



Care Groups General Guidelines 2016

Our Vision is to be "An Acts Church for Today" and
Our Mission is "Leading Generations into a Life-changing Relationship with Jesus Christ."
The Care Group is an important environment in which we can work towards achieving our
Vision and Mission.

1. Premise – Theological Basis of a Care Group

1.1. God is Community

- The Trinity
 - Gen 1:26, Mat 3:16-17, Mat 28:19-20, 2Co 13:14
- The Trinity relates in love, delight and honour
 - Mat 3:17, Joh 16:14, Joh 17:24-26
- Since we are made in the image of God, we are made for community
 - Gen 1:27

1.2. Jesus has united the church in Community

- Joh 17:22, 1Co 12:12-13, Gal 3:28, Eph 2:14, Eph 4:4-6, 1 Joh 1:3

1.3. We are commanded to live in Community

- Joh 13:34-35, Gal 6:2, Heb 10:24-25

The Care Group is an important avenue where church members can practise community

2. Purpose – Objective of a Care Group

The purpose of a Care Group in Gospel Light is to **care** for one another.
Some of the ways we can achieve this are via C.A.R.E.S:

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| 2.1. Connect: | getting to know one another |
| 2.2. Adore: | thanking and praising God |
| 2.3. Reach-out: | welcoming newcomers and engaging pre-believers |
| 2.4. Edify: | building one another up in the faith |
| 2.5. Serve: | meeting one another's needs |

3. Principles - Key Guidelines for a Care Group

- 3.1.** It is about relationships, not rituals.
- 3.2.** It is about serving the people, not making use of people.
- 3.3.** It is a community where everyone C.A.R.E.S, not only where they are cared for.
- 3.4.** It is to be aligned to the local church, not isolated from the local church.
- 3.5.** It is to be outward-looking, not just inward-looking.

4. Practices – Recommended Steps for a Care Group Meeting

4.1. BEFORE - What to prepare for a meeting?

- Confirm date, time and place
- Remind members about meeting plans

4.2. DURING - What to do in a typical meeting?

Connect:	refreshments, games, simple conversations
Adore:	singing, thanksgiving
Reach-out:	welcome newcomers, outreach activities
Edify:	sharing on scripture, books, Christian videos*
Serve:	prayer, refreshments, hospitality, encouragement, fulfilling different roles in a Care Group (eg. song-leader, facilitator, refreshment IC etc.)

Confirm arrangements for the next meeting:

- Agenda
- Assignment of roles
- Allocation of place, date and time

*Example: Life in the Spirit/ 2:7/ Highquest/ John studies/ Gospel Light sermons

4.3. AFTER - What to do outside the meeting?

- Communications
 - WhatsApp chat group
 - Phone calls
 - Social media
- Activities
 - Visitation
 - One-on-one meetings (lunch/dinner)
 - Serving together as a Care Group

5. Progression – Life-cycle of a Care Group

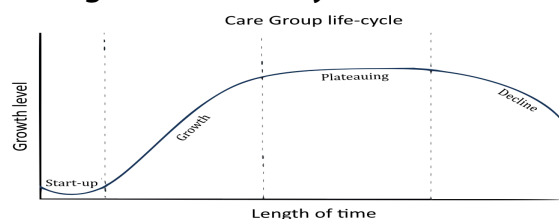


Chart 1:

In general, a Care Group typically enjoys good dynamics for about 2-3 years before a natural decline.

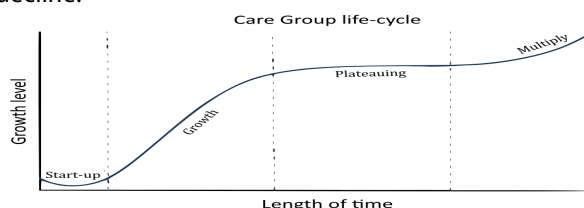


Chart 2:

Renewal via multiplication results in a healthy progression.

While multiplication may not always be possible, Care Groups should pray and labour towards that end.

*Charts adapted from <http://proecclesia.net/tag/plateau/?cb=09474862185306847>.
(accessed on 3rd October 2016)

5.1. The new Care Group leader

The new Care Group leader is the key to multiplication.

Selection of a potential Care Group leader is an intentional process.

Ideally, it should be embarked upon early in the life of the Care Group.

