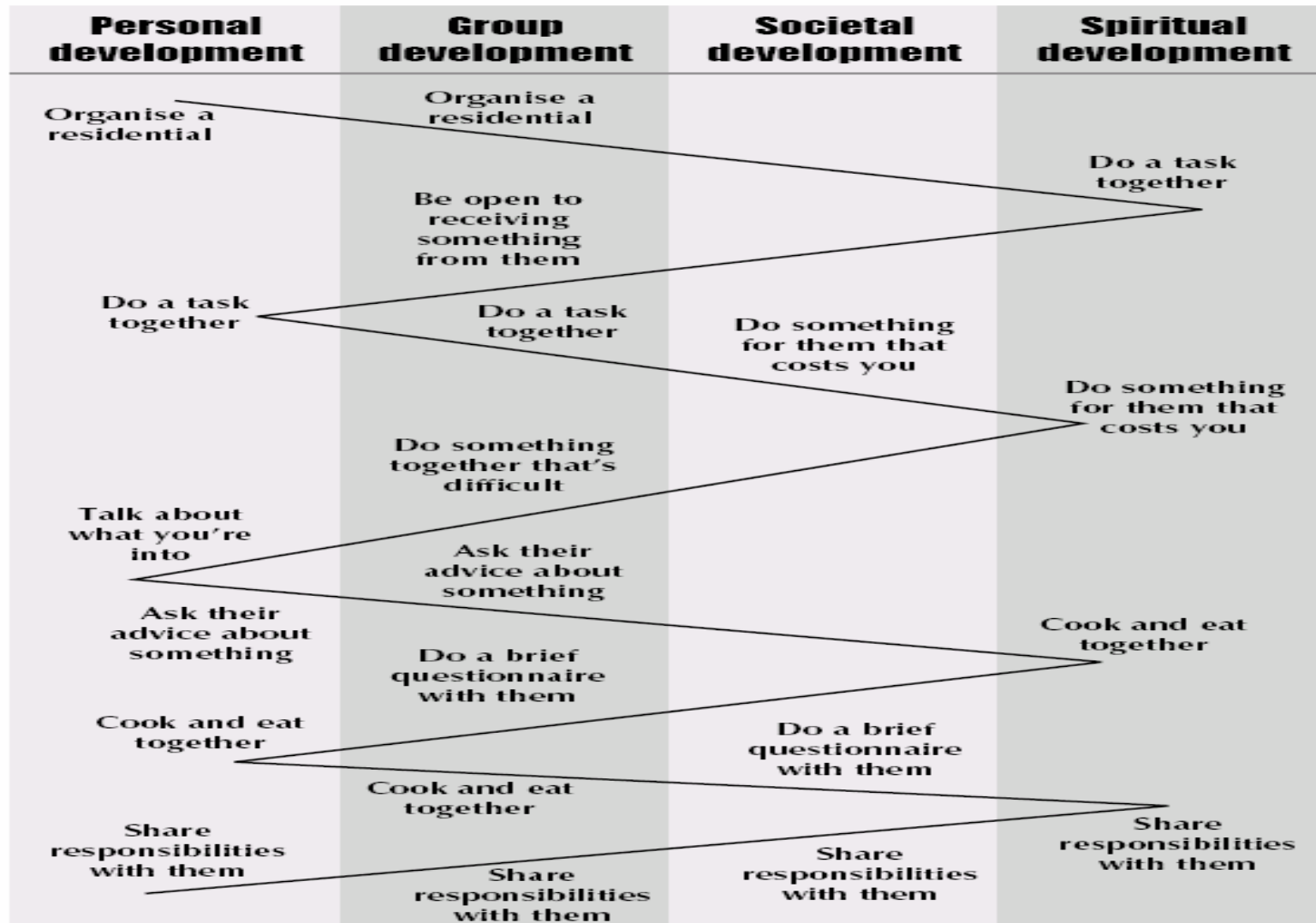
**Group
Development**

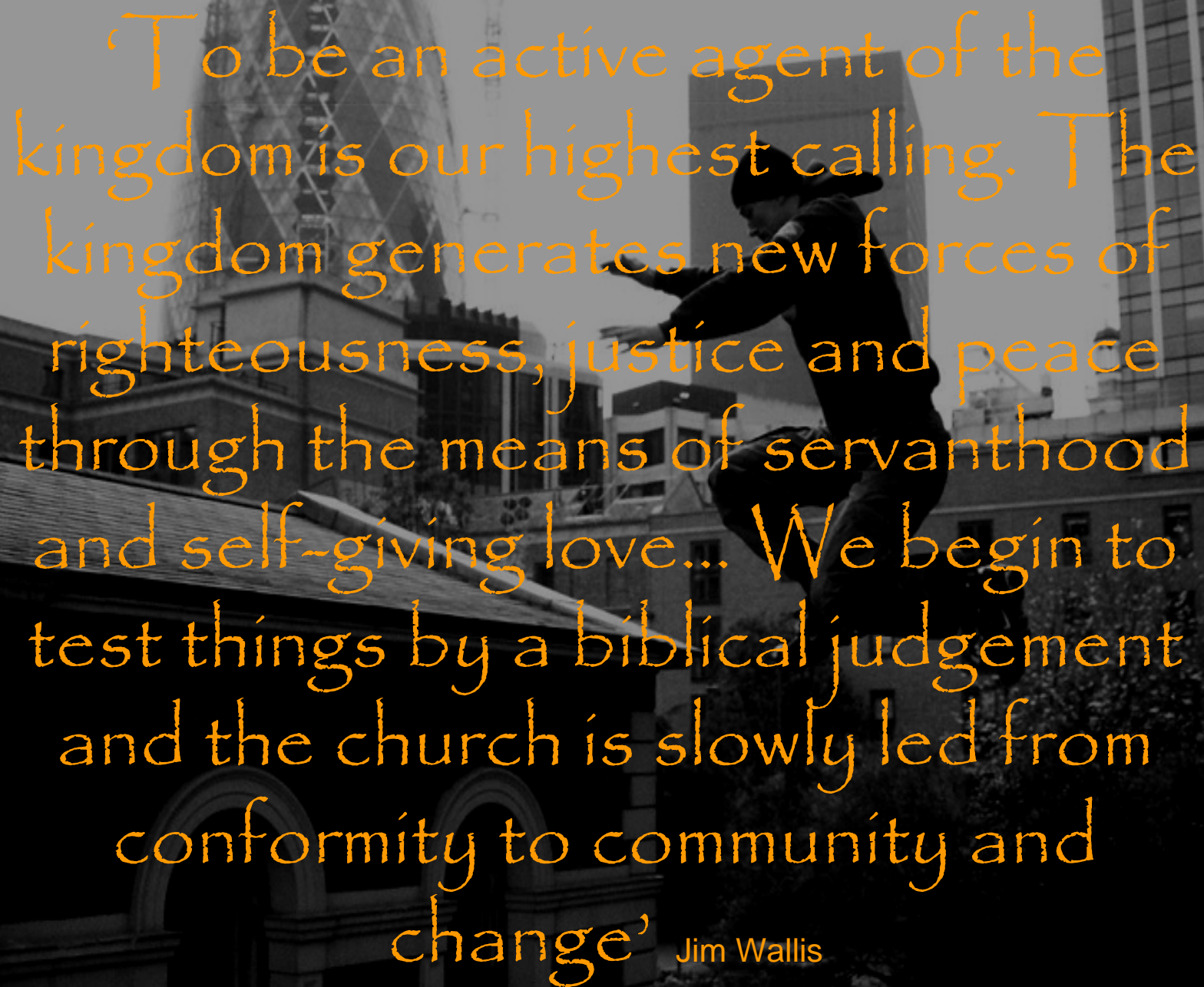
**Societal
Development**

**Spiritual
Development**

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Youth Work and Tacking





To be an active agent of the kingdom is our highest calling. The kingdom generates new forces of righteousness, justice and peace through the means of servanthood and self-giving love... We begin to test things by a biblical judgement and the church is slowly led from conformity to community and change'

Jim Wallis

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Church On the Edge

Breaking out of the gravitational
pull of Christendom

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A black and white photograph of a person in a dark jacket and beanie jumping over a building roof in a city setting. The person is in mid-air, with arms outstretched. The background shows various city buildings, including a tall skyscraper and a building with a dome. The image is overlaid with four light blue ovals containing text.

