

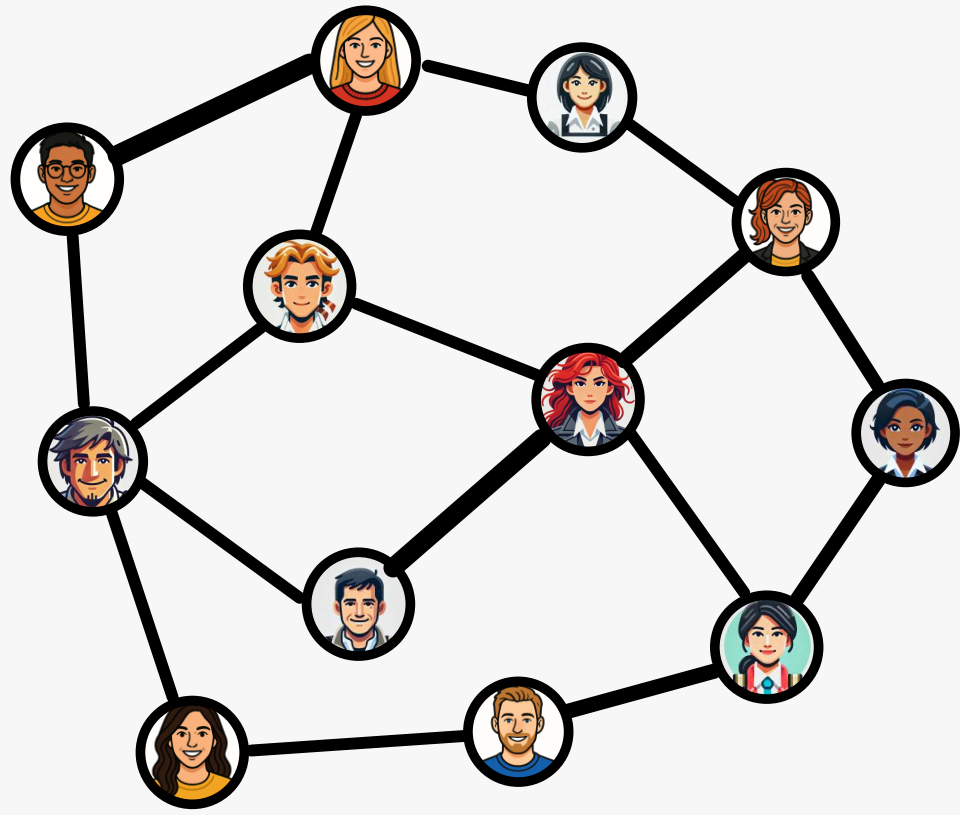
INITIATIVE

# GEM EINSAMKEIT

## Social connection and the network

How to think about your „weak ties“ and the community

Christian Langkamp



Member of  
**GILC**  
GLOBAL INITIATIVE ON  
LONELINESS AND CONNECTION

# Social loneliness depends on society embeddedness

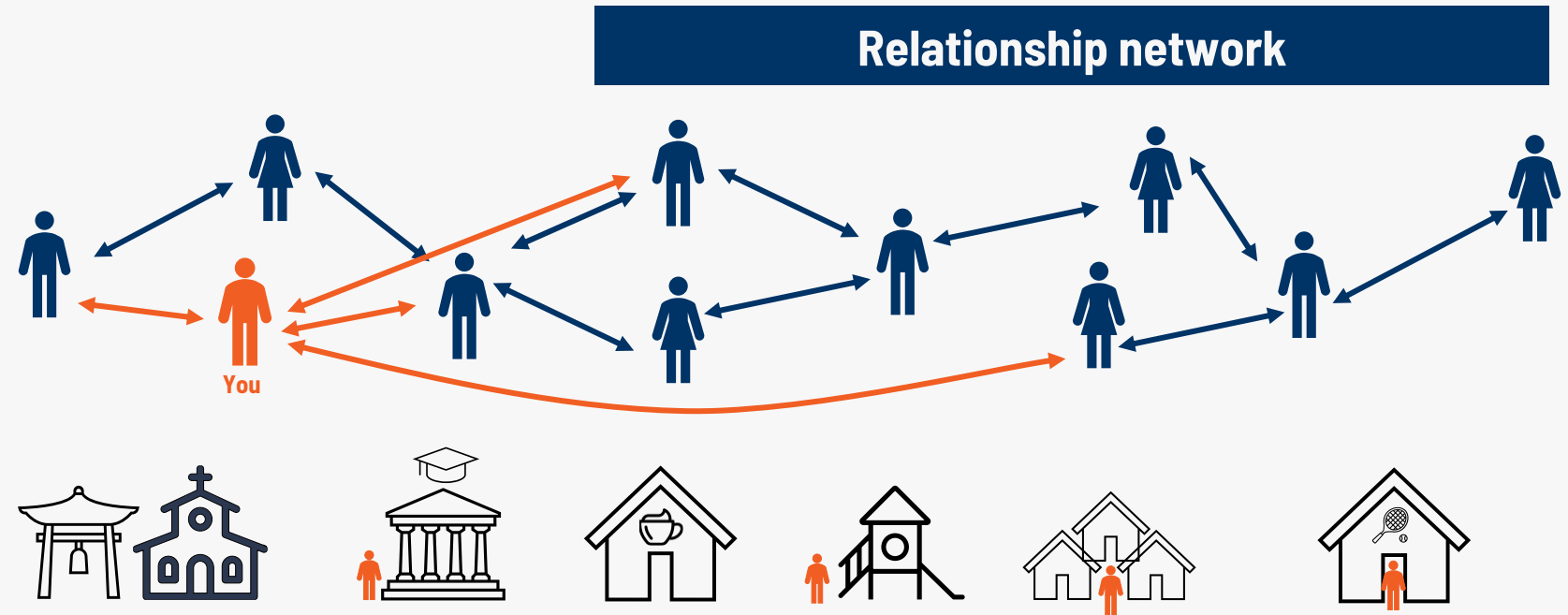
## Social Loneliness

- Few contacts
- Not integrated into society
- No circles of social friends

## Existential Loneliness

- No significance for society
- "Dying without being dead"

## Cultural Loneliness

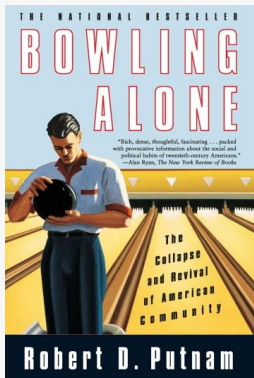
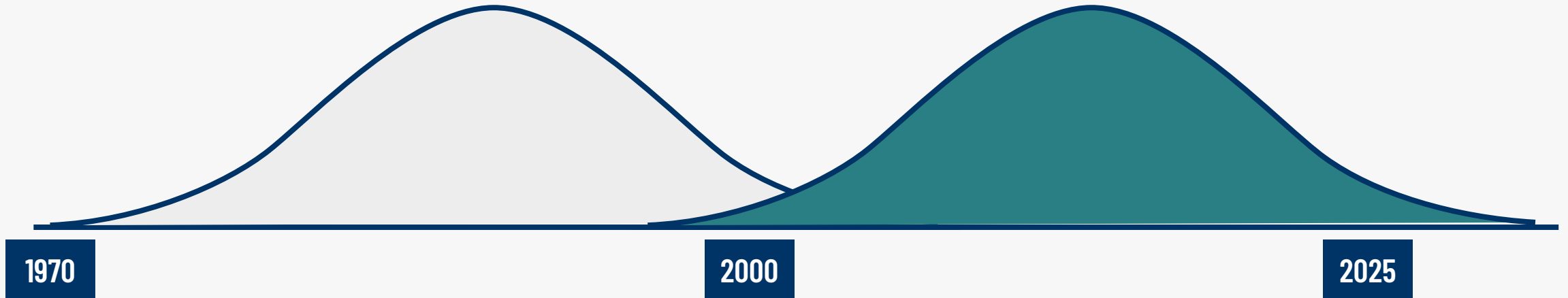


