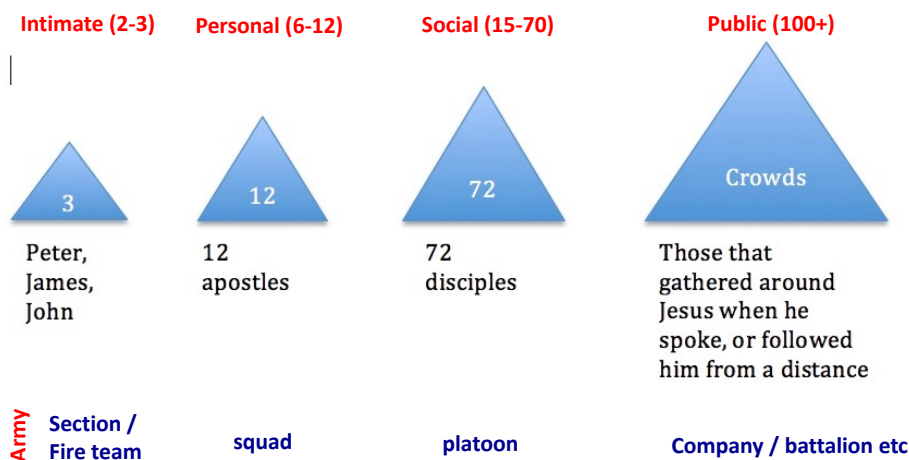


The Four Relational Spaces

There are 4 main spaces in which people connect and things happen, (see below). This was reflected in how Jesus did life with his followers. It is also true of most cultures in most places in the world today. There is something hard-wired within the human psyche to want to make connections in these size spaces. For further insights see 'The Search to belong' by Joseph Myers.

The 4 Spaces

As we look through the gospels, we see that Jesus' community essentially operated in 4 different sizes of groups:



Myers asserts that “a healthy strategy for those working to build community entails allowing people to grow significant relationships in all four spaces.”

1) **Intimate belonging or Intimate Space:** One or two people we allow to get up close and personal. Like marriage, or a very few close friends with whom we share “naked” experiences (literally and metaphorically) - feelings and thoughts. These are people who know the “whole truth” about us and accept us nonetheless.

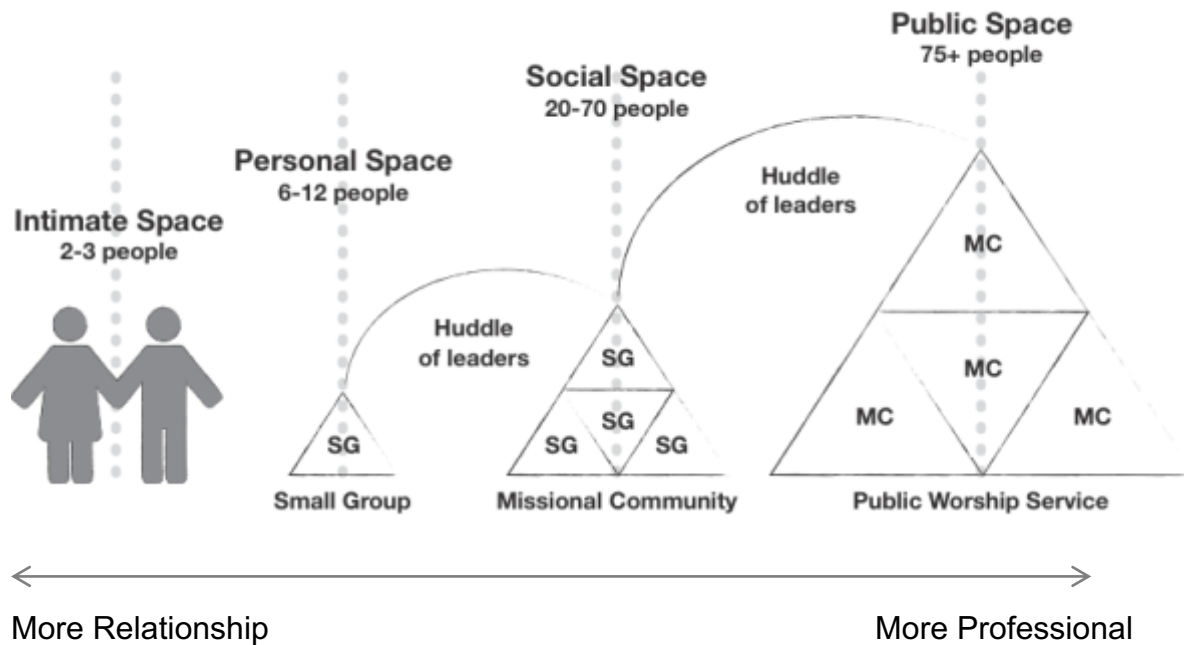
2) **Personal belonging or Personal Space:** A group of between 6 and 12 people with whom we share private thoughts and feelings. This would include our nuclear family and the good friend-ship that just picks up where you left off no matter how much time you may have spent apart, or a close friend with whom we share more about ourselves than we would an acquaintance, but not so much that they'd be uncomfortable.

3) **Social belonging or Social Space:** Gatherings or groups made up of 15 to 70 people. It occurs when we share “snapshots” of ourselves where we give hints of what it would be like to be in a personal space with us on our best behaviour. This provides space for “neighbourly” relationships to develop, and a “selection space” for those with whom you'd like to develop a “deeper” relationship with others who share an affinity with us.

4) **Public belonging or Public Space:** Gathering in groups of 100s or even 1000s.

Usually gatherings are around a shared event or experience. Going 'to church', playing bingo every week, being a football fan.

So how could this translate into our churches?



Different types of activity happen most naturally in different sized spaces. Some examples can be seen below.

4 Spaces – best fit activities

Intimate	Personal	Social	Public
	DBS/other content		Presentation
Self-revelation (deepest fears and hopes)	Peer discipleship		Altar calls (prayer ministry or evangelistic)
Confession of sin	Eating together		
Accountability		Family stuff (messy church etc.)	
Personal Prayer		Mission projects/serving	
Prayer for PoPs		Fun/Socialising	
Fellowship		Training	
		Worship & intercession	
		Teaching	
		Invitations	
		Holy Spirit ministry	

The aim in this launchpad huddle session (17) is not to go into detail about the difference of various sized groups but simply to be aware that they exist. It is difficult time and capacity-wise to be part of all 4 spaces simultaneously, most of us have the capacity to be part of groups with in 2 or 3 of these spaces in church life.

For example a church may want to have a network of small groups of 6-8 people, who meet together weekly for DBS and prayer, and then come together as clusters of small groups of 20-30 for bigger mission activities and social connection monthly. There is no one right way to structure this.

Another church might want its members to form DNA groups of 3 and for them to come together in larger groups of 12 for other functions. These different sized spaces then need to connect together in appropriate rhythms over a 4 week period.