Diocese of Exeter

FYT

CMS


**Supported by
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Beyond the lid

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A person in a dark jacket and beanie is captured in mid-air, jumping over a building ledge. The background shows a cityscape with various buildings, including a tall skyscraper and a building under construction with scaffolding. The overall tone is dark and urban.

How do we journey
in mission with
young people?

What may
Donovan's new
place look like?

What can youth
work & emerging
church learn from
each other?

What might
a missional approach
look like?

What does Tacking
look like in reality?

How do we
collapse the gap
between church
and mission?

How do we grow
church from
scratch?

Action Research Approach

- Builds on work already done through Meet Them where they're at and Off the Beaten Track
- Grows from the FYT heritage of kingdom centred missional youth work with young people

“God is about a big purpose in and for the whole of creation. The church has been called into life to be both the means of this mission and a foretaste of where God is inviting all creation to go. Just as its Lord is a mission-shaped God, so the community of God’s people exists, not for themselves but for the sake of the work. Mission is therefore not a program or project some people in the Church do from time to time (as in “mission trip”, “mission budget” and so on); the church’s very nature is to be God’s missionary people...”

Roxburgh A and Romanuk F *The missional leader - equipping your church to reach a changed world*. Jossey Bass 2006 page xv

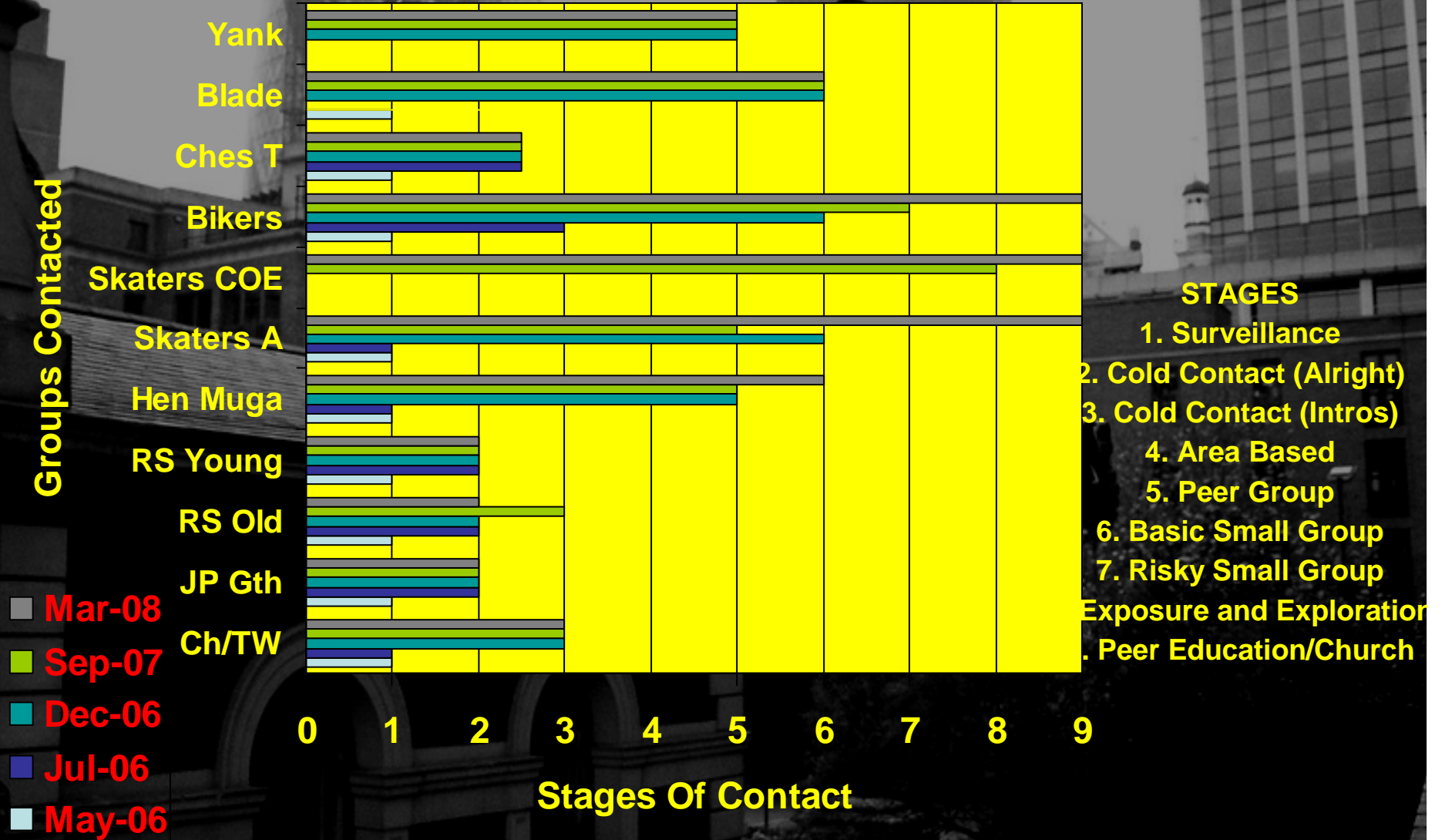
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Mission and Community