Visibility

Belonging

Contribution

# Phases of change in social connection

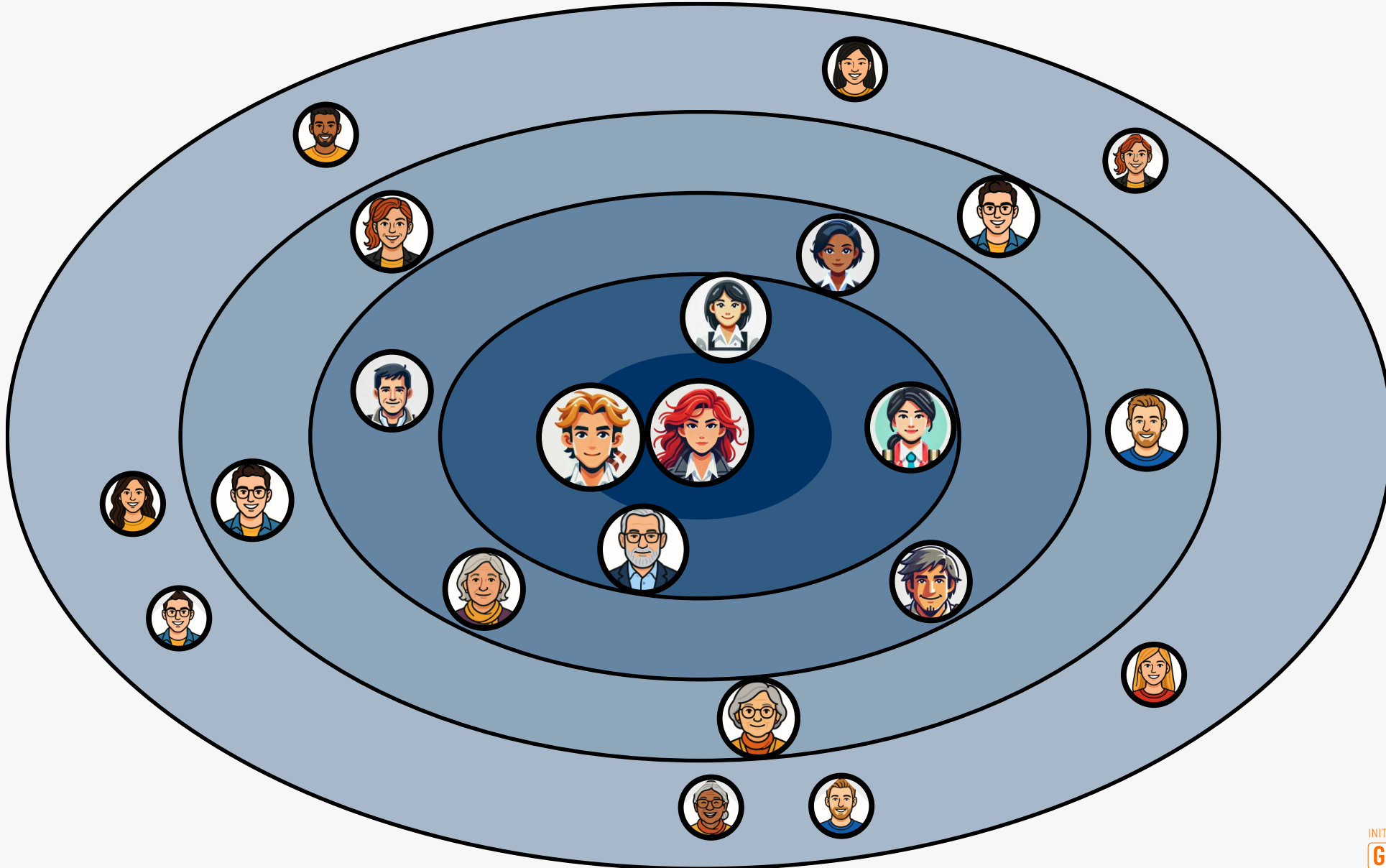


- Sprawl and Commute
- TV / Screen time
- Generational habit change

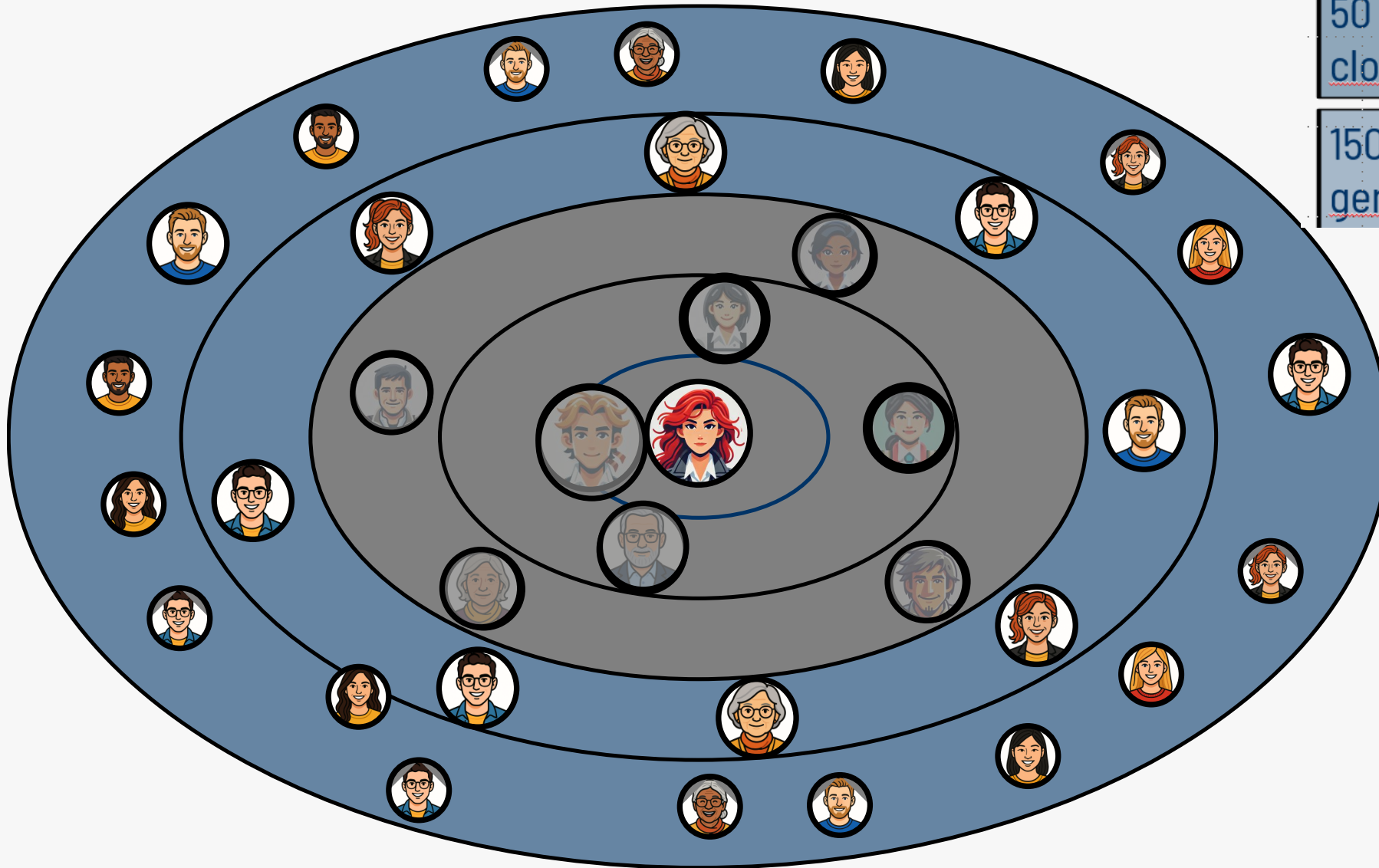


- Attention sliced
- Smartphones / Feeds
- Hybrid work / fragmentation

# Dunbar circles



# Capacity for Colleagues, Neighbours and Acquaintances



50 friendly acquaintances –  
close social environment

150 friendly acquaintances –  
general social environment

# Talking to strangers – LOOKUP by T2MP

L  
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P

Listen

Overcome internal obstacles

Open a dialogue

Keep the conversation going

Uncomfortable - how to exit

Play and improvise



What

talk to a  
stranger  
week.

## Bridge questions (story-inviting)

“What brings you here most weeks?”

