

gloo

Getting Started: Connecting to Explorers



Contents

Introduction & Our Expectations	03
Module 1: Let's Get Started	04
Quick Start Guide	06
Explorer Journey	07
Receiving & Responding to Explorers	08
Manage Your Explorer Settings	09
Module 2: Creating Successful Connections	12
5 Keys to Creating Successful Connections	14
Guidelines for Successful Connections	15
Sample Conversations	18
Texting Do's & Don'ts	23
Module 3: Handling At-Risk Conversations	28
Responding to At-Risk Conversations	31
National Crisis Resources	36
Understanding Felt Needs	37
Module 4: Building a Team of Responders	39
Building & Training a Volunteer Team	41
First Responder Volunteer Job Description	44
Case Study: Activating Volunteers	46

Who This Course is For

Getting Started: Connecting to Explorers is a foundational and essential course designed for all churches who are signed up to receive and connect to Explorers. Everyone on your responder team needs to complete this course, be it staff or volunteers, before messaging any Explorer your church has received. It is essential training that contains important information and guidelines to help you create successful connections.

Our Expectations

We trust your church to do what you do best, to minister to people and build relationships. We don't police conversations or require certain verbiage but we do provide best practices and guidelines and advise you to apply these principles and tactics so that you can create successful connections with Explorers.

Confidentiality and Trust. Treat all inquiries as confidential and in accordance with your organization's privacy policy. Do not use the Explorers submitted information for any other purpose and do not spam.

Mandatory reporting and crisis resources. If an Explorer appears to be in a crisis situation, direct them to a local resource who can meet their immediate need. We strongly suggest creating a list of local crisis resources that your church has vetted

and feels comfortable recommending. If the situation appears to be a life threatening or other emergency, consider contacting law enforcement or other emergency personnel. Know your county's mandatory reporting requirements.

Minors. People submitting their contact information must agree to terms of service that excludes their participation if they are a minor (under 13 years old). However, you may still have a minor who contacts you, but you are not advised to engage with them. Please encourage them to speak to an adult they can trust, such as a parent/guardian, church leader, school guidance counselor or teacher. If you receive a high-risk response from a minor, please follow local guidelines. Contact your local public school to learn the procedures in place.

Module 1: **Let's Get Started**



Quick Start Guide

Use this checklist as a guide when starting to receive and respond to Explorers.

Who is an Explorer?

An Explorer is either a person who is searching online for answers in a time of need or is looking for a church, community, or experiencing any other life transition. We have all been there, or are, Explorers to some extent.

Account Setup:

[Claim Your Phone Number](#)



[Add Your Team Members](#)



[View & Manage Your Explorer Settings](#)



Upon being matched with your first Explorer:

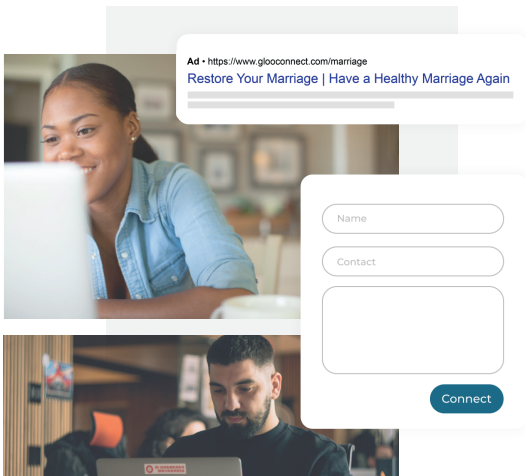
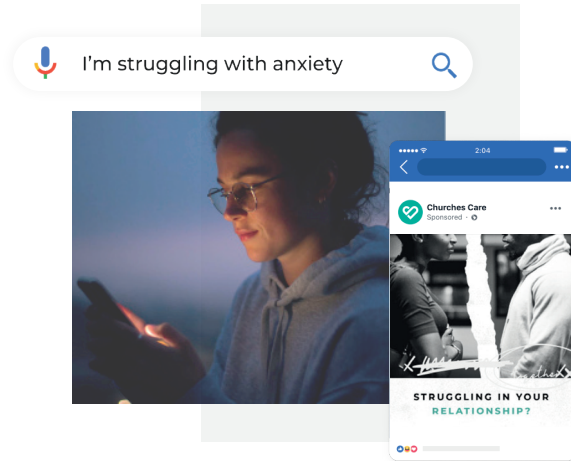
[View your connection in the Explorer Inbox and send a response!](#)



The Explorer Journey

Our partners run ongoing digital campaigns.

People are searching every day for answers to their heartfelt and deep questions—and for connection with community. We call these people Explorers.

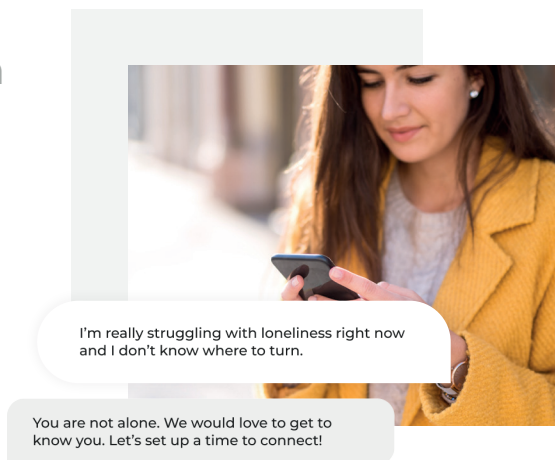


An Explorer encounters a message of hope & an invitation to connect to a person that cares.

We want Explorers to know that your church cares about them as a whole person, which is why our outreach campaign focus on a variety of areas like relationships, marriage, loneliness, faith, anxiety, and many more.

The Explorer's response is then matched to you, allowing your team to respond.

Gloo sends a message directly to you, a volunteer, or someone from your team, including the Explorer's contact information and details on why they wanted to connect. You can message them directly in-app or assign them to a ministry team member.

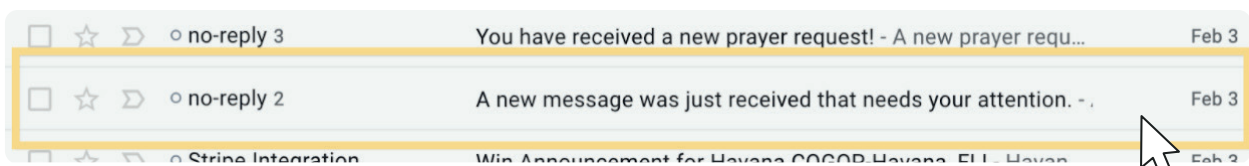


Receiving & Responding to Explorers

Use this guide to kickstart conversations with Explorers you've been matched with!