- Christian Mission is in a time of transition
- God is a missionary God who crosses frontiers towards the world. (Bosch)
- The word became flesh and blood and moved into the neighbourhood. (Jn 1 - The Message)

Chard Detached Project

Groups Contacted

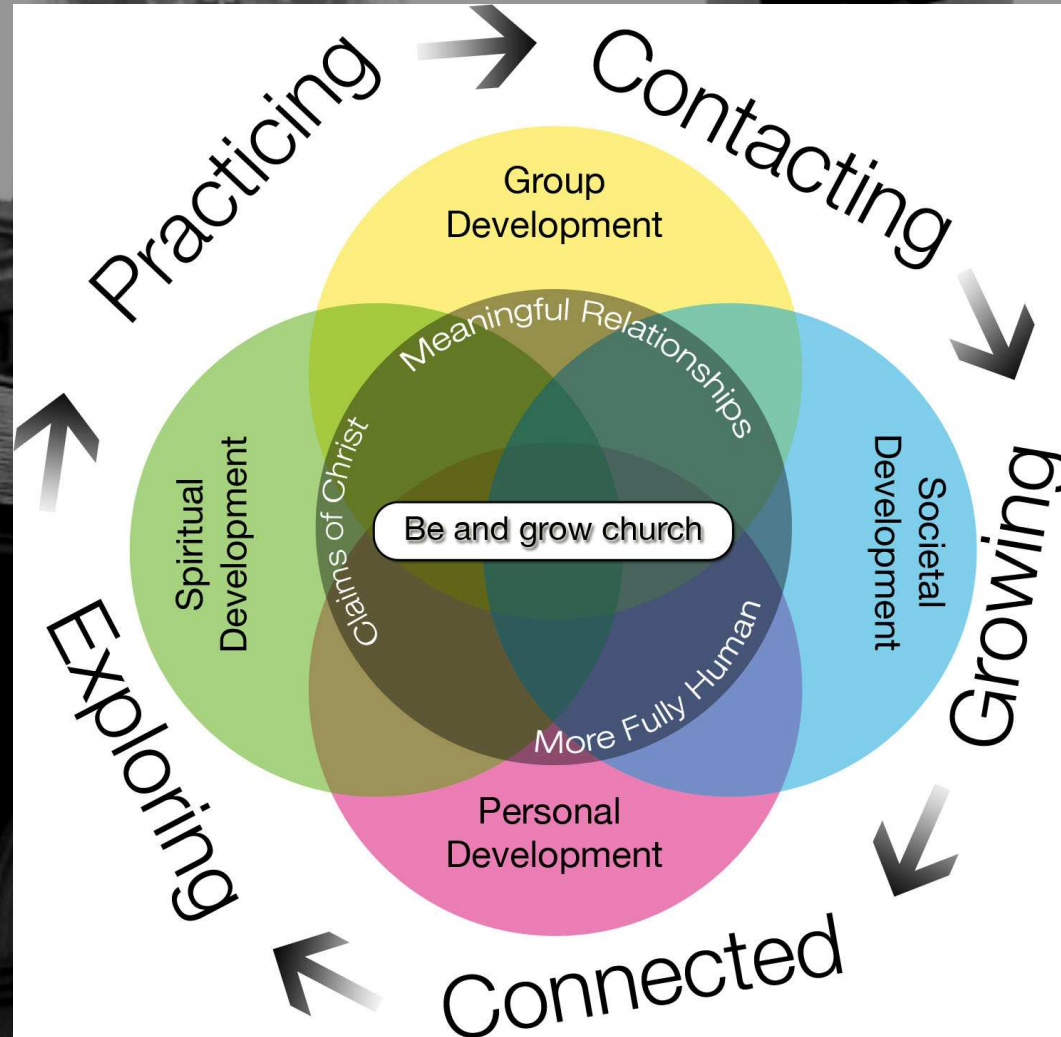


Be and Grow Church

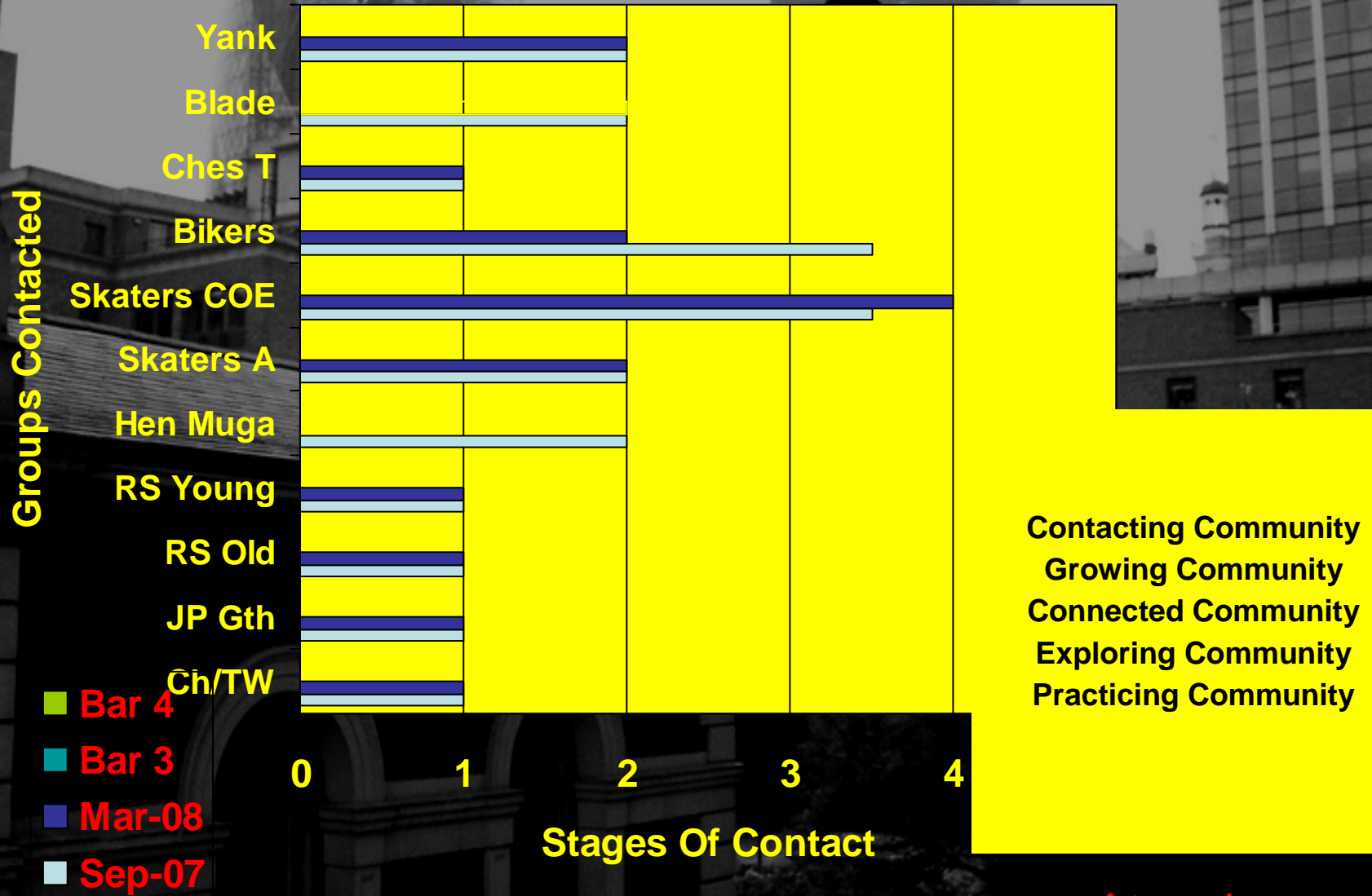
- A Contacting Community
- A Growing Community
- A Connecting Community
- An Exploring Community
- A Practicing Community

