



# WAYS OF LIFE

And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

Acts 2v42-47



REVISED AND EXPANDED EDITION

"Savvy and insightful."

—*New York Times*

# ALONE TOGETHER



WHY WE EXPECT **MORE** from  
TECHNOLOGY and **LESS**  
from EACH OTHER

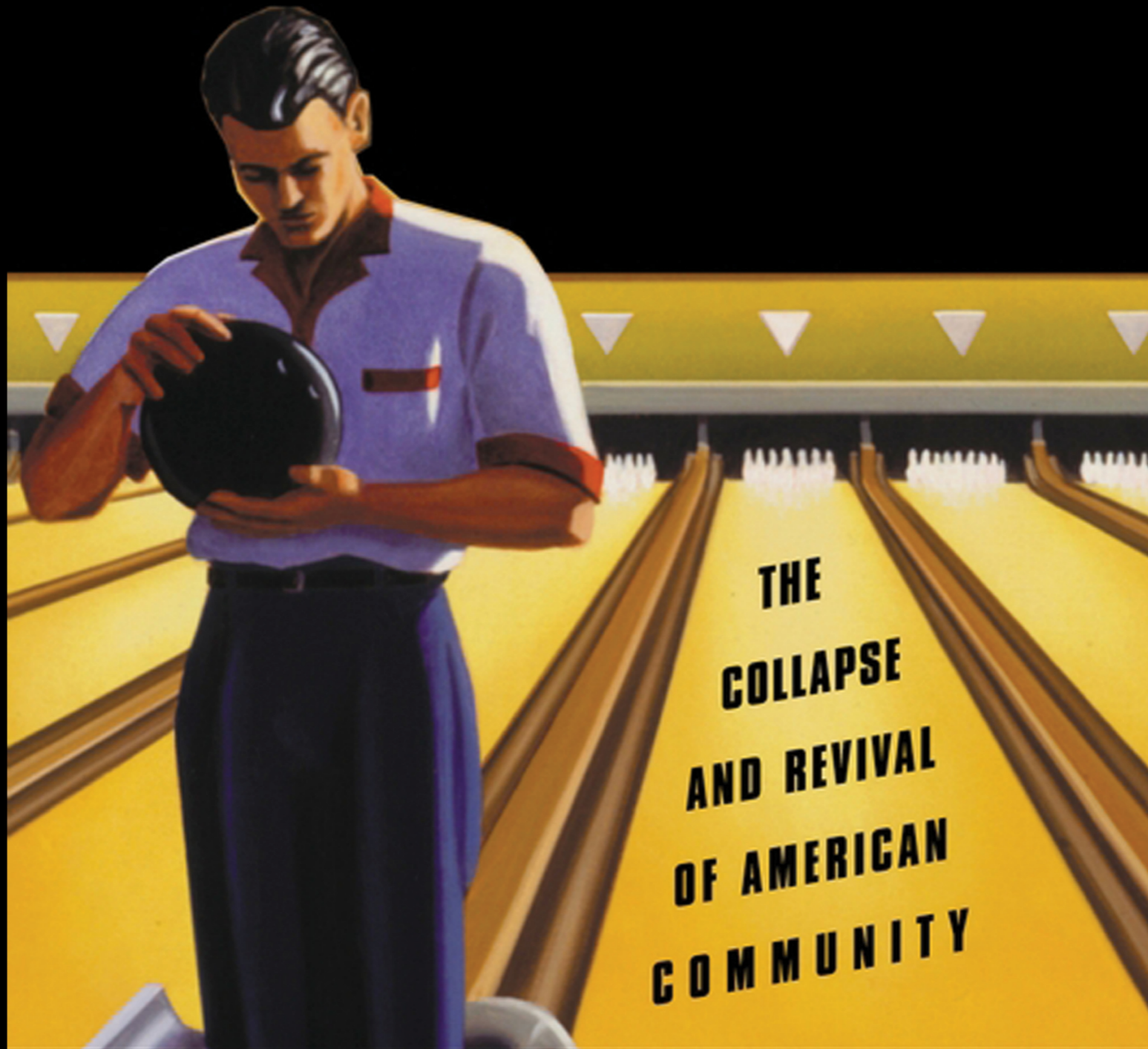


SHERRY TURKLE

Our networked life allows us to hide from each other, even as we are tethered to each other... we are a people who take comfort in being in touch with a lot of people whom we also keep at bay.

- Sherry Turkle

# BOWLING ALONE



**Robert D. Putnam**

READ BY ARTHUR MOREY

Our propensity for spiritual and communal wanderlust is detrimental to our formation into Christlikeness.

To be human is to be relational.

Jesus modeled intentional community.



Jesus redefined his own community.

Early followers of Jesus experienced life-changing community.

There is a tension between what community is and what we hope it would be.

Every human wish dream that is injected into the Christian Community is a hindrance to genuine community and must be banished if genuine Community is to survive. He who loves his dream of a community more than the Christian Community itself becomes a destroyer of the latter, even though his personal intentions may be ever so honest and earnest and sacrificial.

- Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Our expectations of community often center around our comfort over our transformation.

The way of community as Jesus intended is not for our comfort, but for our transformation. And true community will always **expose** our real selves and see to it that our expectations of community fail us - because what we want is not always best for us.