Getting matched with your first Explorer:

1. You will be automatically matched with Explorers in your area.
2. Depending on your location, you can expect to receive your first Explorer between 1-2 weeks after signing up.
3. You will receive an email notification upon receiving your first Explorer, prompting you to login and respond to an Explorer's message.



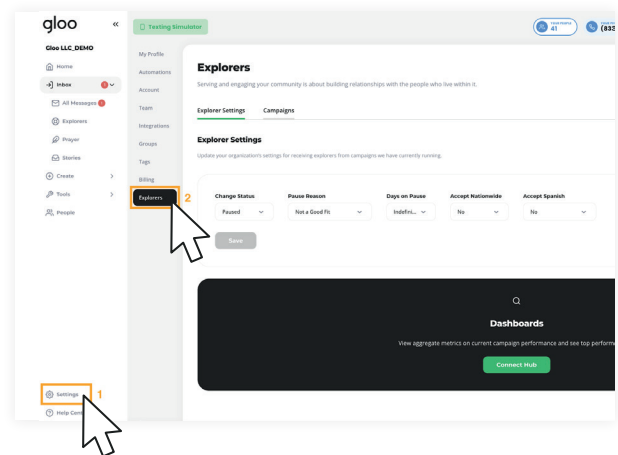
Manage Explorer Settings



You manage and discover more about Explorers through settings. In settings, you can update your status, set the reason and duration of a pause, find additional resources about campaigns, and review metrics for reaching explorers.

Manage Explorer Settings

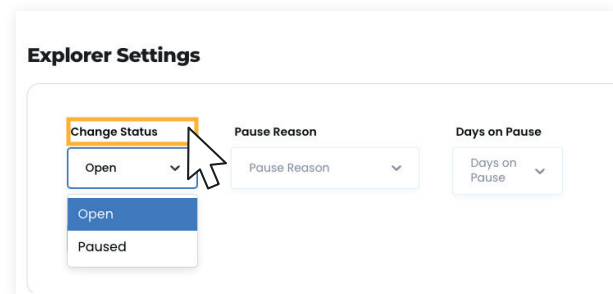
1. Navigate to Settings
2. Click the Explorer Settings tab



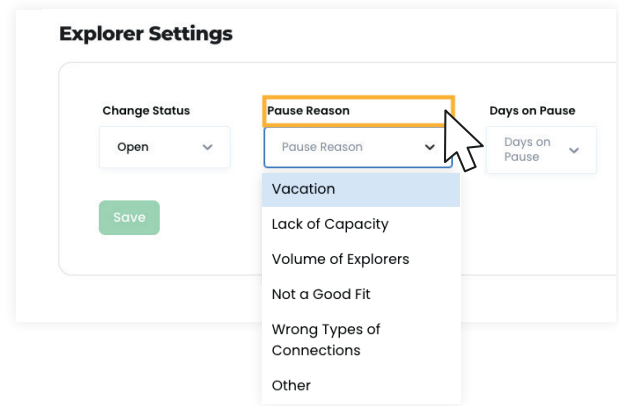
Pausing Connections

Note: Explorer Status is set to Open by default when you activate your subscription.

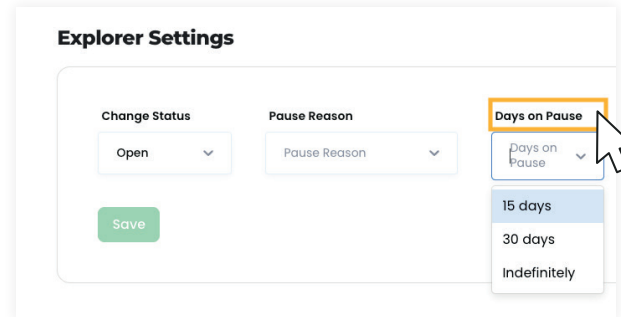
1. Click the Change Status drop down and choose Open or Pause



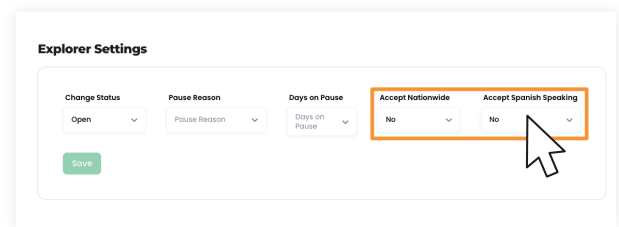
2. If pausing, click the Pause Reason drop down to select an option



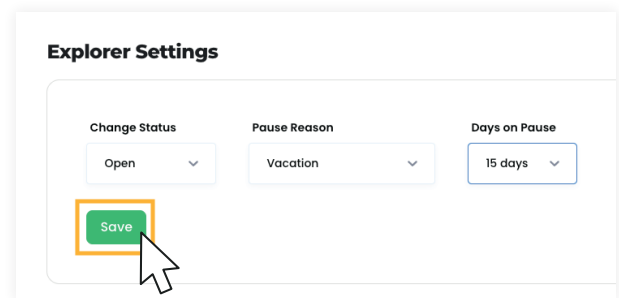
3. If pausing, click the Days on Pause drop down to select an option



4. Use the Accept Nation Wide and Accept Spanish Speaking dropdowns to specify which types of Explorers you would like to accept

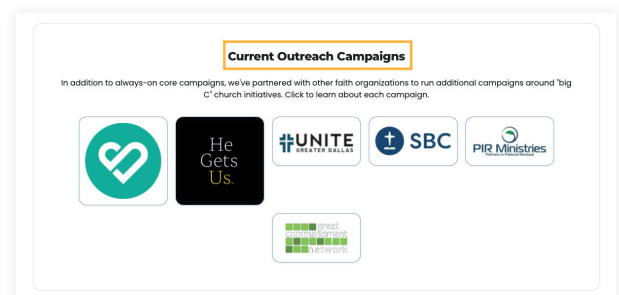


5. Click the Save button for the changes to take effect



Discover Campaign Resources

Learn more about current Outreach Campaigns through the “Campaigns” tab at the top of Explorer settings.





Module 2: **Creating Successful** **Connections**



5 Keys to Successful Connections

1.