Intentionally
Being and
Growing

Drawing the strands together



Chard Detached Project



Contacting community

Ideas on this stage in practice settings (see stages 1-3)

Detached Work

Cold contact

Offering to walk away if
yp don't want you
around

Youth Club

Developing the drop in

Regular Contact and presence
Basic relationship building

Using physical barriers
to enable yp to
enable secure
contacts eg Tuck
shop

Toddler Group

Establishing the group

Developing the
ownership of the
group through
purchase of
equipment etc

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Growing Community

Ideas on this stage in practice settings (see stages 4-7)

Detached Work

Area Work and group stages

Responding to needs and interests

Look for Flow (eg skaters) and introduce concept

Youth Club

Beginning activities day
Trips

Continuing relationship building

Start meeting as leaders ready to receive groups

Working with existing groups freeing leaders to build on these

Develop a residential to provoke Flow/raise issues of Spiritual awareness

Toddler Group

Social meetings outside of group

Responding to needs and interests, eg healthy eating course

Discuss flow moments with the parents

Connected Community

Ideas on this stage in practice settings (see stages 7-8)

Detached Work

Exploration - COE stages
7-8

Develop Rite of Passage residential provoking Flow and concluding with activity that gives yp space to continue exploration on return (see below)

Develop a symbol to give to those who want to continue

Use the image/metaphor

Youth Club

Develop

Toddler Group

Social meetings outside of group

Similar but adults so Rite of Passage experience questionable

Exploring Community

Ideas on this stage in practice settings (see stages 7-9)

Detached Work

Youth Club

Toddler Group

We are planning to meet on a Sunday to connect into the historic flow/help the yp identify that it is Christian but in Youth Clubs and Toddler Group you may be able to meet as part of this session

Eat together, meet regularly, experiment, call it church / church on the edge?

Find the right parables to tell, but retell in a modern way and do not interpret them for the group

Be creative

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Practicing Community



Ideas on this stage in practice settings (see stages 7-9)

Detached Work

Youth Club

Toddler Group

Evaluate with the group where you are and if you want to continue.

Ask them who else do they think flows and how can they bring them into the group is it by invitation or do they need to revisit the residential stage

Visit other expressions of church and evaluate

Base church role play

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The Model in Practice



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Gravitational Pull

Double Wrapped

Existing Cultural
Paradigm

What resources will give enough velocity to break the gravitational pull of the current paradigm?

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Finding a new language



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Finding God in our communities

- Flow
- The spark of life
- What is it for the young people in the various contact groups?