“How did you get into [thing they mentioned]?”

“What’s a small bright spot from your week?”

“If a friend were new to this area, what would you tell them to try?”

## Gentle quick-depth (one step down the ladder)

“What do you like about this place/community?” (values)

“What are you looking forward to this month?” (anticipation)

“What hobby or project are you tinkering with lately?” (identity)

“What’s your best little corner in this neighbourhood—and why?” (meaning)

Enjoy the moment and stay relaxed

Stay positive and curious

Limit critique and judgement

Put the phones out of sight

Controlled deepening of topics

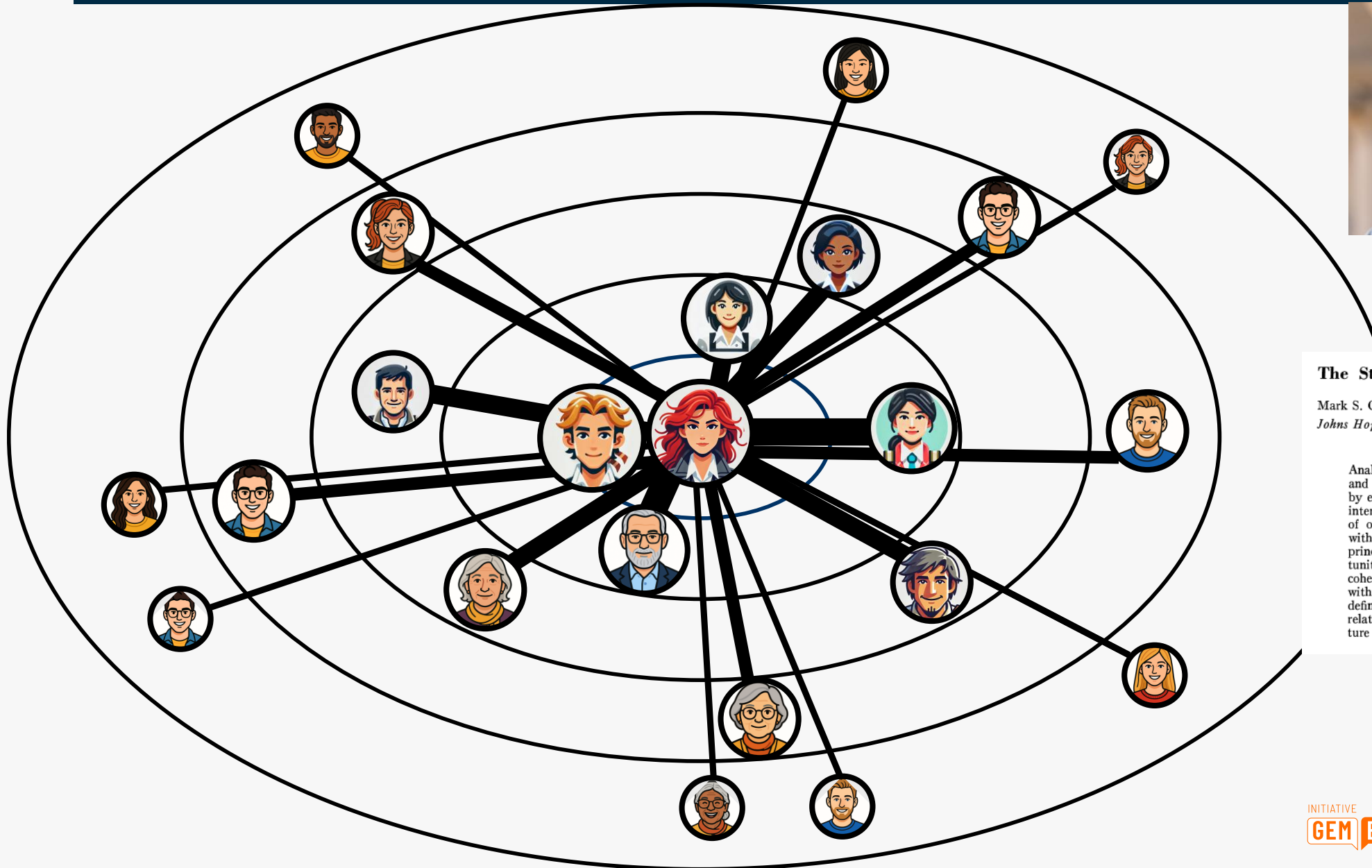
Match energy and tone

Talk to a stranger week is an annual campaign of Genwell – the Canadian social connection initiative.

