



# SUMMER SMALL GROUPS

A Quick Guide to Small Groups





### Summary

Summer is a critical part in the life of small groups. Here are five ways to stay connected and build momentum with your small group over the summer.



### Two Minute Read



### Small Group Commitment #2 *Cultivate Relationships*



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Summer is the perfect time to change things up with your small group. Since groups don't formally meet, the summer is intended to provide a break while giving flexibility to each group. Here, the key is connecting with your group in new and creative ways. It's true—*absence makes the heart grow fonder*. This is especially true in the life and ministry of small groups.

## Rest allows your soul to catch up to your body. We need rhythms of rest.

Rather than meeting every week throughout the year, taking a break builds anticipation and increases momentum. When you take a break, you have more to discuss when you get back together. Rather than killing momentum, time apart motivates people to be more committed and engaged when your group gathers together. If you try to meet every week, your small group won't be motivated. Your people will be tired and running on empty.

You're not a machine. God created you to need regular rhythms of rest in order to be healthy. This is true physically, emotionally, mentally, spiritually and *relationally*. You are wired in a way that rest helps you recharge. This is why we take one week off each month. This is why we stop for six weeks over the holidays. And yes, this is why we take a break during the summer. We are committed to maintaining rhythms of rest in small groups.

## Here are five practical ways to stay connected and build momentum while not completely shutting down or avoiding your small group:

### Discipleship is holistic.

Discipleship is more than a sermon-based study, breakout or prayer. Use the summer to connect in new ways and share experiences with your small group. Getting outside of the living room and engaging in new activities can pave the way for God to work in authenticity and accountability. Summer is also a great way to engage families and involve the children in your small group.

### Make minimum goals.

Instead of trying to do too many things with your small group over the summer, make minimum goals that are specific and attainable. Consider meeting with your whole group once a month for a cookout. Consider meeting one-on-one with one person in your group or getting together with just the guys or ladies.

### Relationships don't stop.

As your group meets less frequently, you can't rely on group meetings to communicate prayer requests and important information. This means you will need to use other forms of communication to stay connected with your group. Send a group text, email prayer requests or download an app to help you stay connected with your group. This is especially helpful when people are traveling.

### Encourage mutual ministry.

As a leader, your group might feel like it revolves around you, but it doesn't. Encourage every person in your small group to connect with one person or one couple from the group. Don't try to force this by pairing people up, let your group gravitate toward one another and cultivate their own relationships.

### Invest in yourself.

The biggest tendency of the summer is to view this time as a break and unplug as a leader. Instead, use this time to focus on your own spiritual health and growth. Consider practicing a new spiritual discipline, attend a class, read a book or look for other ways that God can work in your life and refresh you for ministry.

## Not taking a break could lead to regret, bitterness and burnout.

As people, we need times of renewal and rest. Ultimately, the summer is less about what you do and more about connecting in simple ways. This will not only refresh your group, it will set you up for future opportunities.