Finding what we learn from Mission

- Beyond our Christendom lenses



Flow – Mission Spirituality

Mission and Christian Mysticism

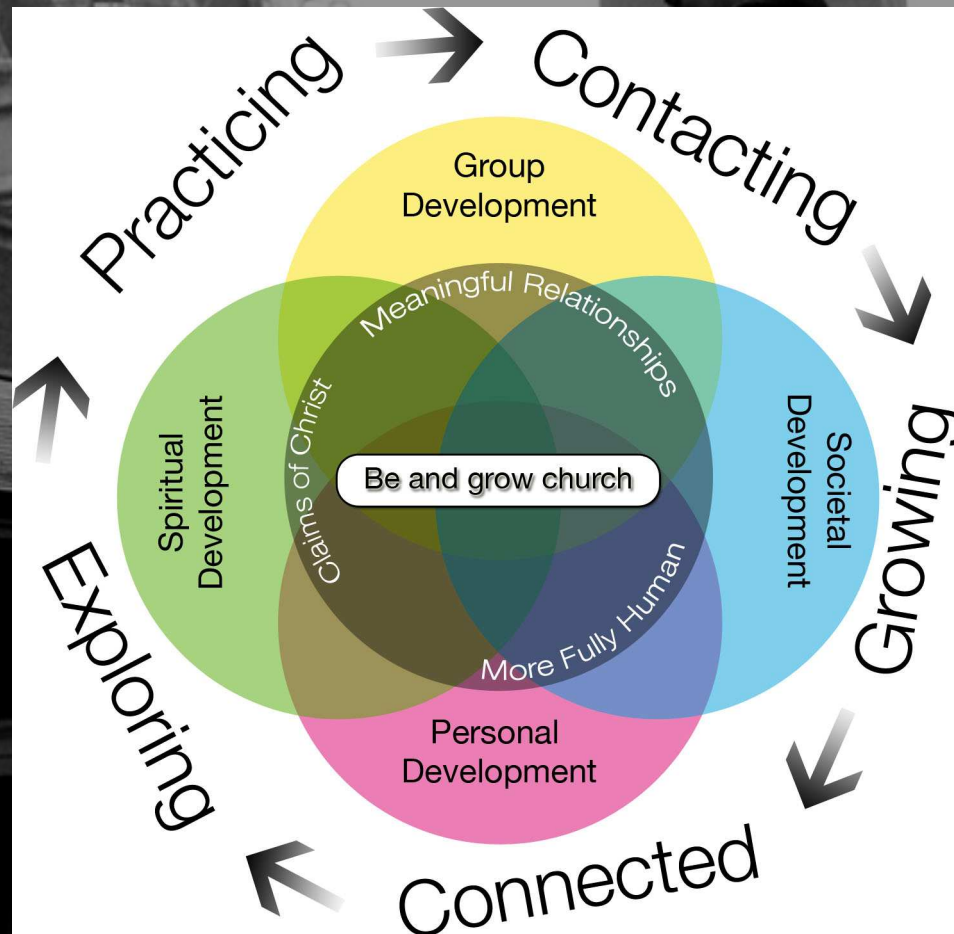
- God rid me of God
- God is Transcendent because He is imminent
- The unspeakable is very thing we must not stop speaking of

Flow – Mission Spirituality



- The Go-between God
- The thin places
- Practicing of the presence of God
- The mysticism of story

Flow – Mission Spirituality



Flow – Mission Spirituality

- Can you identify a time when God may have been present by another name?
- What does it mean to engage in mission from a powerless position?





The Islander

- Which character in the story is most like you?
- Who do you follow and why?
- Why had the beer tent become a thin place?
- What other questions may help the people you know explore the story?

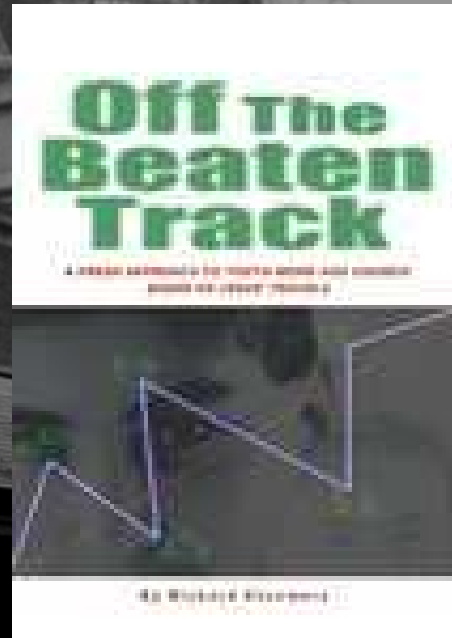
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More resources



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