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INTERNATIONAL

Presents

**CARE MINISTRY**  
NETWORK INTERNATIONAL

Basic Introduction

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## Basic Introduction

*eBook*

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# THE CARE MINISTRY NETWORK

## INTRODUCTION TO CARE MINISTRY IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

***First of all, on behalf of Care Ministry Network International (CMNi), welcome to one of the most exciting journeys you can ever embark on.***

There is a fresh wind of the Holy Spirit blowing over the Church in this exhilarating season, bringing forth a phenomenon called *The Day of the Saints!* During the First Reformation the Church gave the Bible back to the people; in the next Reformation, the Church is giving the ministry back to the people.

One of the greatest opportunities rising before us is the realization that we can utilize the gifts and abilities of church members to partner with their pastor in a collaborative effort to provide congregational care to one another. The pastor cannot alone provide all the demands of ministry a congregation requires. It is not possible and it's not scriptural either. Pastors have a heavy load to carry and if it's then still expected of them to do all the hospital visits, home calls, personal prayer, and other pastoral matters, the burden becomes too heavy and burn-out becomes inevitable.

We can however not ignore our ministry obligation to care for the people God has put under our charge. It is part of the *Great Commandment* of Loving People. Our people have needs and oftentimes struggle on their own with no-one to adequately care for them. In spite of attending church on Sunday, they still feel lonely and can't help to sometimes even wonder if their pastor knows they there – or whether anyone knows they are there. Our modern-day gadgets were meant to help us connect with other people more effectively but has instead in the process caused a generation of disconnected people relationally.

It is for the reason of people-disconnectedness and many other challenges that we have designed a workable solution called the *Care Ministry Network*. It is not an added-on program, or simply another flavor-of-the-month idea. It is rather a dynamic, yet simple system of care that encompasses the entire congregation, provides a safety net so no-one falls through the cracks, and significantly closes the proverbial back door of the congregation.

Unlike all other programs or ministries, Care Ministry implementation does not *invite* the members-at-large to participate or sacrifice another night of activity at the church to receive ministry. In this application the ministry is rather *taken* to them. It is the only model that gets more people involved more rapidly with more positive results than anything else available.

And what is so exciting is that for the pastor, all the work has already been done! CMNi provides you with printed introductory material, helps you cast the vision, supply at least three vision casting sermon outlines, information brochures to present to your leadership, and everything else you will need to launch this exciting ministry. We furthermore provide the training manual masters for the equipping conference, and then follow up with the powerful launching guide eBook.

## The bottom line of our frustration

All dedicated pastors desire to see their churches grow. We often see new faces in the crowd, but never see the attendance numbers rise. We may have for too long held an erroneous perspective. It is very likely that we concentrate only on accumulating more people, but never take the time to focus on those we already have. It doesn't help either when many pastors are convinced that they should not spend time, energy, or resources on people who are already saved. They are convinced that all their efforts should be geared only towards winning the lost and reaching out to the world. While this is obviously true and essential, there is an aspect that goes much wider and deeper than a singular focus.

In our desire to accumulate more people we have continued to miss the link that actually results in the numerical growth we are actually after. This has left us exhausted. Our labors, in most cases, have become in vain. Pastors are tired and often burnt out, but the fruit of their labors are oftentimes miniscule. It is not that people are not coming; it's a matter of people not staying. We many times do well in *attracting* people, but we are not always that successful in *keeping* them. We are comfortable in inviting people, but we longer want to be involved with people. Our back door is most of the times wider open than the front door, and that is just down-right frustrating!

"I hate to admit it . . . I wasn't dialed in on tending the flock God had entrusted to me. Instead, to be brutally honest, I was using the people I already had to reach the people I wanted to reach. They weren't sheep to be cared for; they were tools to be utilized. And while I doted on every new person who came through the front door, more and more were walking out the back door.

"I know that sounds crass, unspiritual, and pretty lame for a pastor to admit. But it's true. Sadly true. And what's worse, I'm not alone.

"The decision to focus on the people I already had helped to close the back door."

(Osborne, Larry. *Sticky Church*. Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49530. pp. 26 - 27).

Here is a reality check: If we are not taking care of those God has already sent us, why should He send us anymore?

Most of our churches are friendly, but people today are not necessarily looking for a friendly church; it's *friends* they are after. People want to connect through relationships and not so much through religious activities. Programs may attract people, but they do not keep people.

## Taking Care of the Flock Makes a Church Healthy

Most all of the churches that have implemented a network of care in their congregations are now in multiple services, enlarging their worship centers, or building new facilities. But more important than just quantity growth is the spiritual growth that springs forth as a result. The *Care Ministry* releases unbound excitement which flows into healthy relational development. A disconnected, non-caring church is a dysfunctional church. Such a church does not have the vibrancy and energy to effectively do outreach, missions,

evangelism, etc. When we start building community and developing relational-ties among the members, the church becomes healthy and vigorous. It's a proven fact that it's only a healthy church that can sustain meaningful outreach and become more effective in their ministry efforts. comforting assurance the Lead Pastor has of knowing, when he/she goes to bed at night, all the members have been cared for and they all have somebody that is constantly in touch with them.

