
LIFESIGNS INSIGHTS[®]

Vol 2.3

Research and insights from LifeSigns Partners, Inc.

REASONS WHY LIFE IS BETTER TOGETHER



CONVERSATIONS THAT WILL CHANGE YOUR LIFE[™]

REASONS WHY LIFE IS BETTER TOGETHER

Why bother?

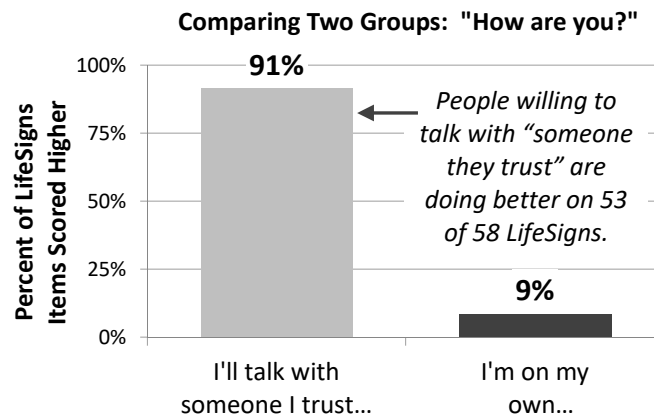
If you've attended church for some time, it's easy to develop an indifference to "churchy things." For example, you may not think a small group could make a big difference in your life. After all, participating in a church-related small group represents a relatively meager slice of your weekly pie. You may think that a small group couldn't possibly impact the rest of your modern, jam-packed, highly caffeinated life.



And you'd be wrong.

The LifeSigns results about relationships are stunning. People who are plugged-in to an authentic, loving small group are doing better at work, at home with the kids, in marriage, in their walk with Christ, and even in their finances.

The very last question on LifeSigns asks you to pick one of three options for your horizontal conversation, with: 1) someone you trust, 2) a pastor, or 3) a LifeSigns coach. We found a massive difference in the overall spiritual health of people who planned to share "with someone I trust" compared with those who said, "I'm on my own." People willing to talk with someone about their LifeSigns results scored higher on 91% of the areas covered by LifeSigns (see graph below).



What are the Implications?

Those numbers tell a scary story. The more you struggle in marriage or live with deep wounds, the more likely you are to become isolated and say, "I can handle this on my own." Isolation is one of the enemy's most effective weapons in his efforts to take you out.

A horizontal LifeSigns conversation takes courage—especially when the storms of life, or a rough patch in your marriage, have prompted you to batten down the hatches. Stop for a moment and consider: Who can be a safe harbor for you? Who can you talk to about the deeper issues in your life? Who could you call tonight?

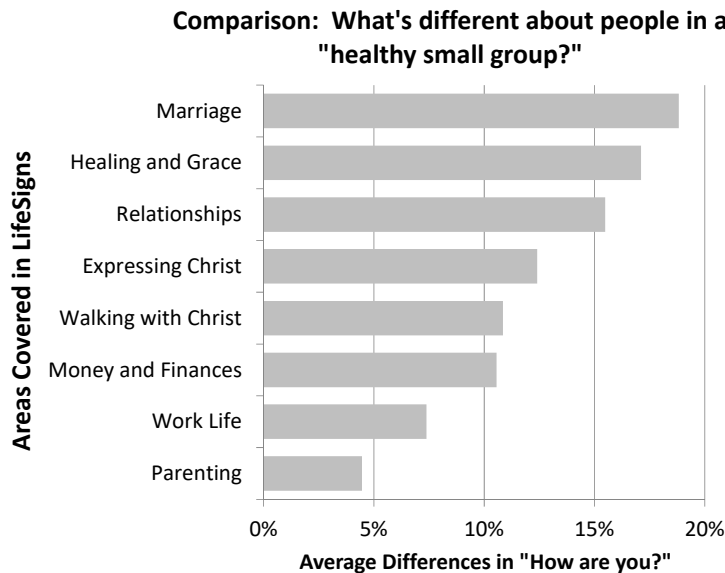
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A Case for Community

Let's clarify what we mean by a "healthy" small group, versus a less-than-healthy small group. While there are many dimensions to a vibrant group, the primary differentiator we used is relational depth—the degree to which it's safe to deal with real life issues. The healthier the group, the more "real life" they're willing to tackle together.

Here's the bottom line: People in a healthy small group are doing better than just about everyone else, in just about every area of life that we covered in LifeSigns (see below).



However, there's a wrinkle to this story: We found that shallow groups are actually worse for your spiritual health than none at all. The people who said, "Yes I'm in a small group, but I don't feel connected" are doing the worst of anyone across 17 different LifeSigns. People in shallow small groups are hurting, but they're hiding. It's not safe, and they know it. Upon seeing this, one pastor remarked, *"It looks like being fake is more dangerous than being alone."*

The Bottom Line?

Intimate biblical relationships are the fertile soil in which you'll grow. God uses relationships to lift you up when you fall and to teach you how to love people through thick and thin. While solitude has its place, God never intended us to go it alone.