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TALK TO THAT ONE

# Granovetter - Weak ties

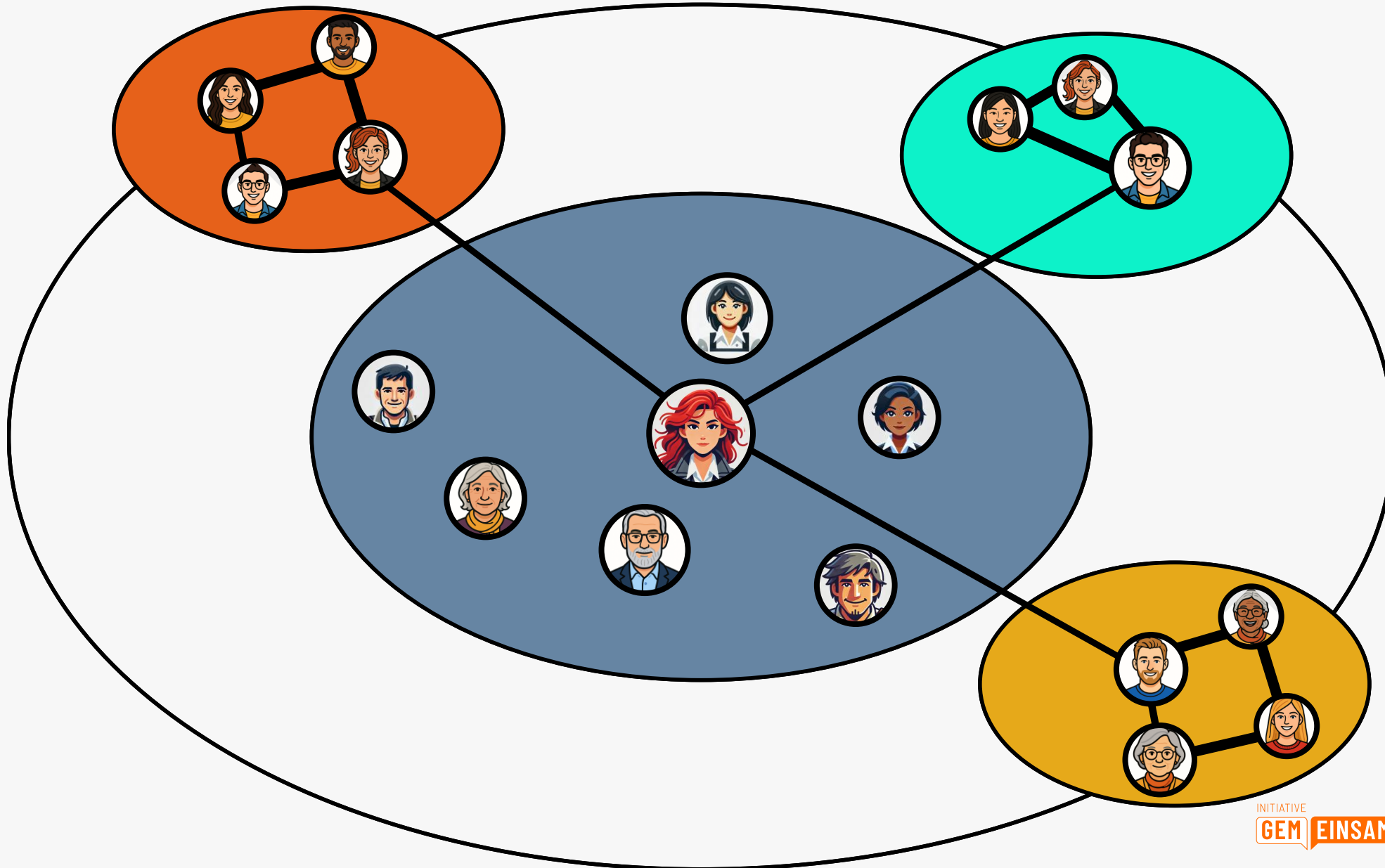


## The Strength of Weak Ties<sup>1</sup>

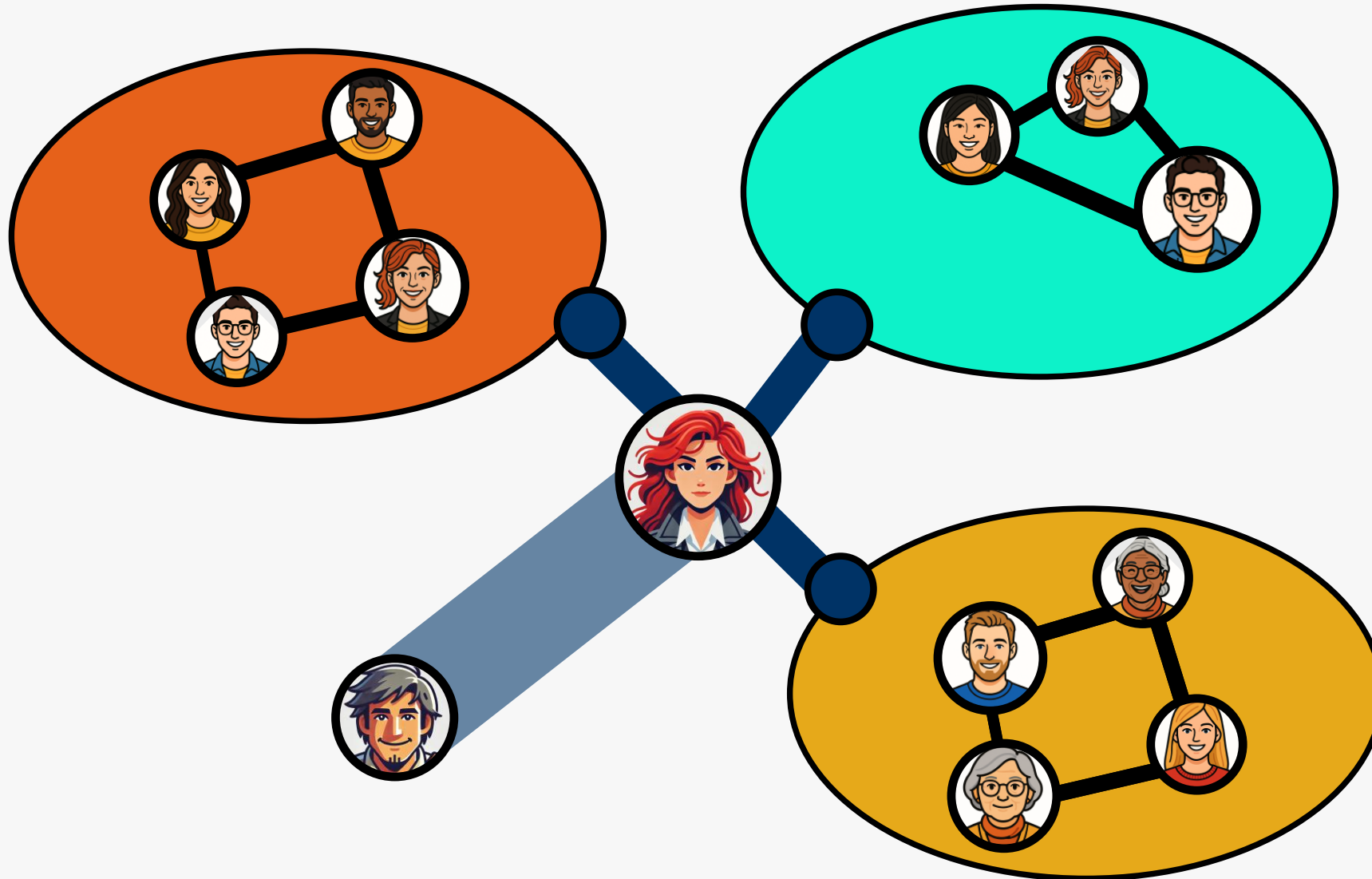
Mark S. Granovetter  
*Johns Hopkins University*

Analysis of social networks is suggested as a tool for linking micro and macro levels of sociological theory. The procedure is illustrated by elaboration of the macro implications of one aspect of small-scale interaction: the strength of dyadic ties. It is argued that the degree of overlap of two individuals' friendship networks varies directly with the strength of their tie to one another. The impact of this principle on diffusion of influence and information, mobility opportunity, and community organization is explored. Stress is laid on the cohesive power of weak ties. Most network models deal, implicitly, with strong ties, thus confining their applicability to small, well-defined groups. Emphasis on weak ties lends itself to discussion of relations *between* groups and to analysis of segments of social structure not easily defined in terms of primary groups.