As a result of the many demands on pastors, they are no longer able to adequately provide *pastoral care* and are instead only supplying *crisis care*. This means that when people face some crisis in their lives, they receive attention and care, but when the crisis is over, so is the care. What about the others? What about the majority of the remainder of the congregation? Should they not also be cared for? Should all our people not be valued? What about all the times of celebration that we miss with our people? How about simply letting them know they are needed and belong?

*Caring* is the heart of God, the message of the Gospel and becomes the power of connection that establishes relationships. It is built on the premise of *loving others as you love yourself* . . . So, let us tell you more:

DEFINITION: The *Care Ministry Network* is an authentic and proven system of congregational care, which enables God's people to care for one another.

#### PLEASE NOTE the essence of the Care Ministry Network:

1. “. . . *Is a **system*** . . .” It is not an added-on program, but rather a belief that becomes part of a congregation's DNA. It cultivates a culture of care to the point where a church could potentially become known as *The Caring Place*. It's not simply an event but rather an ongoing action of the church.

*Caring* becomes the glue that connects people to the local congregation. Programs may *attract* people, but do not *connect* people. *Caring* provides the *Velcro* every church needs; once people connect, it's hard to leave.

2. “. . . *Which enables **God's people*** . . .” This is a ministry of the believers to the believers. It does not run on the feet of the vocational ministers, but on the feet of the people (Laos) – the church members.

This ministry is clearly an extension of the Lead Pastors and is designed to significantly lift the load of caring off their shoulders. Those involved are not developed to *replace* the pastor, but rather to *represent* the pastor. Church members partner with their pastors to provide authentic congregational care.

3. “. . . *To **Care for one another*** . . .” This concept is a powerful and Biblical way of making sure that every member in the congregation receives authentic care – not only some. People are cared for in the good times as well as the bad. It ensures that no one falls through the cracks. It is not necessarily an evangelism ministry, but certainly has some elements thereof in its fruit. Church health and Church growth is a natural outflow.

*The Care Ministry Network* is the way a congregation provides pastoral care to all its constituents. It is important to ensure that people never feel they were sought after only until they became members, after which they then simply become names on a roll. Our system is designed to become a process of completeness.

Through this ministry we add value to our people, make them feel wanted and needed, and provide the safety and security all people need. Remember the American Express slogan: *There are Benefits to Membership!*

*The Care Ministry Network* solidifies a church, brings unity, and ensures cohesiveness.

### **The Care Ministry Functions**

*The Care Ministry Network* is based on five major levels, is run by the believers, and becomes an extension of the Lead pastor.

Our structure is developed to develop levels of leadership, lines of authority, avenues of communication, and functions of ministry. People have to know whom they are *accountable to*, whom they are *responsible for*, and whom they are *in relationship with*.

#### **FIVE LEVELS:**

1. Care Ministry Director
2. Leadership Team
3. Care Shepherds
4. Care Pastors
5. Flocks (consisting of five to seven family units in the congregation).

We make sure everyone receives care. Many times, churches have "care leaders", but neglect to provide these leaders with care themselves. At CMNI we have it all covered.

**1. The Care Ministry Director** leads the Care Ministry Network and has a Leadership Team that assists him/her in the execution of the entire ministry. In most churches the Director is a volunteer, but larger churches (1,000 plus) utilize a fulltime person to head the ministry. We highly recommend that this responsibility be placed on the shoulders of a couple rather than a single person. The Care Director (or Minister of Pastoral Care) relates directly to the Lead Pastor. Such a point-person is crucial to the effectiveness of this ministry. We provide complete job descriptions, qualifications, and functions of the Care Director. To add to the effectiveness of Care Directors, they should preferably not be involved in any other leadership positions in the congregation.

**2. The Care Leadership Team** consists of +-five church members who mainly assist the Care Director in operating the ministry, and help arranging the different events and conferences. Although it's not a requirement, the leadership team should preferably be appointed before the first official training conference. They could become very instrumental in formulating the vision. They obviously should have a heart for caring and possess some leadership skills.

**3. Care Shepherds** relate directly to the Care Ministry Director and provide supervision to five Care Pastors each. They become the *Care Pastors* to the Care Pastors. It is highly recommended that Care Shepherds serve as Care Pastors before they are invited to serve as Care Shepherds. They attend an additional training conference.

**4. Care Pastors** on their part relate directly to the Care Shepherds and provide authentic care to five family units – called a Flock. Care Pastors have five definite **points of contact** they make with their flocks. The effectiveness of the Care Ministry Network rests upon the proper preparation of the Care Pastors and their faithful execution of their ministry. Again, we provide all the training, job descriptions, qualifications, and ministry functions for proper implementation by Care Pastors.