Timely Response

We encourage you to respond as quickly as you can. Data suggests that response rates climb from 25% to 70% when Explorers receive a response from a church within 15 minutes of submitting their information.

2.

Connect Using the Gloo App

Open rates for texts are 98%, much higher than emails. Additionally, many people have been conditioned to ignore incoming phone calls from numbers they don't recognize. The Gloo app provides a variety of features to help you in connect to Explorers including data dashboards, tracking connections and assigning team members.

3.

Build and Train a Team

Churches who build volunteer teams as a part of their outreach strategy report high volunteer engagement and fulfillment. Gloo provides churches with both Getting Started, on-going training resources, and workshops so teams are equipped and feel confident.

4.

Adopt a Listening Posture

Focus on the Explorer's needs by listening and meeting them where they are at to create a trusting relationship. Be interested in asking open-ended questions and keeping the conversation going.

5.

Keep a Relational Mindset

Connections are relational. Each Explorer is looking to be met with empathy and kindness. 100% want to connect with a person, but only 30% are comfortable engaging with a church.

Guidelines for Successful Connections with Explorers

Your team plays an important role in making successful connections with people, or as we refer to them Explorers, who view these nation-wide ads. These Explorers desire to connect with someone who cares and will walk with them through a particular need or topic. We want you to be prepared and confident in making this connection through SMS text messaging. There are nuances to this form of communication that can easily turn-off the Explorer from wanting to continue the conversation. Using the best practices below will provide you and your team the greatest opportunity to successfully connect with the Explorer.

Most Explorers responding to these ads often express a felt need. Common topics are: anxiety and fears; stress and depression; relationship challenges, including marriage, dating, children, family

and friends; some folks are struggling with finances and unemployment. They want to talk about the current situation they are going through and often they don't have anyone else to turn to. Sometimes they ask for prayer, oftentimes not. Because of the nature of the He Gets Us ads, you might also receive a connection from an Explorer that is curious or skeptical towards the message of Jesus. Please take your responsibility to these individuals seriously and treat them as you would others seeking assistance or walking into the front door of your church.

The following best practices will help guide you no matter what topic the Explorer begins the conversation with.

Objective

The goal is simple: create a connection and start a conversation. How you start that conversation will determine if that conversation continues. Starting the conversation well—about the Explorer and their need—will help them feel like you're addressing their need and build trust in the connection you've just made.

It's About the Explorer!

Any mention of Gloop, a campaign, scripture, or your church takes the conversation away from the Explorer and the reason they were connected with you. The Explorer cares more about their needs right now than anything else. Keep the focus on them and nurture the relationship.

Respond in Timely Manner

Review connections regularly and respond within a quick and timely basis, depending on time of day. Respond to urgent messages as soon as possible. Data shows that Explorer response rates can climb up to 70% when responded to within 15 minutes. Having a team in place allows you to assign days and times to be available to respond, although they are not expected to respond to after hours messages.

Keep it Simple & Friendly

Keep messages short and to the point.

Create a friendly tone and consider using an emoji. Keep in mind longer messages and emoji's take more credits. For more information on message cost see the [Message Credit](#) help article.

Be mindful of filler words and church jargon that the Explorer will not understand.

Be the Bridge

If they need crisis resources or professional services, help them find it. You don't need to be their counselor or therapist. For more on at-risk conversations and resources [click here](#).

Before You Reply, Pray First

Before you respond, take a moment to pray for the Explorer, the situation they're facing and over your response.

Be the Kind Friend

The best friends are the ones that listen, don't give their opinion or solve a problem unless asked, and don't preach. They relate and walk quietly next to you in the hardships of life. Explorers are looking for you to be that person. Be empathetic by trying to understand the pain or need they are going through and relate it back to them.

Take It Slow

We build strong relationships through listening, caring and developing trust over time. When we follow up too soon, bring the conversation to our church or beliefs, or send them unsolicited invitations, we move the tone of the conversation away from the Explorer to ourselves.

Ways to pace the conversation:

- a. Wait for them to ask about you, then gently share something that relates.

- b. Give them space and follow up in a few days.
- c. Only offer to pray with them if they ask.

Ways to break the conversation:

- a. Sign them up for your mailing list without asking.
- b. Push prayer, scripture, or your church on them while ignoring their need.
- c. Relentlessly message them for a response (spamming).

Meet up

If the Explorer is local to you and the relationship grows in trust, extend an invitation to connect in person. This may take a few text messages (they offer to connect in person) or a few days or weeks of messaging to build trust before extending an invitation. You will need to decide what works best for you both.

- a. Don't pressure them to meet but occasionally offer to talk further in depth in a public setting.
- b. Pick a neutral location that will be disarming for the Explorer, such as a local coffee shop.
- c. Avoid meeting one-on-one with the opposite sex. If necessary, bring your spouse or a church staff member.

Need	Don't Say	Say This
Struggling...	Hi, I'm Pastor John at First Church. If you're struggling, come to church this Sunday at 10AM. We have a prayer pastor who will pray with you and free coffee. See you there! - Your Pastor, John	Hi, my name is Sarah. We all struggle and I sure do too. Would you be willing to tell me more?
Loneliness...	Hello! There's no reason to feel alone. Jesus is a friend of sinners (Luke 7:34). Come to our church on Sunday at 10:00 AM. We'd love to be your friend. Welcome Pastor Jenn.	Feeling alone is awful. I'm Joel. What's going on that you feel lonely?
Anxiety...	Hello! There's no reason to feel alone. Jesus is a friend of sinners (Luke 7:34). Come to our church on Sunday at 10:00 AM. We'd love to be your friend. Welcome Pastor Jenn.	I'm Lilly. I'm sorry you're feeling anxious. I know it can be burden. Would you be willing to share with me what you're anxious about?
Relationships...	Good Evening! Sounds like your relationship isn't going well. We offer counseling or if you end up breaking up, even a singles activity group at our church. It's a great way to meet people who are striving to be in relationship with Jesus. Is your current relationship founded on Jesus? - Welcome Pastor Charlie	My name is Anthony and relationships can be difficult. I'm willing to listen and chat about to what you feel comfortable in sharing.

Sample Conversations

A practical guide of sample responses designed to help you effectively respond to Explorers connections.

EM = Explorer Message

IR = Initial Response

FR = Follow-up Response



EM

I have two sons that are in bad relationships. I wish they realized this.

