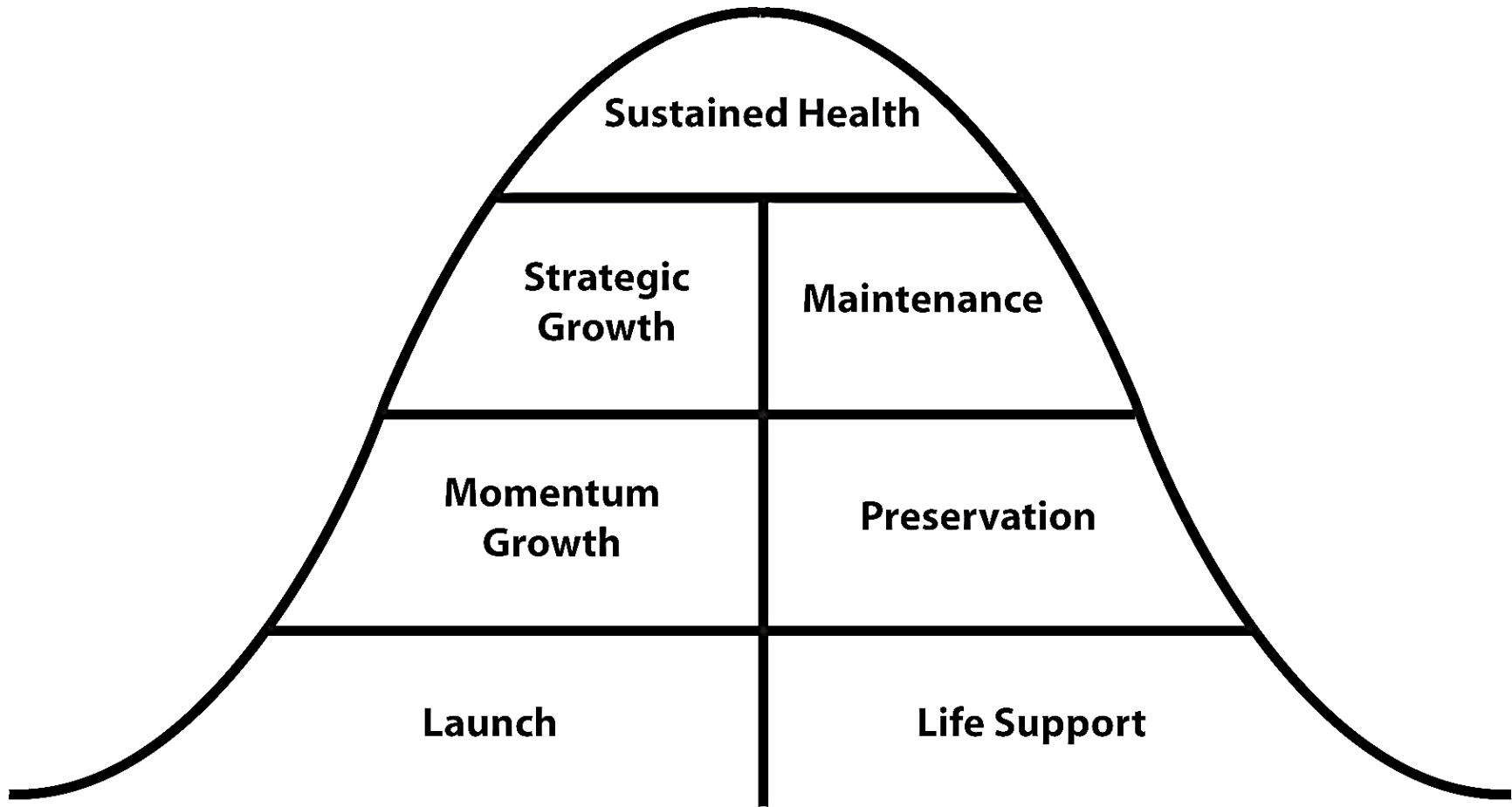


*The Unstuck Church: Equipping Churches to Experience Sustained Health*  
by Tony Morgan



### ***Characteristics of Launch:***

- It's a new beginning
- Priority is on reaching new people
- Heavy reliance on volunteer engagement
- Very little competes with weekend worship
- There are few if any rules
- Finances are tight

### ***Characteristics of Momentum Growth:***

- There's an outward focus
- There's a lot of buzz
- Creativity and innovation are expected
- They begin to focus their vision
- They are often driven by personality
- They begin to give leadership away

### ***Characteristics of Strategic Growth:***

- They shift from personalities to teams
- Growth pains force leaders to think more strategically
- They confirm their discipleship path
- Systems are established to reinforce healthy behaviors
- Structure forms to support future growth
- They begin to flex their healthy change muscles