# Granovetter - Weak ties - II



# Burt – Bridging and Structural Holes



Bridging Circles

Embedded

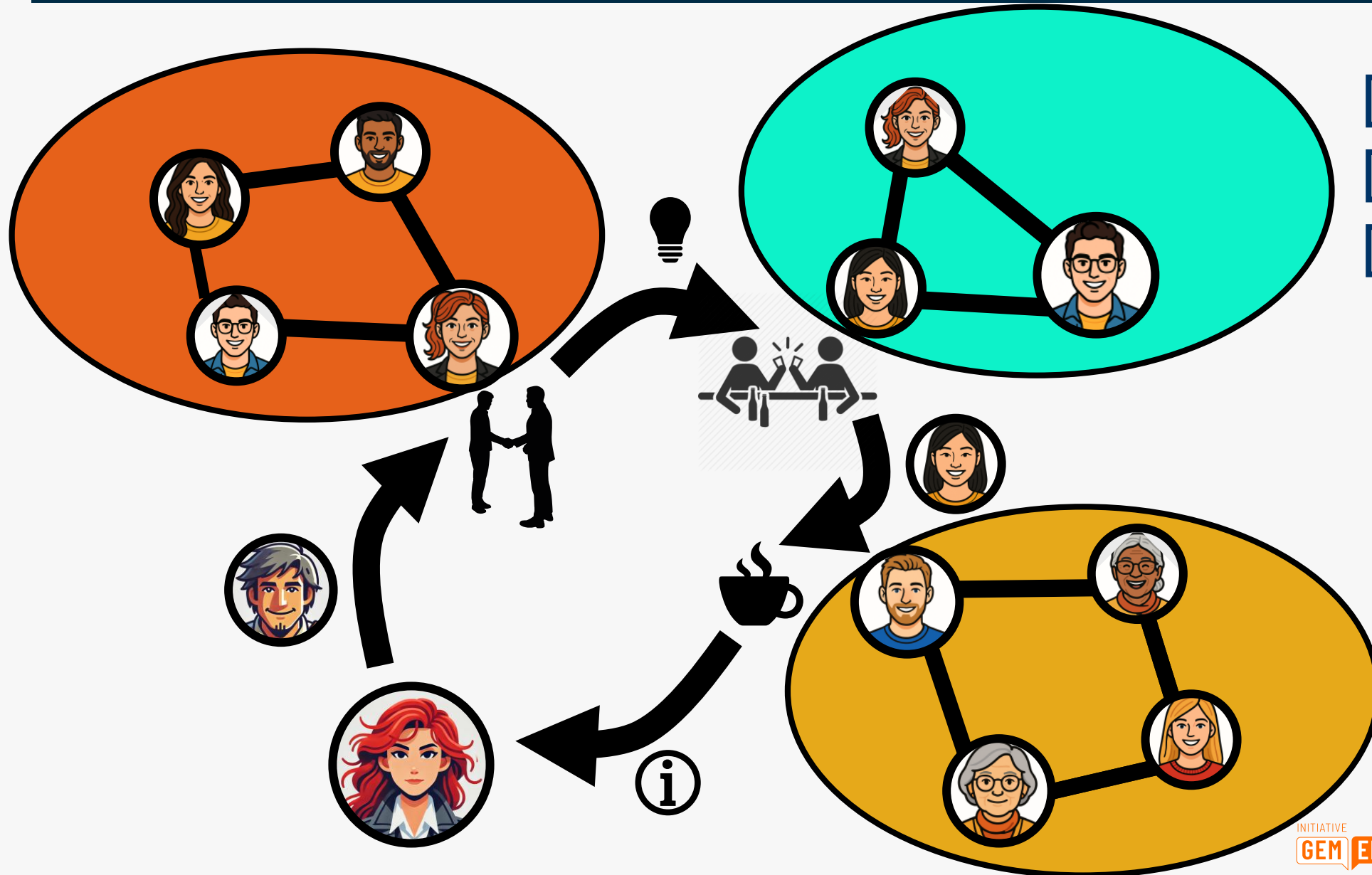
Brokerage

## Structural Holes and Good Ideas<sup>1</sup>

Ronald S. Burt  
*University of Chicago*

This article outlines the mechanism by which brokerage provides social capital. Opinion and behavior are more homogeneous within than between groups, so people connected across groups are more familiar with alternative ways of thinking and behaving. Brokerage across the structural holes between groups provides a vision of options otherwise unseen, which is the mechanism by which brokerage becomes social capital. I review evidence consistent with the hypothesis, then look at the networks around managers in a large American electronics company. The organization is rife with structural holes, and brokerage has its expected correlates. Compensation, positive performance evaluations, promotions, and good ideas are disproportionately in the hands of people whose networks span structural holes. The between-group brokers are more likely to express ideas, less likely to have ideas dismissed, and more likely to have ideas evaluated as valuable. I close with implications for creativity and structural change.

