

The Power of Groups

By Joe Kreuz — January 2025



— The annual Buffalo Renaissance general meeting never disappoints

What's a group, you ask? Think of it as the ecosystem of your life—personal friend circles, professional associations, golf groups, happy hour huddles, clubs, boards, book clubs, and yes, those endless group chats where 90% of the content is memes, and the other 10% is someone asking, “What’s the plan?”

Groups can also play a vital role in mental health, providing support, therapy, and a sense of belonging.

This post isn't just about my groups—it's about your groups too. It's about celebrating the joy of connection, the lessons we learn from each other, and the sometimes ridiculous (but always memorable) dynamics that emerge when people come together.

Pamela Say, author of *Waking Up Grateful*, introduced me to the Social Change Model for Leadership Development, sparking memories of all the groups that have shaped my journey.

****Foundations of Friendship and Teamwork**** My journey began with my 7th and 8th grade little league football team, the “Marines.” Formed in 1971, this group instilled shared values of teamwork and friendship. Decades later, a vintage team photo and a lively group text keep those memories alive.

Fast forward to high school, and the Williamsville South Golf Team and University of Buffalo Golf Team became another source of enduring friendships. Three years undefeated, three friends for life.

****Professional Circles**** PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PwC) alumni and the Pen Club remain a constant source of camaraderie. Whether on the golf course or around the dinner table, these groups are a meaningful part of my life.

****Mentorship and Legacy Building**** The Buffalo Renaissance Foundation has been dedicated to charitable causes for decades, evolving into a multi-generational circle of philanthropy.

Reflecting on my journey, I realize how each group has added depth to my understanding of leadership and community. Looking ahead, I'm excited to continue forming and contributing to groups that balance shared and individual values, always building relationships that stand the test of time.