Groups are regular, long haul space to **share, care, trust and grow**. Welcome!

Facilitator: Read the guide. Prep sticky notes, pens. Note some thoughts to grease the wheels. Trust the 3 strands showing up!

## Get Started                                                                                   10-15 mins

*Welcome!* There are some big problems out there. Can we all agree? As much as we might wish we weren't, life woven deeply says we are not apart from those problems (their impact or their causes). But that also means we are not apart from the solutions! But really looking them in the eye and wondering about our role takes some big time courage and some really good company to practice with.

Review the **Group Agreements**. *By the way, we do this every week so they are part of our groove when we need them. It's a* 'practice when it's easy so you have the skills you need when it's not' *thing.* Take your time, passing around to read.

**Check-In.** Taking on the challenging stuff makes gratitude, humor and delight all the more important. *Go around, share names and…what is something that made you smile or laugh you this week?*

Welcome again. Thanks everyone for showing up today. This wouldn't be much of a group without you!
And Fabric wouldn't be much of a community without Groups!

## Discussion & Practice Ideas                                                                   30-60 mins

1. **Political polarization has been described as "the problem behind all the other problems."** *What do you think? How does it affect a problem you care about?*
   - Jeff talked about "turning down the heat" in order to be able to relate and solve problems. Not removing it all together. *How is heat a good thing? What happens when things get too hot?*
   - *Does talking about this as an ongoing, 3-stranded community help? How? Who does it help?*

2. *Talk about places you go when it comes to thinking about the state of politics and democracy right now.* Ian shared three common (and unhelpful) impulses when it comes to facing big challenges: **Denial, despair, double-down.** *Which "D" is your go-to?*

3. How can you be part of EBBing the tide? Look at [the list of ideas](#) for **equipping** yourself to be part of the solution rather than the problem. *What have you tried and learned from these or similar things? What could you learn?* What is ONE **brave** step you could try toward "turning down the heat?" *Any wins to* **brag** *about (counting TRYING as one win)? What did you learn from it? What happened?*

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**Close**  (Don't miss this.)                                                                           5-15 mins

**Take aways.** *What is one thing you want to make sure to carry into your week?*

**Check in on plans** for upcoming meetings:  who is facilitating, providing hospitality, or other needs of your group. *Remember, anyone is welcome to serve the group as facilitator.*  **Next meeting:**

> **Ian is visiting Groups! Can he visit yours to get to know more people and hear what matters to you? When would be good options for him to visit your group? Let Melissa know so she can help coordinate. And if you have any questions.**

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**Group Agreements**

1. **Push pause.** The world is noisy. Before speaking, take a breath…. let Silence be a voice in your Group.

2. **Be present.** Your being here matters! Step up to share when you are ready. Step back to listen.

3. **Share what you want** when you want. "I'll pass" is always an option.

4. **Confidentiality.** Always ask before sharing anything outside the group, even if it is with the most supportive of intentions.

5. **Wonder over judgment.** Stay curious about yourself and others. Practice open and honest questions.

6. **Listening is a superpower.** Listening to others share their own experiences, struggle and strength is empowering. So is being listened to!

7. **Speak from your own experience,** to the whole group. Ask for help or feedback for yourself if you'd like, but avoid crosstalk, fixing, interpretation, or unsolicited advice directed toward any one person.

*These agreements are practiced, not perfected! You can always circle back with the group or an individual to share how something felt to you or check in. Practice when it's easy!*

Sometimes there will be care and support needs that go beyond what can be addressed within your normal group operation. That's a good time to pull out the **Care IQ** tools.

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Life woven deeply.