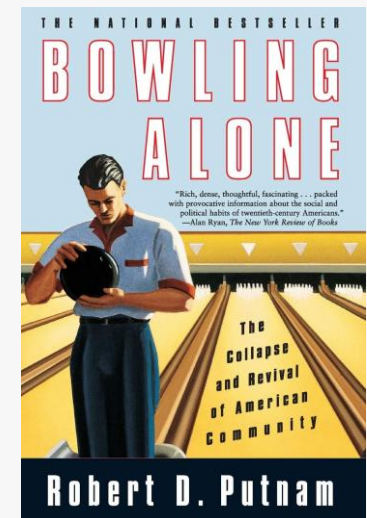
# Putnam – Schmoozing



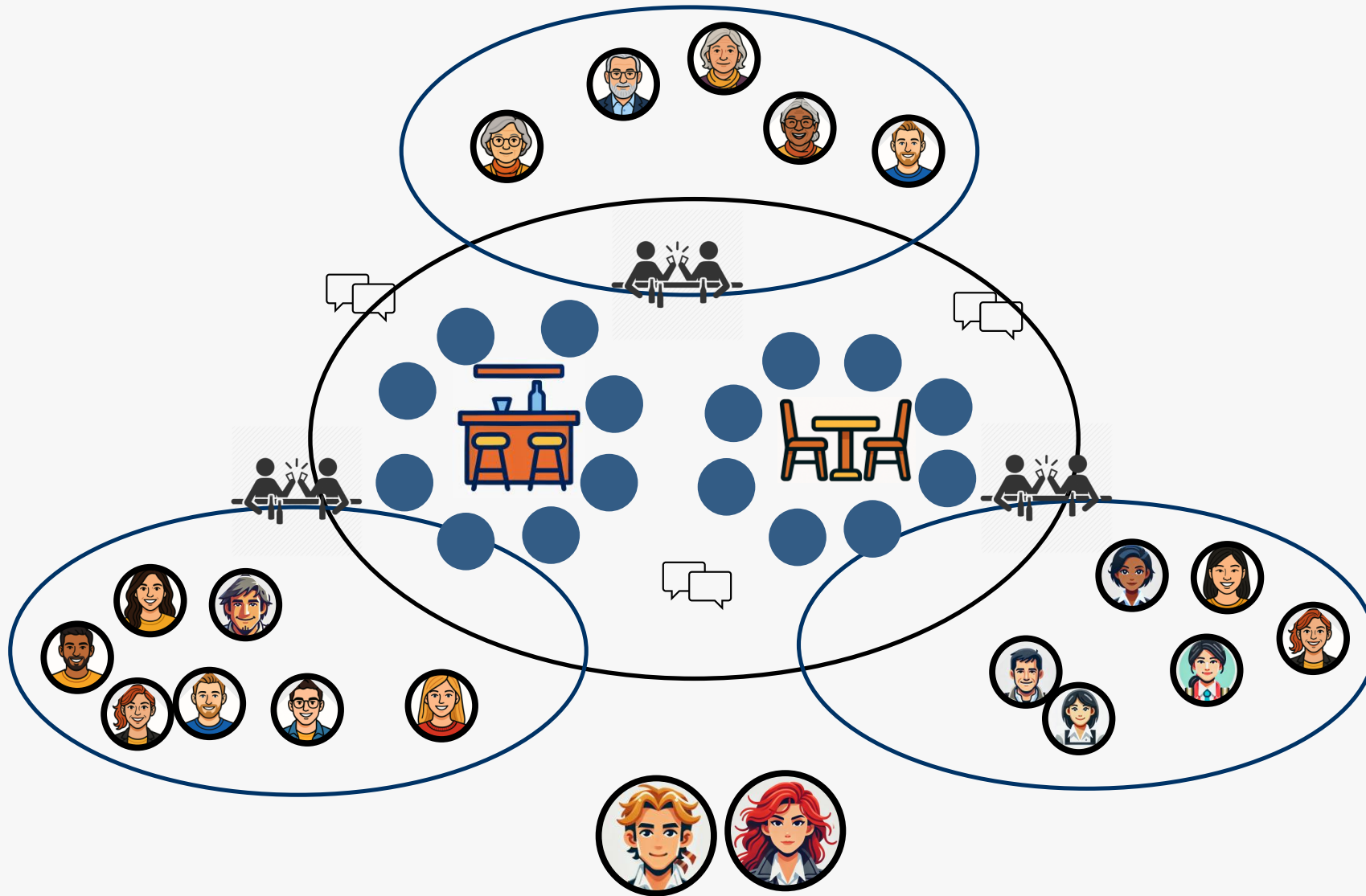
Loose connection

Embedded

Brokerage



# Third Place Oldenburg – contact generator



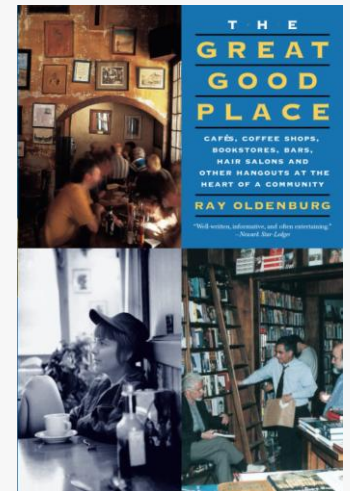
Permeable

Predictable

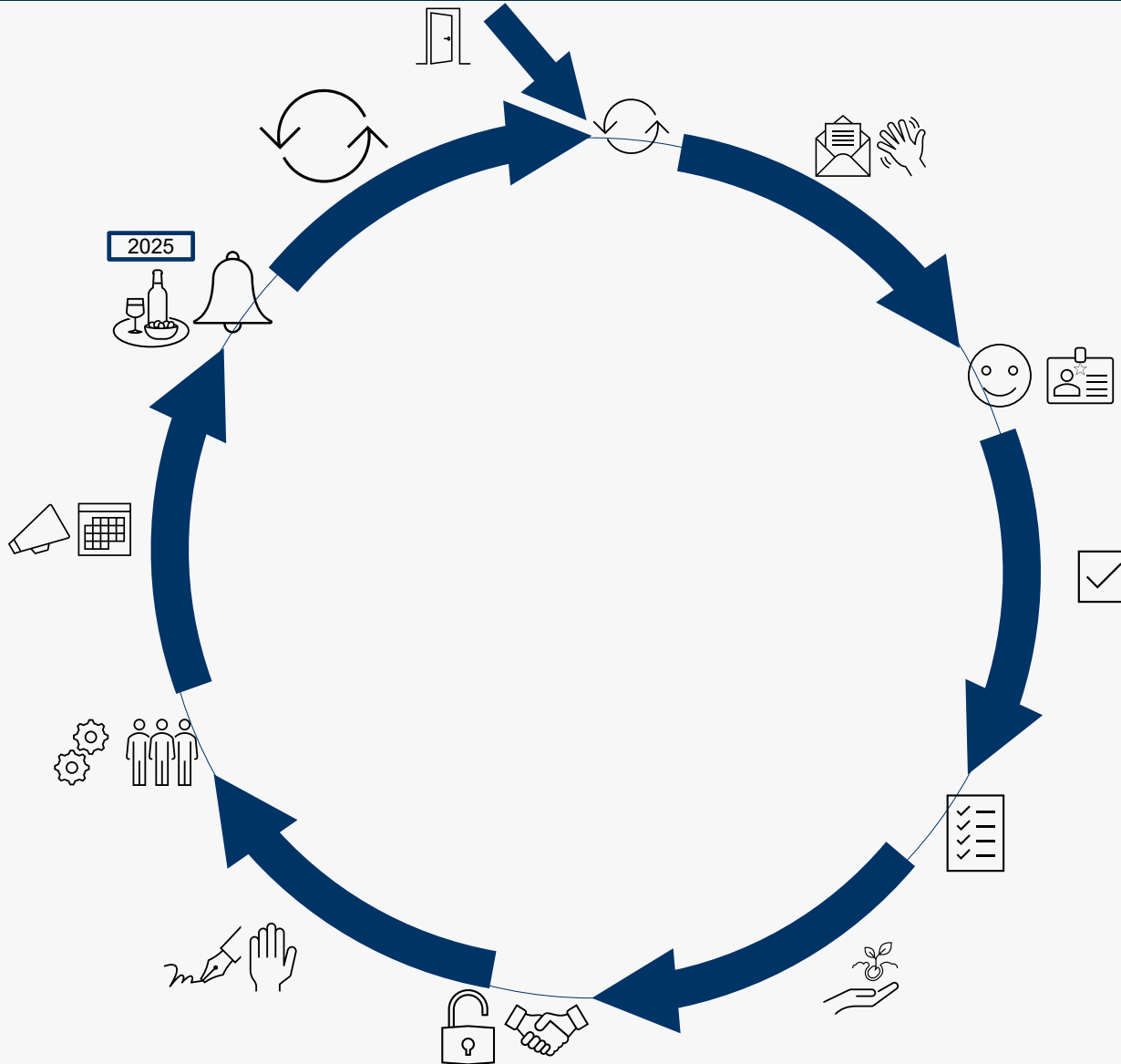
Low Cost

Playful

Regulars friendly



# Process of achieving belonging



Invite

Approve

Contribute

Own

Announce

Re-engage

Recognised member

Shared Norms

Trust & safety

Joined effort

Ritual

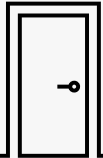
Repeat co-presence

# Parker – the Art of Gathering



**Purpose**  
Who is this for - not everything to everyone

**Pop up rules**  
No phones, mix with strangers, stay the whole time



**Close doors with purpose**  
Density over sprawl - guest list for purpose

**Strong opening**  
Preparation before - starting moments set identity



**Generous authority**  
Support quiet people with protected turns

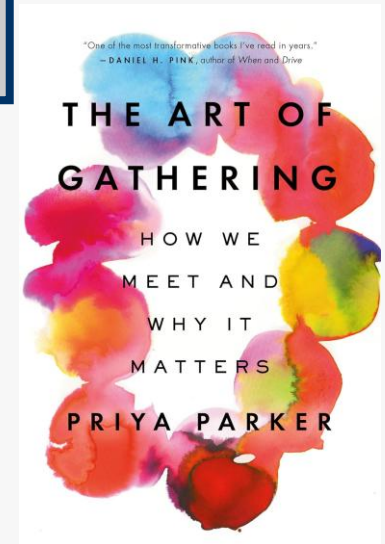
**Meaningful close**  
What learned? What next?