We will say it frequently but can never say it too often: Care Pastors have to be trained and trained very well. That is why we provide the extensive outlines that we do at the Care Pastors Training Conference.

**5. Flocks** consist of five to seven *family units* who are members of the congregation.

A family unit may consist of:

- A couple (husband/wife); or
- A father, mother, and children in the home, or
- A single person living on his or her own

Each family is taken care of by a Care Pastor on a consistent basis. It is a unique concept that brings forth peace and stability and develops community in a most powerful way.

## Function: Five Points of Contact

Care Pastors are trained and developed to make *Five Points of Contact* with each of their family units in a prescribed way and is applied very easily. This system is the GLUE that brings the entire ministry of care together and provides the safety net, which prevents people from falling through the cracks.

The key to the care-concept is this *Five Points of Contact* application. That is where the joy and satisfaction come from. It is for this reason in particular why specialized training is necessary. If this level of the ministry is not well understood, or church members are not well trained, the entire ministry is doomed to failure. (CMNI provides the means of the training).

After the Care Pastors are thoroughly trained and selected by the church leadership, they are commissioned in the presence of the entire congregation. This gives them the authority and validity to function in their roles as Care Pastors. All these facets are clearly addressed during the preparation stage. Relevant material has been designed and is available to the local church.

We also cover aspects such as churches with multi campuses, those who have cell groups (Small groups) and also multiple services. We also present a very exhilarating approach to youth ministry.

## THE GREAT COMMITMENT

There are many Scriptural foundations for providing care to the people of God, but we base our conviction mostly on John 21:15-17 and refer to it as *The Great Commitment*. Also refer to Scriptures such as: 1 Peter 5:1-4; Acts 20:28; Galatians 6:10; 1 Corinthians 12:25-27.

**The love of God**

**Must flow down the aisles  
Of our churches,  
Before it will flow down  
The streets of our cities!**

## **TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

It is vital that people be thoroughly trained for each of the care ministry levels or else the whole initiative may hurt more than it will help.

Grasping and sharing the vision alone is not enough. The foundation of the substantive content with all required training is of absolute necessity to assure successful outcome. Attempting to release people into the important ministry of care without them being undergirded with in-depth preparation, teaching, and training will have discouragement and disappointment as a result. Some have tried – most have failed! **We raise up an army, not just an audience!**

**The Good News** – as mentioned previously – is that ALL the work has already been done for you. We are able to provide you with everything you need to launch an effective care ministry in your church. We can provide you with all the training manuals, which include the Facilitator's, as well as the Participant's Guides, plus more.

GLOSSARY. For clarities sake we want to explain different terms, titles and positions to all who read this brochure. Please note the following:

1. **Couples in Ministry.** Whenever we refer to a "position" we always have a *couple* in mind (or two individuals joined together for ministry). E.g. when we refer to a *Care Pastor*, we are actually talking about a husband/wife team or two single persons grouped together. The same applies to the Director, the Care Shepherds, etc.
2. **Names, titles, and designations.** With reference to the above we have found that some feel awkward to call church members *Care Pastors* and *Care Shepherds* even though these persons have been trained and prepared.

We have an understanding for all this uneasiness, but want to make it clear that names, titles, and positions are not what are important – it's the *concept* that is. Pastors and churches are therefore free to call their "Care Shepherds/Pastors" by whatever *designation* they prefer. As long as it makes sense. For reference sake we have decided to standardize our text by using the terms *Care Shepherds* and *Care Pastors*, but do not expect all to follow suit. We can help you with alternatives.

**Fact is that this ministry is very flexible and adaptable.** We do **not**, however, recommend random changes of *the concept and the procedure*, since we have spent much time, effort, and pain to reach the point at which we have found what works and what does not. There are some serious pitfalls in developing people for care ministry and if you do not know how to avoid these you may potentially become very frustrated.

We also do NOT advise changing the *Five Points of Contact*. Adapt them, but do not disregard them.



## Some Thoughts or Suggestions of Alternative References:

Pastoral Care	Congregational Care
Care Ministry Network	Care Ministry, or Community Connection,
Care Ministry Director	Care Director/Pastoral Care Director/Care Network Director/Care Administrator
Care Shepherds	Care Overseers or Care Supervisors
Care Pastors	Care Leaders, or Care Ministers, or Care Partners (we do not suggest, "care giver").
Flocks	Family Units/Family Groups/Clusters

We are purposely giving you this information, because we do not want prospective pastors/leaders to get stuck on terminology and then throw the baby out with the bath water.

If you have not done so yet, attend a *Care Ministry Network* presentation and familiarize yourself with the great benefits this ministry holds. The results are amazing and the benefits unequalled.

***This ministry works – and we invite you to be part of it!***

[Contact us](#) for more information. We will come alongside you and your church leadership and help you develop a system of care that is like nothing else available. We do not have a product to sell – we have a service to offer.

[www.cmni.org](http://www.cmni.org)



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