### ***Characteristics of Sustained Health:***

- The church is growing over time
- The church is unified
- The ministry is bearing good fruit
- The ministry is multiplying
- The church embraces the new
- The people are generous

### ***Characteristics of Maintenance:***

- Attendance growth plateaus or begins to decline
- The church becomes insider-focused
- The vision stales
- Ministry silos begin to form
- The church becomes overstaffed
- The church remains financially healthy

### ***Characteristics of Preservation:***

- Attendance and finances are both declining
- Methods become more important than the mission
- There's a prevailing pull to go back to the way things used to be
- The strong leaders and visionaries have left the church
- Power shifts from the pastor and staff to the lay leadership
- The focus shifts to keeping people from leaving

### ***Characteristics of Life Support:***

- The church is unwilling to change
- There is no fruit
- The church is being led by one key family or one key donor
- The church is usually in financial crisis
- The church is aging
- The blame game takes root

### ***Next Steps for a Church in the Launch Stage:***

- Start with Strong Leadership: You Need a Leader More than You Need a Pastor or Preacher
- Identify Who You Are Trying to Reach: You Need to Identify Your Target Audience (and It Needs to Be Younger)
- Determine the Primary Purpose of Your Ministry: You Need a Mission That Turns Some People Away from Your Church
- Establish a Financial Plan: Hope and Prayer Won't Pay the Bills
- Give the Ministry Away to Volunteers: God Did Not Design the Church for the Pastor to Make Every Hospital Visit

### ***Next Steps for a Church in the Momentum Growth Stage:***

- Make Space for Growth: Always Build a New Service Before You Build a New Building
- You Need to Define Your Vision: Create a Picture of the Future That Both Rallies and Repels People
- A clear vision that is properly communicated will rally AND repel people
- Skip the Core Values and Develop Team Values: The Values of Your Church Will Be a Reflection of the Values of Your Team
- Give Leadership Away: If You Have to Call All the Shots, You Are Not a Leader
- Don't Neglect the Health of Your Soul: God Will Not Bless Your Ministry If You Don't Honor the Sabbath

### ***Next Steps for a Church in the Strategic Growth Stage:***

- Build a Strategy to Accomplish Your Vision: Good Stewardship Demands a Good Plan of Attack
- Implement Systems Around Common Touch Points: Don't Let One Person Become a Bottleneck to Helping More People
- Adjust Your Structure to Reflect Your Strategy: Start by Making Sure the Senior Pastor Has a Healthy Span of Care
- Clarify the Discipleship Path: Keeping People Busy in Ministry Activities Doesn't Produce Spiritual Growth
- Increase the Leadership Capacity of Your Team: Leadership Isn't Leadership If It Isn't Released to Others

### ***Next Steps for a Church in the Sustained Health Stage:***

- Confirm the Ministry is Bearing Good Fruit: Your Ministry Strategy Should Produce New Disciples of Jesus
- Pursue Health and Growth Over Time: If the Church is Healthy, It Will Continue to Grow
- Establish and Maintain Unity: Be Ruthless About Eliminating Any Division, Particularly at the Leadership Level
- Multiply Your Impact: The Mission is Not About You but Rather Your Need to Mobilize Others
- Don't Hold On to the Past: Healthy Churches Embrace New Changes to Get New Results
- Be Generous: Stewardship Is a Better Financial Strategy than Hope

### ***Next Steps for a Church in the Maintenance Stage:***

- Renew the Vision: Embrace the Change Before the Emergency Forces the Change
- Prioritize Reaching New People: Reconfirm the Primary Person You're Trying to Reach is Outside the Church
- Curtail the Complexity Creep: Shift from Adding Programs to Clarifying a Path
- Stop Low-Impact Programs and Events: Reprioritize Resources Around New Initiatives to Accomplish Your Renewed Vision
- Get a Fresh Perspective: Invest in Outside Help to Disrupt the Inside Voices

### ***Next Steps for a Church in the Preservation Stage:***

- Change Demands Intentional Leadership: You Can't Keep Everyone Happy and Experience the Change that Produces Health
- Address the Warning Signs First: You Can't Ignore Problems and Expect Them to Go Away
- Look Backward to Move Forward: The Key to Health May Be in the Rearview Mirror
- Structure Boards for Health and Impact: Move More People into Ministry over Meetings
- Prioritize the Main Thing: Adding More Events to the Calendar Will Not Produce Church Health

### ***Next Steps for a Church in the Life Support Stage:***

- Embrace the New Mission: Begin by Reestablishing Why the Church Exists
- Go back to the start: It's Time to Relaunch a New Life Cycle
- Experience Hope: But Develop a Plan and Put It into Action