

TRIANGLE

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Brief description:

Disciples of Jesus need to understand what a balanced Christian life looks like and be able to self diagnose where they have deficiencies, allowing them to take action steps to grow where they are weak.

When to use this shape:

When people in your huddle are missing any of the elements of UP, IN, or OUT. You may notice something out of balance or they may comment on the fact that something doesn't feel right in their relationships with God.

Missing UP could look like:

trying to live the Christian life on their own power, not God's, which leads to either pride or to discouragement

Missing IN could look like:

lack of vulnerability and true Gospel friendships with Christian community

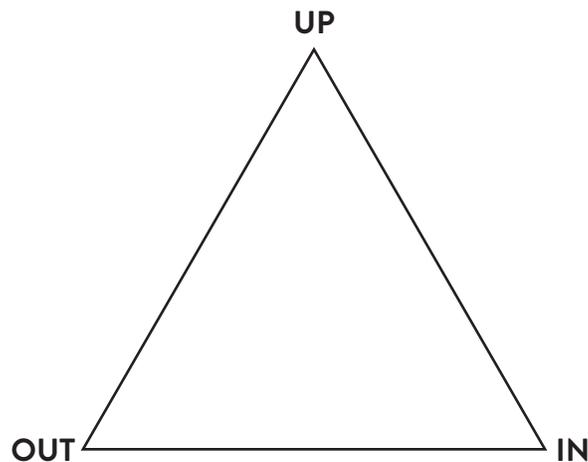
Missing OUT could look like:

only focused on hanging out with God and Christians, never sharing the gospel or developing relationships with nonbelievers

A perfect picture of Jesus interacting in all three areas of the Triangle can be seen in Luke 6:12-19.

Scripture: LUKE 6:12-19

12 One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God. 13 When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles: 14 Simon (whom he named Peter), his brother Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, 15 Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Simon who was called the Zealot, 16 Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor. 17 He went down with them and stood on a level place. A large crowd of his disciples was there and a great number of people from all over Judea, from Jerusalem, and from the coastal region around Tyre and Sidon, 18 who had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases. Those troubled by impure spirits were cured, 19 and the people all tried to touch him, because power was coming from him and healing them all.



Shape:

UP – Connection with God

IN – Connection with Christian Community

OUT – Connection with non-Christians and the Mission of God

Description:

Following Jesus entails three areas of activity, three groups of relationships, and to leave even one of them out leads to an unbalanced life. Just relating to God is not enough to fully experience life as you were intended to experience it. Friendships with other Christians are not the only relationships you were made for. It's not normal and it's not ok to not be on mission and not have relationships with non-Christians.

As followers of Jesus, we look to His life lived on earth to learn what our life as a human is supposed to look like. The biggest thing we notice from Jesus' life is His variety of relationships that shape so much of His daily life. When we classify all of His relationships, we see that they fall into three categories: Up, In, and Out:

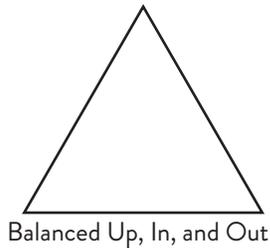
- **UP** - Jesus prioritized His relationship with God the Father and had intentional time alone with Him. He also showed His disciples how to do it by talking to His Father in front of them. Health in all other relationships flows out of our relationship with God.
- **IN** - If anyone could do life on their own it was Jesus. However, he chose not to do his life by himself and instead he chose to do it with others. Jesus gave His closest friends extra, inside access to His life so they saw how He lived out every area of His personal life. He also knew them well enough to know how to care for and speak to them in just the way they needed. Through Jesus' relationships with His closest friends, they embraced the things most important to Jesus.
- **OUT** - Jesus developed relationships with those who were not yet connected with Him and those who were outcasts in their society and the mass population. He did this by His teachings and serving them through His actions. And Jesus wasn't afraid to relate to outsiders no matter what others thought.

The reality is that we were created to be three-dimensional people. When there is not balance in all areas, we wobble through life and do not experience life as we were created to experience it. In addition, when one dimension is missing or suppressed, the other two do not work as they should. Moving towards balance means growing in self-awareness of your own strengths and weaknesses. When you recognize your deficiency, you then get to choose how you are going to join God in your sanctification. So if you are low in UP, then you need to learn and experience more connection with God through reading the Bible and prayer. Learning some new ways to engage Bible reading and new ways to pray could be the action steps you need to grow stronger in your UP. If you have deficient IN, you probably need to take an inventory of the relationships with fellow believers God has sovereignly placed in your life, planning intentional time to spend with them, serving them in ways that meet their needs, and allowing them to know you (your joys and interests and fears and needs). If you need to grow in OUT, you probably need to learn some simple tools for understanding how to share your faith and your story, and take note of the people God has sovereignly placed in your life for you to share the message of the gospel with. It also means you need to find some places where you can begin to serve the world, and define the specifics of what it means for you to be light in the dark places that are available to you.

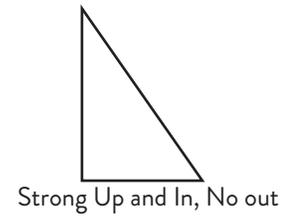
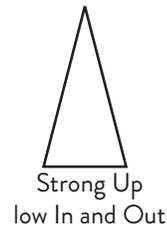
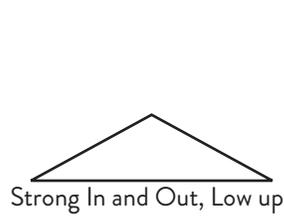
A balanced life has healthy relationships in all three areas: Relationship with God, Relationships in Community, and Relationships with outsiders/non-believers. Most of us can identify one of these three areas that we are better at than the others. We may even be able to point to two areas where we feel strong. And there is almost always at least one area where we are weak. What we want is balance.

When we draw it out, a balanced life looks like an equilateral triangle, and an unbalanced life looks like all those other triangles you learned about in geometry class.

BALANCED



UNBALANCED



Application questions to ask in huddle:

How does one dimension of the triangle being out of balance affect the other two? What does your triangle look like? (rank UP, IN, & OUT in your own life) Take a few minutes and select the question from the list below that you least desire to answer. Pick from the list that reflects the weakest side of your triangle. Walk through the Kairos Circle with what you are learning about yourself, your question, and your triangle. What are you going to do this week to move towards balance in your life?

UP Questions //

- Do I make enough space for prayer?
- What situation or what person is weighing on my heart?
- Am I noticing God's strength and power more and more in my life?
- Do I still feel pleasure?
- Am I living in a state of peace?
- Am I afraid or nervous?
- Am I obedient to God's prompting?

IN Questions //

- Do I love the people in my community?
- Am I resting enough?
- How are my relationships with my friends?
- Am I experiencing intimacy in relationships?
- Do I keep my promises?
- How easy is it for me to trust people?
- Am I discipling others?
- Is my family happy?
- Am I sleeping/eating well?
- Am I making myself vulnerable to others?

OUT Questions //

- Do I have a heart for people not living in the story of Jesus?
- How often do I share my faith?
- Do I leave time for relationships with non-christians?
- Do I have a vision?
- Am I dying to success?
- Am I proud of the gospel or ashamed?
- Am I a servant?
- Do I intentionally spend time with the poor?
- Do I find it easy to recognize people of peace?
- Can I take a risk?
- Am I generous with my finances to those who don't have enough?

Resources and Sources:

Building a Discipling Culture by Mike Breen