Hi Denise! This is Sarah. I got your note about what you're walking through with your two sons, and would love to chat more. Do you have time today or tomorrow for a phone call?

IR

Hello Denise, This is Sarah. I sent you a text yesterday. Following up today in case you missed it. You mentioned that you had two sons who were in bad relationships, and as a Mom of two kids myself I can only imagine how difficult that is. I'd love hear more about your family, and offer any support that we can. I'm free tomorrow at 10am if you're up for a quick phone call? I know it can be strange talking to a complete stranger, but I'd love the chance to connect.

FR

Your goal is to just create a connection and start a conversation.

EM

I am struggling with the decision whether I should continue to try to make my marriage work, or if it will cause more harm than good to my children and myself if I stay. I've gotten used to walking on eggshells, but it has effected my children alot. They have been suffering through alot of anxiety, and feel like is my fault for staying with him. Another issue is that I have always been a stay-at-home mom, and so to leave abruptly, would be financially devastating for my kids and I. I also have guilt because I took my vows wholeheartedly, so I am worried about dishonoring God by not trying my best to work it out.

Hi Jenny, this is Sarah. I just read your message about your marriage and the decisions that you are facing. I want you to know first and foremost, that you don't have to walk through any of this alone, and I'm so glad that you reached out. Do you have time to connect? I'd love to come alongside you and offer support, whatever that might look like. Can I give you a call tonight or tomorrow morning?

IR

Hi Jenny, this is Sarah. Following up from the message I sent yesterday. Again, I'm so glad that you reached out. I've been married for nearly 10 years, and having come from a divorced (multiple times) family, your story hit home in so many ways for me. I would love to meet with you, hear more about your story and your family. I don't have all of the answers, but we weren't made to walk through life (especially life's difficulties) alone. I know that meeting with a total stranger can be... strange. So there's no pressure. At the least, I'd love to meet you. Let me know if you're coming so I can say hi.

FR

The example response here is encouraging and offers a next step to a fairly heavy question. Simply engaging with people, or offering to engage.

EM

I am surrounded by people and talk to people yet I feel so alone.

Hi Ryan, this is David. I got your note about being surrounded by people but feeling alone. It's such a strange thing to be in a room full of humans but still feel alone...I've been there a lot. The only way I crawled out of that hole was by connecting with other people. I know we don't know each other, but I'd love to hear more about you? I can give you a call tonight or we can meet for coffee on Friday? Text anytime.

IR

Hey Ryan, this is David, reaching out again. I remember when I was 18, I moved to Oklahoma for a new job and I have a distinct memory of being in a room full of hundreds of people, but hardly anyone there really knew me. It was so strange to be surrounded by people but completely alone. Almost feels like you shouldn't feel that way. But it's real, and it's a common experience, we just don't talk about it. But I'd love to hear more about you, and talk about it. I'm free for coffee on Friday? I know that meeting with a total stranger can be... strange. So there's no pressure.

FR

The tone is casual and details are vague. Never go more than 10% deeper than the other party. In this case, relate to them but stay vague and casual in order to connect.

EM

I really need a job. I'm about to be homeless. I have no support from my family, they are all broken and we all need to be restored.

Hey James - this is David. I got your note about your financial and job situation. I'd love to chat about what's going on, and see how we can support? I can give you a call tonight or tomorrow morning if that's better.

IR

Hello James, This is David . I sent you a text yesterday, hope you got my message. I know you mentioned you were looking for a job. Our church actually has a few resources that might be helpful and I'd be glad to send those to you if you were interested.

FR

When you make connections, do your best to offer real help based on their connection.

EM

I have been in an extended season of feeling like I can't relax, I can't shut my mind off, and I am not getting good rest. I feel on edge and unable to disconnect from my own anxious mind that feels jumbled.

Hi James! This is David. I got your note about the current season of life you are in, and would love to chat more. Do you have time today or tomorrow for a phone call? I'd love to chat some more :)

IR

Hi James, this is David.. Again, I'm so glad that you reached out. There are many going through what you're going through and feeling what you're feeling. You're definitely not alone. But still, it sounds like this current season of life is weighing on you. I'm certainly not a counselor, but I'm here if you want to text or talk. I'd love to connect and hear a little more of your story. I know that meeting with a total stranger can be... strange. So there's no pressure.

FR

If people share their phone number, a text message is probably best. Keep it short, sweet, and personal. Your texts to other people probably are not overly formal, so apply that here.

EM

My sister committed suicide a week ago and my emotions are all over the place. I need help dealing with my feelings. I need to talk to someone that can help me please.

Hi Jenny, this is Sarah. I just got your note about your sister and what you're walking through. I am so sorry. Text isn't exactly the best place to connect, are you up for a phone call? I can call tonight or tomorrow morning if that's better.

IR

Hello Jenny, This is Sarah. Just following up with you today. I am so sorry to hear about your sister and I'm sure you're dealing with a world of emotions and feelings. I'm not a therapist but I'm a great listener. First Baptist Church and they have some groups and programs that might be encouraging to you during this time.

FR

The pastor or even a staff member may not always be the best person to respond. If there's someone in your congregation who has a similar story, that might be the best person to serve as a first responder. The tone was direct, so it's okay to be direct back. Always reflect the other person.

EM

I am a good person, but a sinner saved by grace. The Bible says that God will never give you more than you can handle, but I feel so lost, alone, scared and right now, struggling to provide for my family and thier needs that I feel like a failure. I am in an abusive relationship hoping things can get better. Just trying to hold the weight of the world alone. I saw this video, and thought, maybe just maybe, someone out there understands and I could have someone to talk to.

Hi Jenny, this is Sarah. I got your note about feeling like a failure, your marriage, and feeling the weight of the world. Sounds like you're carrying a lot right now, and I'm so glad you reached out. I would love to talk more about it, and offer support, whatever that might look like. Can I give you a call tonight or tomorrow morning?

IR

Hi Jenny, this is Sarah. Following up from the message I sent yesterday. Before I married my husband, I was in an abusive relationship and I remember the heaviness and confusion that carried. The first step to working through all of it is talking about it, and not letting shame or fear lead you. I would love to meet with you to hear more about your story, maybe share some of mine, and talk through what you're carrying. I know that meeting with a total stranger can be... strange. At the least, I'd love to meet you. Feel free to reach out if you want to talk further.