There are 5 steps involved in the selection of a new Care Group leader:

- Ask (pray for God to reveal the right leader)
- Appoint (selection criteria of the leader)
 - F.A.S.T (faithful, available, shepherd's heart, teachable)
 - Member of Gospel Light Christian Church
 - Member of a Care Group
 - Consensus amongst the members within the Care Group
 - Consensus amongst the Care Group leaders within the Cluster & Congregation Leaders' Group
- Associate (spend time with the potential leader)
 - Connect spiritually over prayer and the Word
 - Dialogue on Care Group purpose and philosophy
 - Share experiences of the Care Group
 - Invite potential leader to Cluster / Congregation Leaders meetings
 - Mentor potential leader
- Assign (progressively share the ministry with the potential leader)
 - Direct – tell him/her what to do
 - Equip – show him/her how to do
 - Support – guide him/her to do
 - Delegate – let him/her do

- Affirm
 - Feedback and encouragement
 - The Care Group Leader and the Cluster Leader will assess overall suitability
 - When ready, announce his/her appointment as Care Group leader
 - The new Care Group Leader will be accountable to and be supported by other Care Group leaders and their Cluster Leader throughout the process

5.2. The core of the Care Group

The core members of the Care Group are fundamental to its success.

- Prayerfully select 2-4 potential core members
 - The core members provide stability to the new Care Group
 - They share in the care of the new members.
 - They also share in the various roles and responsibilities eg. hosting, facilitating, cooking, leading and contacting.
- Regularly work together with your core members in the journey of the Care Group eg. planning, organising, decision-making
- The number of core members can increase as the Care Group grows in size
- The next potential Care Group leader is likely to be from among the core members

5.3. The Care Group

- Group size
 - Min 6-8 (including the core members)
 - Max 10-12 for a start
- Group Meetings
 - Frequency: Weekly recommended- formally or informally
 - Location: Home setting is preferred
- Avenues to connect with potential new Care Group members
 - From natural spheres of influences of the core members.
 - From another existing Care Group (with the agreement of the other Care Group's leader)
 - At church activities eg. newcomers party, camps, membership class
 - Recommendations from other Care Group leaders
 - Newcomers to church (as suggested by the Shepherds)

Appendix

A. Frequently Asked Questions

- 1) *Can a lady lead a Care Group?*
Yes. We believe that a lady can lead a Care Group. But she should not be leading it if her own husband is a member of that Care Group.
- 2) *Can I be a member of a Care Group if I worship in another church?*
Yes. We would love to serve you in whatever ways we can. However, we do not recommend it for the long run. In our experience, the best way for you to be cared for and for you to serve is to do so within one local body of believers.
- 3) *Can I bring my unsaved friends to a Care Group?*
Absolutely! This is the "R" of C.A.R.E.S. That is what we are for. Individual Care Groups can decide among themselves the appropriate time and avenue for unsaved friends to visit.
- 4) *Why can't we meet monthly instead of weekly?*
We have learned that we care for one another best when we meet regularly and frequently. If we miss a monthly meeting, it will be 2 months before we meet again.
- 5) *Can I lead a Care Group without attending the leaders' meetings?*
The leaders' meetings provide accountability and support for you. They are also platforms where the leaders can collaborate. We strongly encourage your active participation.
- 6) *Where can I find support and guidance for cases beyond my abilities?*
You can find support and guidance from your Shepherd and your fellow Care Group leaders.
- 7) *How do we handle young children in our Care Group?*
You can work out with the members in your Care Group what the best plan is for your children.
- 8) *What if one of the members comes with a hidden/wrong agenda?*
If you sense that a member is attending your Care Group with a wrong or hidden agenda, clarify the situation with him or her. If need be, discuss the situation with your core members. After discussing with your core members, you may want to involve your Cluster Leader for appropriate actions to be taken if necessary.
- 9) *How do I deal with a misfit?*
Chemistry is a very strange thing. We must serve everyone, but we may not be able to serve everyone as effectively as someone else. There are other Care Groups in the local church that may be able to serve him or her better. If you feel your group is not suitable for a particular member, discuss it with your Shepherd and fellow Care Group leaders.
- 10) *How can I help my members to discover their spiritual gifts?*
You can help your members discover their spiritual gifts by teaching and discussing what the Bible says about spiritual gifts, encouraging them to take steps to serve, and encourage them and provide feedback as they do.

You may listen to this sermon "You are Gifted by God" by Gospel Light Christian Church as a starting point. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xISFk2DDaUY>

No	Resource	Source	Remarks
#	Name	Source	Description
1	Gospel Light sermons	Website/ Youtube	Application to life
2	John studies	Shepherds	Good for seekers/ new believers
3	2:7	Navigators	9-month study on foundations of Christianity
4	Life in the Spirit	Robertson McQuilkin	12-unit group study on the Holy Spirit
5	Move on to Maturity	Mike Redick	16-unit group study on Christian growth
6	Gospel in Life	Tim Keller	8 video sessions (10min each) on living a Gospel-centred life
7	Secrets of the Vine	Bruce Wilkinson	8 video sessions (30min each) teaching on John 15
8	Reason for God	Tim Keller	Apologetics
9	You and Me Forever	Francis Chan	7 video sessions (15min each) on marriage
10	Crazy Love	Francis Chan	10 video sessions (10min each) on Christians love
11	Shepherding a Child's Heart	Tedd Tripp	15 video sessions (30min each) on biblical parenting