

HOW ARE COMMUNITY GROUPS AND SUPPORT GROUPS DIFFERENT?



Community Groups and support groups should have a symbiotic/supportive relationship – each giving life to the other.

Community Groups	Support Groups
Defined: central offering - know and be known, transparency, accountability to the good things left undone and do life together.	Defined: designed to help participants invest a season of their life overcoming a life-dominating struggle of sin or suffering.
Meet on an ongoing basis to discuss bible, pray, do ministry together and care for one another	The goal of Support Groups is to see participants graduate back into various ministries and communities in the church, freer from their struggle and with a clearer picture of what it means for believers to care for one another as the gospel transforms the most difficult part of our lives.
Broader purpose	Narrower purpose
Do ministry and life together	Place to overcome a struggle of suffering or sin
Often includes bible study	Support group with a Christian curriculum to help participants overcome sin or suffering so they can re-enter a community group/ ministry in a healthier place
Ongoing	Short term – not intended to be a place of ongoing community
General discipleship	Targeted discipleship
Often formed around factors like age, season of life or relational status	Organized around a common life struggle of sin or suffering
Participants plan to remain in well-formed community groups	Participants goal is to “graduate” into services and community after they reach a satisfying level of change from their life struggle
Offers a place of support after support group involvement that does not inadvertently reinforce a struggle-based identity	Provides a season for people to focus on a single area of needed change. This prevents community groups from being overwhelmed by an intense need in the life of one member.