FR

Jenny has some faulty theology, but she didn't ask to be corrected. She asked to be heard. Appoint a person to connect with Jenny who knows what abusive relationships look like, and can help navigate the guilt, confusion, and trauma that often accomponies it. Their message was deep, dark, and full of desperation. Meet them in it. Don't try to fix it, but try to be what their looking for, "Someone out there who understands."

Sample Texting

Do's & Don'ts

Don't Do This

I'm struggling with a lot of anxiety and depression. Things have been so difficult lately and I can't seem to break out of it. I have no one to talk to and don't even know what to do next.

Hi Mitch. You've been matched by Gloop from the He Gets Us campaign because of Anxiety. I'm Pastor Dan Smith from First Church.

Anxiety is easy with Jesus.

In Matthew 6:34, Jesus says "do not worry about tomorrow. Each day has enough worries of its own." Just worry about today and give the rest to Jesus!

Also, nothing helps depression like friends. Make some friends by joining us Sunday at 10am (9th & Main St) or on Zoom <https://zoom.us/j/907883650>

If you're still anxious and need counsel, please email me at pastordan@firstchurch.org to find a time to talk.

In His Will,
Pastor Daniel Smith, MDiv
First Christian Church

I've been so anxious lately. It's tough to even go to the store. I'm worried about getting sick. I'm hoping someone will talk to me.

Hi, I'm Executive Pastor Richard. It looks like you were paired with First Church through the He Gets Us Campaign on Anxiety.

Have you seen "What about Bob" with Bill Murray?

Yes, I've seen it.

Anxiety it like that. We "baby step" through it but WITH Jesus!

In Matthew 6:34, Jesus says do not worry about tomorrow. Each day has enough worries of its own. Have you given your worries to Jesus to "baby step" through your anxiety?

- Executive Pastor Richard

Don't Do This

My kids have gotten into a lot of trouble, lately. It'd like to talk about it.

Hi, I'm Youth Pastor Melvin at First Church. Have you tried disciplining them? Proverbs 13:24 says, "Whoever spares the rod hate their children, but he who love them is diligent to discipline them."

I don't believe in physical punishment and they just make faces at me.

Oh, I see. Tell them proverbs 30:17, "The eye that mocks a father and scorns to obey a mother will be picked out by the ravens of the valley and eaten by the vultures."

If that doesn't work, we have a children's and youth ministry on Sundays at 10AM. We'll straighten them out.

- Y.P. Mel

I asked my wife help around the house since I work 50 hours a week. But she doesn't do anything.

Hi, I'm the Marriage Pastor at First Church, Jeff. Looks like you were partnered with us through a media campaign. Have you tried praying and reading your bible?

I'm not sure what that has to do with my wife helping around the house.

The bible says in Ephesians 5:24, that wives should submit in everything to their husbands. She should be submitting to you.

I'm going to tell her this.

How'd it go?

Not well. Sleeping on the couch.

Oh-no. We do offer marriage counseling for free?



Do This

I'm struggling with my children. They're teenagers and they keep getting into trouble.

Hi Sarah, I'm Janice. Those are some of the toughest years being a parent. I'm here if you want to talk about it.

Thanks. I do. They....

...and that's why I'm upset.

Wow. I can see why that would make you upset. My kids did some similar stuff in their teenage years. I can laugh at it now but at the time it was heart wrenching. Totally up to you, but I'm willing to talk on the phone, or if you want to meet for coffee we can do that too. I'm local.

Really? Yeah, let's talk on the phone.

Great! How about tomorrow at 3:00 PM? You can reach me at...

I'm so anxious. It feels like something bad is going to happen.

Hello Ash, I'm Pat. I'm sorry you're feeling anxious. Would you be willing to share a bit more? What happened that you feel anxious?

Just the news, political tension, shootings, hate, you know everything. I can't seem to get away from it either, between social media and TV. I'm worried for my kids and family.

I know what you mean. It seems like it's everywhere and being a parent is a lot of responsibility. What helps make you feel at ease?

Talking to someone. My partner doesn't want to listen at all. It makes them anxious too.

That is understandable. I'm happy to listen over the phone or meet for coffee, if your partner is ok with that? You can also have them on call or bring them.

They say coffee would be great. Where should we meet?

Do This

I'm new to the country. I'm going to college and I can't seem to make any friends. I'm outgoing but no one talks to me. I feel so alone and just want to go home.

Hi, this is James, Anbu. I didn't go to another country for college but I did go to a new state. It's not quite the same, but I was in a new place with no friends. What are you studying?

Electrical Engineering with an emphasis on energy storage. I'm hoping to work on next generation battery technology.

Whoa, sounds like you want to help change the world?

Yes, I intend to go back to my country and help build electric vehicles because pollution is so bad there.

That is awesome! I'd like hear more. It might be too much to text so would you want to talk on the phone or meet for coffee sometime?

Yes, that would be great!



Module 3: **Handling At-Risk** **Conversations**





Responding to At-Risk Conversations

Explorers, those exploring the internet, come from a wide variety of backgrounds and experiences. For many, the deep felt needs they are experiencing prompt them to reach out for tangible help and answers. A small percentage of our Explorers will express what we will call an “at-risk situation” which requires extra caution and care. We want you to feel confidently equipped with appropriate next step responses.

If you receive an at-risk message, we highly suggest you involve someone else on your team. Reach out to your team lead and let them know. Consider running your response by someone else on your team before sending, leaning into wisdom, discernment and prayer. It’s important to handle this type of message with great care, following the guidelines below.

Minors

A minor is anyone who is under the age of 18. Minors will sometimes join chat conversations and, while they may not always self-identify as a minor immediately, this fact can become clear over time. If a person uses language mentioning “parents,” “school,” “mom,” “dad,” “my teacher,” “classmates,” “my youth group”, etc., that person is likely a minor. The chat functionality is not intended for minors under the age of 18; therefore, as a Chat Responder, if you receive information that either establishes that the individual is under 18 (e.g., the individual provides an age or references minor status) or would reasonably lead to the conclusion that the individual is a minor, you should politely disengage.

X Do not ask the minor their age, or collect any personally identifiable information (name, age, location, etc.).

X Avoid engaging with them further about any topic, particularly sensitive topics such as sexuality, abuse, mental health, bullying, etc.

+ Do encourage them to talk to an adult they can bring onto their help team.

+ Do encourage them to connect with school, community, or church resources that bring support and advocates onto their help team.