Hosts, co-hosts and roles  
enabling good mixing of guests

Ritual and Identity building

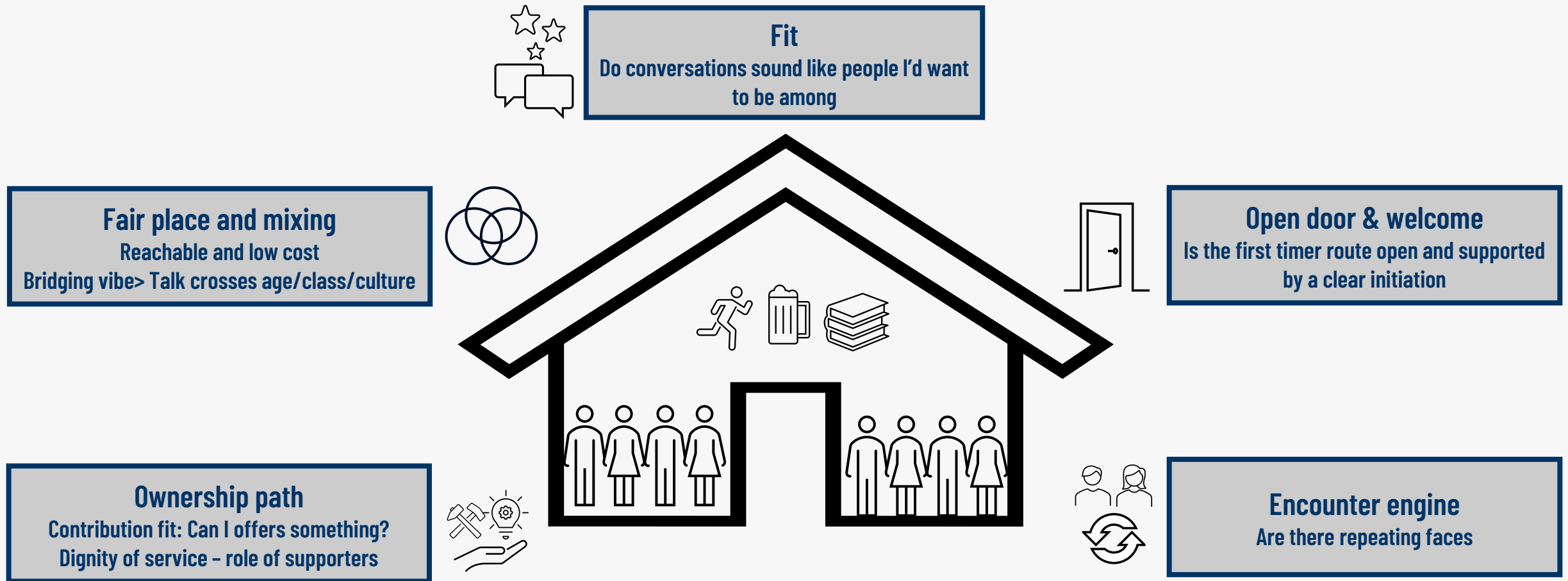
Good opportunity for in place  
introductions - Triads closed

Exchange of stories supports  
familiarity building process



**Inclusive across the Portfolio, purposeful and specific within each event**

# What is a good third place for me ?



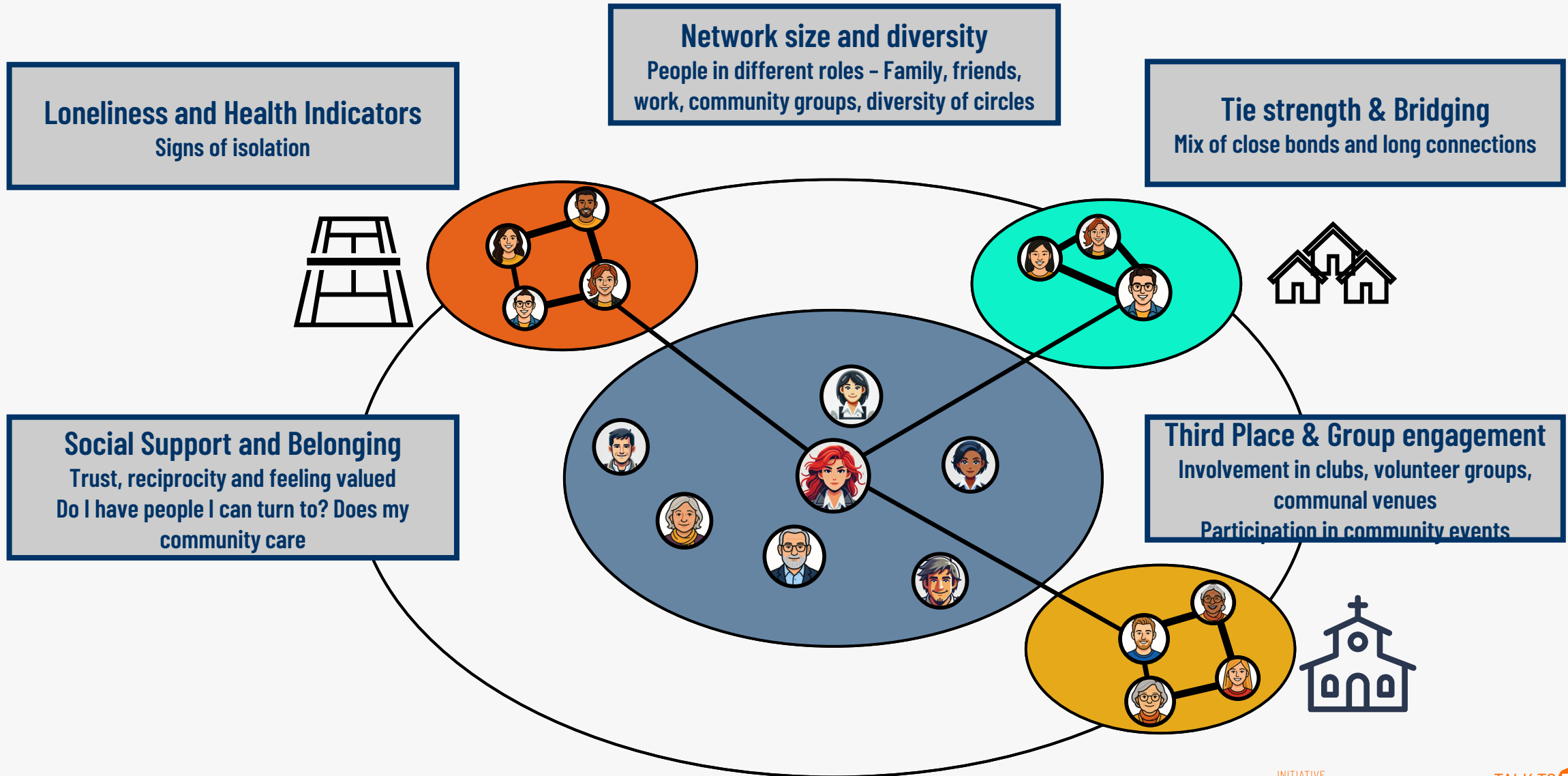
**“Three visit rule” – delay judgement until three completed encounters**

Are people talking to each other?