“Almost everyone finds their early days in a community ideal. It all seems perfect. They feel they are surrounded by saints, heroes, or at the least, the most exceptional people who are everything they want to be themselves. And then comes the let-down. The greater their idealization of the community at the start, the greater the disenchantment. If people manage to get through this second period, they come to a third phase – that of realism and of true commitment. They no longer see other members of the community as saints or devils, but as people – each with a mixture of good and bad, darkness and light, each growing and each with their own hope. The community is neither heaven nor hell, but planted firmly on earth, and they are ready to walk in it, and with it. They accept the community and the other members as they are; they are confident that together they can grow towards something more beautiful.”

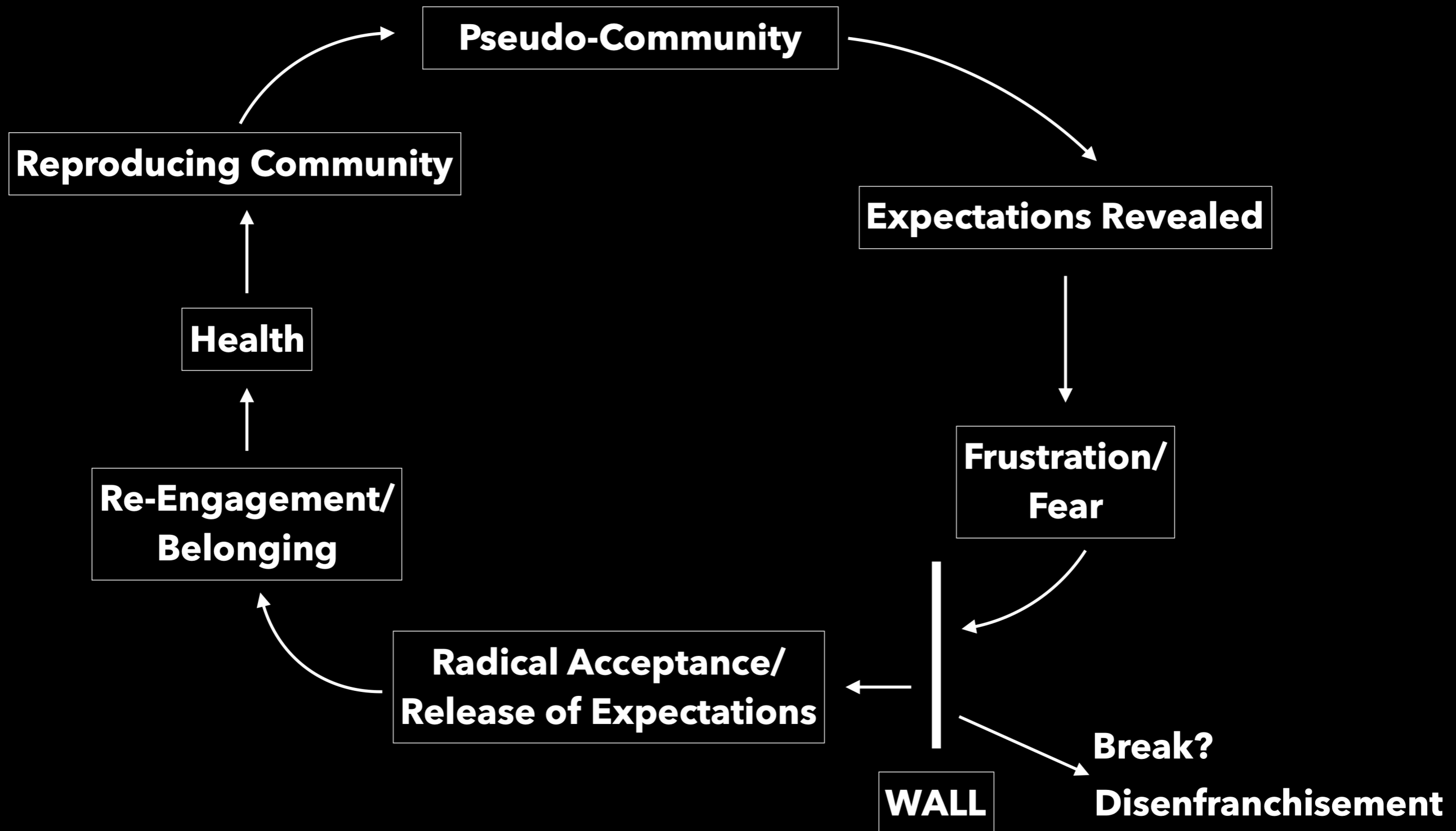
- Jean Vanier

At the core of our being is this truth - we are designed for and defined by our relationships. We were born with a relentless longing to participate in the lives of others. Fundamentally, we are relational souls.

- Richard Plass and James Cofield



# Stages of Community



In years to come, we are going to need many small communities which will welcome lost and lonely people, offering them a new form of family and a sense of belonging. In the past, Christians who wanted to follow Jesus opened hospitals and schools. Now there are so many of these, Christians must commit themselves to the new communities of welcome, to live with people who have no other family, and to show them that they are loved and can grow to greater freedom and that they, in turn, can love and give life to others.

- Jean Vanier

The way of community is necessary in order to become like Jesus.

Spiritual formation occurs primarily in the context of community. People who remain connected with their brothers and sisters in the local church almost invariably grow in self-understanding, and they mature in their ability to relate in healthy ways to God and to their fellow human beings. This is especially the case for those courageous Christians who stick it out through the often messy process of interpersonal discord and conflict resolution. Long-term interpersonal relationships are the crucible of genuine progress in the Christian life. People who stay also grow.

- Joseph Hellerman

To become like Jesus, we need each other.