Physical and Sexual Abuse

Abuse is any action where a person is misused, harmed, or injured. Most often abuse is intentional although sometimes it can be unintentional, especially when it is frequent misuse or repetitive. There are many different kinds of abuse, such as physical, spiritual, verbal, emotional, psychological, sexual, etc. Sometimes individuals in the chat will confess to having experienced some form of abuse and should be directed to additional resources.

X Do not dismiss their feelings or experience. Be empathetic.

X Do not request details of the abuse.

X Do not say everything will be alright.

X Do not say you are safe and it will never happen again.

+ Let them know these situations can lead to a lot of confusing or upsetting thoughts and feelings and it is good to talk to someone specially trained in helping you process all this so you can make the healthy decisions you need to make.

+ If the individual does not appear to be in immediate danger or crisis, you may walk them through a conversation directing them toward healing. Speak words of encouragement, hope, truth, and love.

+ If the individual requests specific information about escaping or recovering from abuse or otherwise needs specific additional help, recommend they speak to a licensed counselor.

Criminal Activity

An action is a crime if it is something that is punishable by law. It is possible that a person in the chat may mention or feel guilt over criminal activity and share it with you. Or it is possible that they may have been a victim of criminal activity in the past. Different categories of crime might include things such as theft, violence, assault, rape, murder, damage to property, forgery, etc.

(Note: See section above for information on physical/sexual crimes such as rape or violence).

On occasion, this type of message turns out to be spam.

X Do not investigate or dig into details.

X Do not say you've done nothing wrong.

X Do not say the perpetrator will be punished.

X Do not personally reach out to law enforcement.

+ Let them know these situations can lead to a lot of confusing or upsetting thoughts and feelings and it is good to talk to someone specially trained in helping you process all this so you can make the healthy decisions you need to make.

+ Instead, recommend they talk to a trusted adult like a counselor, other professional or law enforcement.

Suicide

A suicidal person is anyone who expresses desire or intention to end their own life. They are often extremely unhappy, depressed, in pain, minimal connections to confide in, or don't want to live life this way anymore. If you encounter someone in the chat who exhibits signs of being suicidal, or self-identifies as wanting to die, it is very important that you handle these conversations with extreme care and refer them to professional help.

X Do not discount their emotions, but also do not validate their emotions in a way that might encourage them on the path of suicide.

X Don't say "I know how you feel".

X Don't say anything that implies "Just get over it".

X Don't say anything that implies a simple spiritual action will solve it "claim this verse and it will be ok".

X Don't compare their situation to another tragedy and say it could be worse – like saying someone just lost their kids and husband in an accident and they aren't suicidal.

X Do not panic and talk in fast, intense, high-pitched, loud, stress inducing voice.

X Do not make assumptions about the person and their story.

+ Pray for wisdom.

+ Keep your emotional cool.

+ Calm, slow, soothing, decisive and knowledgeable voice. Not high-pitched, rapid, intense.

+ Short sentences, simple instructions, affirmations, encouragements, connecting comments. Avoid disjointed and rambling, complex sentences and instructions.

+ Listen to them, speaking words of hope, truth and love.

+ Thank you for reaching out to me and being willing to share some deep and personal struggles with me.

+ I know it took courage and you moved out of your comfort zone to reach out and contact us.

+ Listen to their story and be empathetic.

+ Thank you for sharing your pain/story/emotions with me.

+ I know life might look very difficult or painful right now, but there are people who are interested in coming alongside and helping.

+ You do have value and purpose, and although it might be hard at times to see that, it is true.

+ Let them know you want to help them. You want to connect them to someone who can help them with next steps.

+ They are important as God loves them.

+ Do you want to kill yourself right now? Do you have a plan as to how you would do it? Do you have those things available to you? Is a gun in the house or of easy access to you?

+ Do you have another adult around that can help you get to a safe place right now.

+ Some people are tempted to use substances to feel better, but they accentuate the distress and make it worse, so if you can, please try to not use any chemicals until you can connect and get guidance from a professional to help you.

Mental Health

A person's overall behavioral health includes their physical, emotional, psychological, social, and spiritual well-being. It determines how a person thinks, feels, and acts, as well as how they handle stress, relate to others, and make healthy decisions. Jesus has perfect brain chemistry, a perfect mind, and perfect psychological functioning. All the rest of us are markedly defective in these areas when compared to Jesus. On a scale of 0-100, Jesus is 100, thus the rest of us are between 0-0.5!

Even though Jesus is perfect, He still experienced many upsetting emotions - anger (Temple money changers), stress (leading a bunch of imperfect people who didn't get it), sadness (wept after Lazarus died), anxiety (sweating blood and asking for another way the night before arrest), and forsakenness/abandonment (on the Cross). Us, being imperfect, will experience this and more. Some of our struggles have a psychiatric diagnosis as a mental illness or addiction issue. Some of our struggles don't have an official diagnosis - low self-esteem, people pleaser, conflict avoider, victim mentality, self-sabotaging, etc.

Explorers are coming with a myriad of psychological and spiritual struggle in their inner being, we call these psychospiritual issues. They manifest in various ways that are often difficult for our Explorers to understand or explain. Handle each of these conversations with love and care, using some of the principles below.

X Do not dismiss their feelings or throw Bible verses at them in a way that might communicate their feelings are wrong/must be fixed.

X Do not claim Jesus will make all their struggles go away if they have more faith or pray.

X Don't compare their situation to another tragedy and say it could be worse - like saying someone just lost their kids and husband in an accident and they aren't suicidal.

X Do not say you know exactly how they feel

+ Listen to them and encourage them. In many situations, they may just want someone to talk to about their struggles.

+ Tell them you are not a licensed counselor but would be happy to listen. Also, tell them that a licensed counselor may be able to provide additional assistance, helping them understand better what is happening inside them.

+ Recommend they seek psychiatric attention if they seem to be struggling with significant psychological struggles (significant distress or significant impairment in functioning, serious consequences have occurred, or potential danger exists) using the following type of response:

Example: "You are going thru some stressful and stormy times, and a good next step to take is a reaching out to a professional who can guide you through the stress/storm you. Here is the number to a licensed therapist (include number). I'm here to continue listening to you but encourage you to take a step towards getting professional help. Would you be willing to do that?"

NOTE: Substitute psychiatrist for licensed therapist if significant distress or significant impairment in functioning, serious consequences have occurred, or potential danger exists.

