



# HOW TO LAUNCH

## A CHRISTIAN SUPPORT GROUP IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

As a compliment to Pastoral Counseling, Christian support and counseling groups are becoming a part of many congregations that seek to provide a dynamic ministry in their community.

### What is a support group?

Webster defines the function of a support group:

- to hold up or serve as a foundation or prop for
- to keep from fainting, yielding, or losing courage
- to keep (something) going

Incorporating these definitions, we can say that a support group is a meeting of people coming alongside of each other to help keep each other going—to help each other maintain a healthy ability to function—so as not to cave in to or lose courage in the face of their suffering or adversity.

This would include elements of encouraging, admonishing, comforting, and assisting one another. A support group is a small group of people who intentionally gather on a regular basis to ensure this happens in their lives in ways and doses that might not naturally occur. Usually the participants are going through similar life difficulties.

### Who will tend to go to a support group?

Those who feel confused, isolated, or alone in their suffering and need to know they are not alone in their struggles.

## START YOUR LAUNCH SUPPORT GROUP TODAY!

Go to [RCCTHEWELL.COM/LAUNCH](https://RCCTHEWELL.COM/LAUNCH) or contact Deborah White at 803-772-7015.

### What makes a support group different from other small groups?

A support group has a distinctive purpose that sets it apart – that of strengthening and lifting those who are suffering or struggling, with compassion and unconditional acceptance.

- Bible study may be a part of the program, it is not primarily a Bible study group.
- Prayer should be a part of the process, it is not primarily a prayer group.
- A witness of Christ should be maintained, it is not primarily an evangelistic event.

A Support Group Ministry is one of the greatest ministries you can start in your church. It not only brings spiritual and emotional healing to a congregation and community. It stores hope and purpose. Let us walk you through how to start this incredible ministry.

# If your church is seeking to provide support groups in your local church, let's get ready to LAUNCH!

## What is LAUNCH?

The LAUNCH principle is not something new. Instead of using the words "create" or "start," when speaking of starting up a new ministry, we use the word LAUNCH. It is the same thing that happens each time a company moves forward with a communications strategy for the launch of a new product to a target market. The church has used it, time in time again in church planting and establishing small group ministry. We help you equip leaders and lay-members for effective ministry in your church providing help for hurting people.

LAUNCH is divided into three components. Each component serves as a guide to help you be more informed, as well as provide you with some additional tools to get started and run an effective support group that will meet the needs of both your congregation and the community at large.

### **PART ONE** RESOURCES: FIND, CREATE, RUN

We have conducted a comprehensive online search for relevant and balanced resources for finding, creating, and running a Christian support group. People who are grieving, trying to break addictions, or facing a host of other life challenges can benefit from a study that provides God's perspective on their suffering or struggles. These resources can be used in Christian support groups or to increase your understanding of the issues.

### **PART TWO** SUPPORT GROUP LEADER TRAINING

Leading Life-Changing Support Groups is designed to identify, equip, encourage and empower individuals desiring to lead support groups by helping and comforting those who are hurting. Some support groups are informal and led by the members themselves, while others are more formal and led by a trained facilitator. **Training includes:** group structure, creating the right atmosphere, developing ground rules, and outreach.

### **PART THREE** LAUNCHING YOUR SUPPORT GROUP

There are six important steps to creating and launching a successful support group. The acronym LAUNCH is a "how to" tool to show the various steps in creating a new support or counseling group. Leverage, assess, utilize, narrow, create, and harness.

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