After the third time do you want to be a part of this?

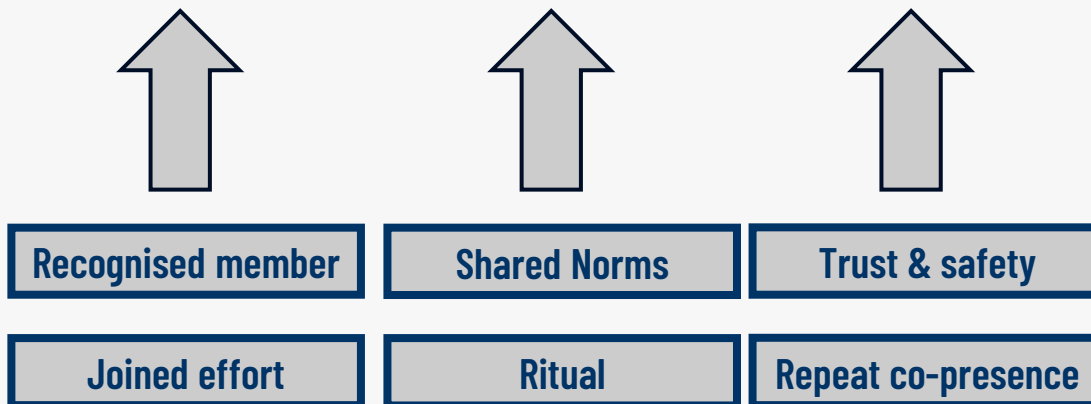
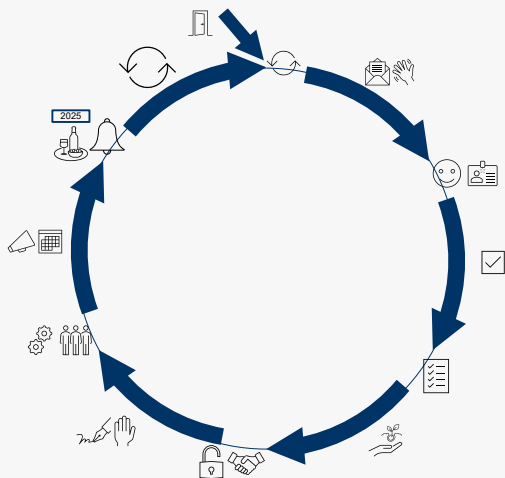
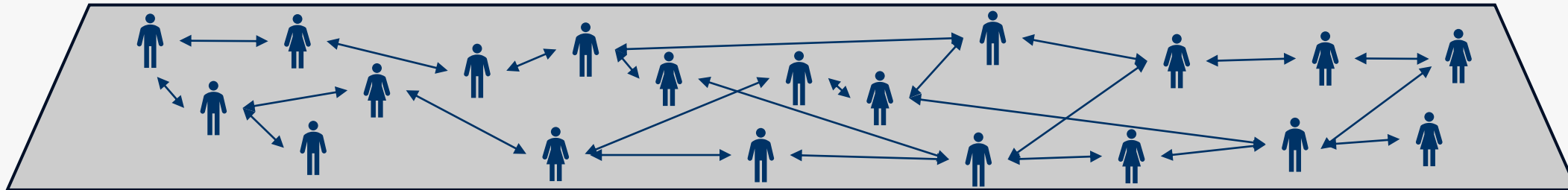
How get newcomers treated and included?

# Health of my network



# Building the community

## Community

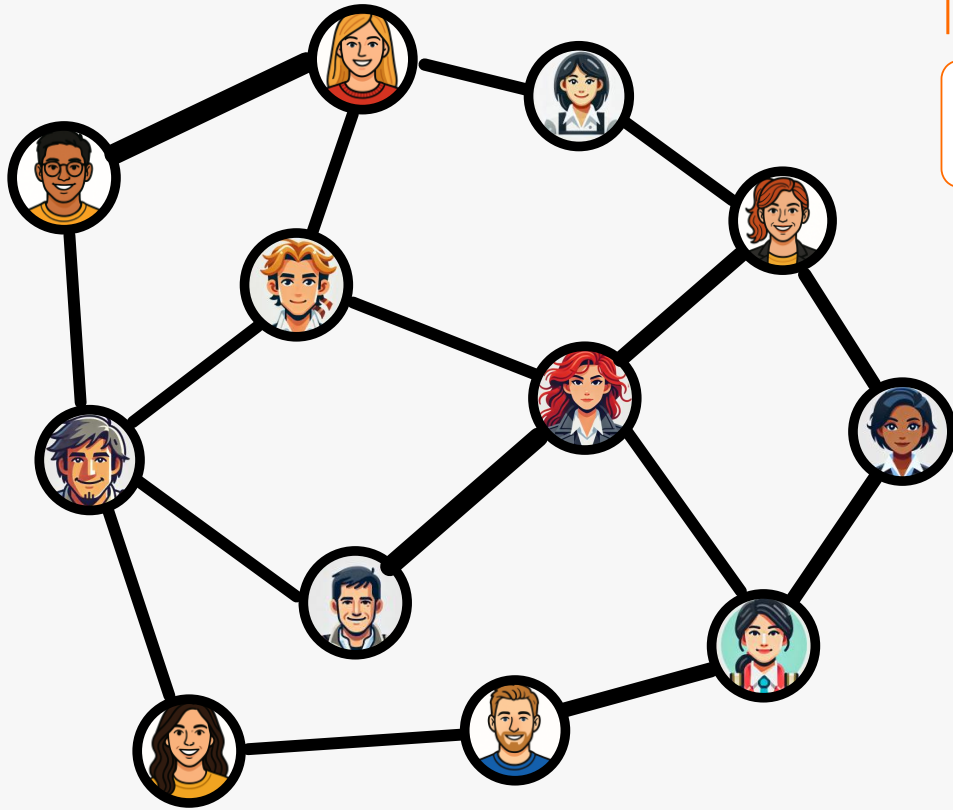


Journal of Community Psychology  
Volume 14, January 1986

### Sense of Community: A Definition and Theory

David W. McMillan and David M. Chavis  
George Peabody College of Vanderbilt University

For several years many of us at Peabody College have participated in the evolution of a theory of community, the first conceptualization of which was presented in a working paper (McMillan, 1976) of the Center for Community Studies. To support the proposed definition, McMillan focused on the literature on group cohesiveness, and we build here on that original definition. This article attempts to describe the dynamics of the sense-of-community force—to identify the various elements in the force and to describe the process by which these elements work together to produce the experience of sense of community.



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**Your communities and your network is determining your embeddedness and fertile soil from which your core friends develop.**

**Be kind. Be friendly. Be approachable and reach out occasionally yourself.**

**Thank you for your attention**

**& great that you were here**

Christian Langkamp

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