Trolls

An internet “troll” is someone who communicates online in a way that is intentionally meant to be inflammatory, off-topic, or upsetting, for the purpose of their own amusement. A troll will usually have no intention or interest in having a conversation of substance, and may not want to engage in dialogue that coincides with the goals of these campaigns. Instead, they might post memes/images, make off-hand comments, write in as a made-up character, or say things meant to elicit a frustrated response from you as the chat responder.

X Do not encourage them. Their goal is to get you to respond with alarm or frustration. Do not entertain the conversation for longer than needed.

X Do not completely ignore them or “ghost” them. Respond, but in a professional and courteous manner.

X Do not get upset with them. Remain calm and polite. Many conversations will end automatically once they realize they can’t get a frustrated response from you.

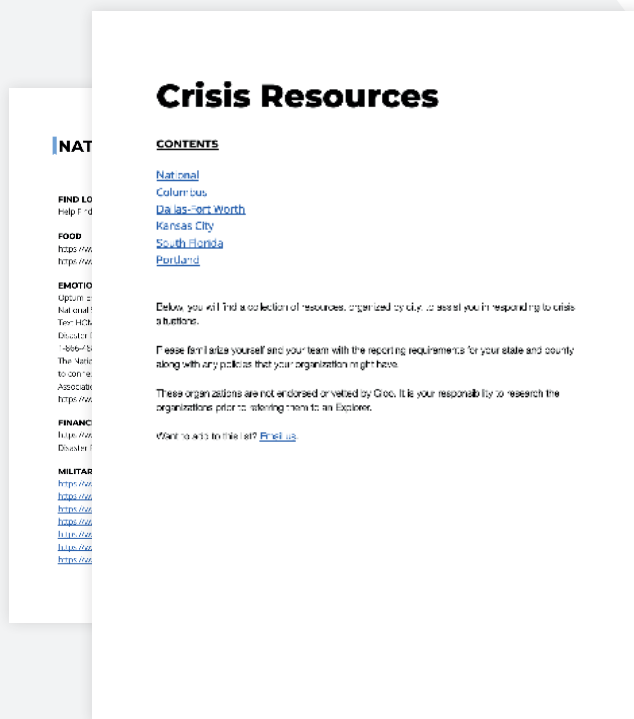
+ Be professional. Say a prayer in you mind that they will realize God’s love and purpose for them, with His forgiveness, grace, and peace.

+ If their comment/question is not relevant and not something you can help them with, let them simply, kindly, and straightforwardly know what the intention of this chat is and that their responses are not falling in that purpose.

+ If the person will not stop, and it becomes clear no meaningful conversation will occur, you can close with something like the following:

Example: “I’m sorry, but your message is not relevant to the purpose of this chat. I’m here to answer any questions you have about life challenges or faith. This present chat is now over, have a nice day.”

Crisis Resources



[View Resource](#)

Understanding Felt Needs

Guides to help you understand specific needs, tips for responding to Explorers and sample responses.



[Anxiety](#)



[Chronic Illness](#)



[Grief & Loss](#)



[Loneliness](#)



[Mental & Behavioral Health](#)



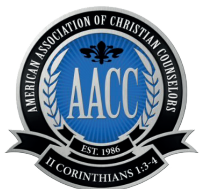
[Relationship & Marital Issues](#)



[Sadness](#)



[Stress](#)





Module 4: **Building a Team** **of Responders**



Building & Training a Volunteer Team

Gloo is a new kind of outreach platform designed to help your church reach your city.

Campaigns are designed to help you reach people who don't typically go to church, but need prayer, have questions about Jesus, or need help—and we deliver them directly to you.

Every day, thousands of people (we call them “Explorers”) connect with churches looking for prayer, next steps, or answers.

And while pastors and staff members can certainly respond, the churches who are most successful with the program actually empower a small team of volunteers to facilitate these conversations.

Since they happen throughout the week and at all times of the day, having a team ready to respond is a great way to make a difference in someone's life.

1. Adopt a Volunteer-First Mindset

While there are certainly tasks and projects that you could do faster or better, the heart of ministry leadership is “equipping people to do the work of the ministry.” And while it's great to dive into best practices, strategies, and tactics, one of the fundamental guiding principles you must adopt in your leadership is operating from a volunteer mindset.

When we are faced with new ministry opportunities, our first response needs to be “how can I recruit a leader and build a team?” instead of “how can I add this to my already-busy schedule?” You may not need to hire someone, you might need to recruit a volunteer.

You might not need a new staff member, you might to develop that volunteer.

You probably shouldn't add something else to your to-do list, you probably need to

empower a volunteer.

You can create a team of people, starting with just one person, who love responding to explorers and consider it their personal ministry.

This is a non-Sunday morning volunteer role, which means it could be open to a wide variety of people. It's also an chance to tap into someone's relational skills in a fresh way.

When you start thinking about the possibilities of reaching explorers through the Gloop platform, don't think of the additional work you will need to do – think of the volunteer leader you get to raise up to lead the initiative.

2. Ask People Personally

Who is the best person to lead this program? You're probably not going to find them by making an announcement from the stage or writing a blurb in the next email newsletter. Instead, you'll want to ask someone personally.

This digital volunteer team is a great role for someone who is relationally and digitally savvy. You'll want to be strategic with the person you ask to lead the team or be a part of the program.

Jot down the qualities you're looking for and then ask God to bring the right person to mind. Then sit down with them and cast vision for the opportunity. Let them know you'll support them, resource them, and champion the cause.

You don't need a lot of people; you need the right people.

3. Vision First, Training Second

When bringing in someone new, the temptation will be to overload them with resources and training.

This isn't a bad thing since, after all, you want them to be successful.

But too much information too early in the process could short-circuit their experience. Certainly share the most important facts with them, but spend the most time talking about the vision for the overall program.

Talk about what could happen.
Talk about the ministry conversations they will have.

Talk about how this new endeavor will help the whole church reach new people.

Talking about what's possible is actually the best form of training you can provide, because you'll inspire people to stay engaged and be willing to learn when the time is right.

4. Clarify Expectations

One of your most important roles as a leader is that of Chief Clarity Officer.

It's up to you to remind people what is most important. It's your job to continually remind them where they add the most value. And it's your job to make sure they know how what they do helps your church fulfill the mission.

As important as it is to cast vision, it might even be more important to cast clarity. As you build a volunteer team to help you respond to explorers, make sure you are clear in what you're asking them to do. Give people a simple, written job description that clearly articulates how they should respond, where they go for help, and who to talk to if they get stuck. Be honest about the time commitment and put it all in writing.

Potential volunteers won't be scared by this - they will be grateful. And when they know the expectations, they can meet them.

This is true for every volunteer role that exists in your church, including existing and new roles.

5. Share Relevant Resources

Once you've given them the basics, make sure they know what other resources are available to them and where to find them. Every now and then, shoot them a note with a link to some bite-sized training. Take a look at the resource library and share a link that feels relevant.

When you were in high school, your teachers took you through a specific curriculum to teach you the basics. For better or worse, that's how we usually teach kids what we think they need to know.

Most adults are different.

You're probably not motivated to learn something until you need to know it. You prefer "just-in-time" training.

First Responder Volunteer Job Description

Your Leader: Fred Smith, 770-222-4222, fred@crosscitychurch.com

Time Required: 2-4 hours a week

Meetings: All-Volunteer Meeting twice a year

Our church has the opportunity to serve people online who are looking for hope or answers in a time of need. It works like this:

1.

Somene sees an ad online or on TV promoting a website like churchescare.com or hegetsus.com.

2.

They engage on the site and send a message, which is quickly routed to us.

3.

You respond with a voice of hope and connection in their life.

Here Are Four Terms You Probably Need To Know:

Explorer – This is the term for people reaching for encouragement, prayer, or answers.

Gloo – This is the technology partner and platform that routes explorers to our church.

Campaign – Explorers may be connected with you through campaigns like hegetsus.com, churchescare.com or other types of felt-need ads.

Responder – That’s you! Think of yourself as a “first responder” – you’ll be the first person to digitally connect with someone who has a need or question.

As a Responder For Our Church, Here’s What You Will Do Throughout The Week:

1. You’ll receive a notification when an explorer is looking to connect, but you can also check your “Explorer Inbox.”
2. Use the Gloo website app to quickly respond to explorers when they reach out.
3. Respond to Explorers via text in a timely manner. *Explorers are nearly 70% more likely to respond when they hear from someone within 15 minutes of submitting their information!*
4. You do not need to solve the Explorer’s problems; instead, focus on encouraging them to engage with you and share more about what is going on. Build trust first and gradually bring Gospel-truths into the conversation. Here’s [a guide](#) to help you have conversations.
5. Make notes in the Gloo app under **Status** to indicate the level of communication you’ve had with an Explorer.

Here’s Where To Go If You Need Help:

1. The [Getting Started Course](#) in Gloo’s [Resource Center](#) will give you a good overview. There are also resources on how to have difficult conversations, what to do if a minor reaches out, or how to move a conversation to face-to-face when ready.
2. Reach out to leadership if this Explorer requires greater care than you can provide! It is perfectly fine to seek outside help.

Activating Volunteers to Engage Explorers

How The Grove Church uses Gloop to reach and serve people in need in their city, and activate volunteers along the way.

About

The Grove Church in Bartonville, Texas, has centered its mission around “reaching people where they are and helping them come alive in Christ.” From their inception, The Grove Church has looked for ways to make a difference in their community.

Their Challenge

Pastor Ben Scheck was brought in to lead the congregation in January 2021 during a season when the number of positive COVID-19 individuals began to spike. Unfortunately, this resulted in limiting The Grove’s opportunities to get to know people in their community in person.

“What Gloop did was bring about another venue for us to reach people that we probably would never see or even notice otherwise,” says Pastor Ben Scheck.

Activating Volunteers

With Pastor Ben Scheck leading the congregation, he saw an opportunity to partner with Gloop to reach and connect with people in their rapidly growing DFW area. “Within Gloop is a love for Jesus and a heart for the lost. That’s what I want for my family, for our congregation and for the community,” says Pastor Ben. As Pastor

Ben began receiving Explorers, he quickly realized that he needed help responding, and began activating the spiritual gifts of his congregation to minister to the needs of Explorers by building a team of ‘first responders.’

“Gloop has allowed members who are unable to come to church the ability to serve with the church by being online ‘first responders.’ Gloop creates opportunities for those with spiritual gifts of mercy, shepherding, etc. to use their gifts to serve the needs of others.”

— Pastor Ben Scheck, The Grove Church

The Solution: The Explorer Inbox

Pastor Ben needed an easy and safe way to manage connections to Explorers and assign ‘first responders’. The Explorer Inbox made it easy to have all the important Explorer information stored in one place—a single

source of truth that gave the whole team a level of transparency and urgency to meet Explorers needs.

The Results

With Gloop's help, The Grove has already connected with 89 Explorers. Because of how simple it was to assign volunteers to Explorer Connections, Pastor Ben isn't overwhelmed with too many Explorers at one time, and volunteers have time to engage, reach out with a text in-platform.

Building a 'First Responders' Team

Beginning with a spiritual gifts test, Pastor Ben pinpoints people in his congregation who have different backgrounds and life experiences that could be shared with Explorers who are going through similar situations. "When an Explorer is matched, I look for folks on my team who have dealt with relationship issues or have dealt with depression or anxiety over the years and have insights on how counseling has helped them out," says Pastor Ben.

Pastor Bens's 5 Steps to Activate Volunteers

Start with a spiritual gifts inventory to see where God is gifting your congregation.

Identify individuals with different backgrounds and gifts like shepherding, mercy, and listening.

Reach out to volunteers one-on-one to tell them they would be a great volunteer fit.

Train your volunteers with Gloop resources that expose them to Explorer's needs they might encounter.

Lean on the Holy Spirit to guide conversations with Explorers.

Bob's Story of Faith

There have been countless connections to Explorers, but one of the most moving for Pastor Ben was Bob's story of faith. Bob [name has been changed to protect confidentiality]. After insurance complications left Bob hopeless as he battled cancer, he looked online for encouragement. Bob reached out to talk with a local church after seeing one of Gloop's outreach ads and was connected to The Grove Church. Pastor Ben received Bob's message in his Explorer Inbox and responded with an encouraging text. A text turned into a phone call and eventually led to Pastor Ben driving to meet him in person, exactly where he was at.

"Bob and I laughed and we cried. We shared Scripture together and I prayed over him and anointed him with oil. He just welled up with tears and shared a confidence with me that he knows he's going to be healed. Whether it's on this side of heaven or on the other side of heaven, he knows that God is going to bring him healing."

— Pastor Ben Scheck, The Grove Church





We're here to help!

Our Success Managers are ready to answer any questions you may have.

[Schedule a quick call today](#)