

Hays Praise

Community

Sponsor's Kit

Sponsorship is an act of love for God, for the participants, for the Emmaus Community, and for the church. It is a demonstration of Agape love. It is making oneself an instrument of grace.

Ideas from this package were adapted from the
Western New York Emmaus/Chrysalis Community's Sponsor's Kit

WHAT IS SPONSORSHIP?

Each person who attends The Walk to Emmaus has a sponsor. A sponsor is a person who has been through an Emmaus experience and is willing to share that experience with another new Emmaus participant. The sponsorship of a previous participant frees the current participant from any personal responsibilities that might distract him or her while on the experience. Sponsorship also undergirds each participant's 72-hour experience with prayer and other expressions of God's love.

According to the dictionary, a sponsor is one who takes responsibility for another. The suffix "ship" refers to the skill involved in the activity. So sponsorship is the skill of taking responsibility for another.

Adapted from Sponsorship by Richard and Janine Gilmore. Copyright 1998 by The Upper Room.

THE AIM OF SPONSORSHIP

The aim of a sponsor should not be "to get all my friends to go," to fill up the weekend, to fix people's problems, or to reproduce one's own religious experience in others. Rather, the aim of the sponsor is to bring spiritual revitalization to Christians who will, in turn, bring new life and vision to the work of the church in the congregation, home, workplace, and community. The aim of sponsorship is to build up the body of Christ.

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How do we sponsor?

- A. Spend concentrated time in prayer in an effort to discern whom God wants you to sponsor.
- B. Pray for the person's openness to God's call to discipleship, not for how to get him or her to go on a weekend.
- C. Make an appointment with the person or couple for the purpose of discussing their participation in Emmaus or Chrysalis.
- D. Extend an invitation. Invite them to attend for the sake of a more vital relationship with Jesus Christ, not just a weekend to go on. Share your faith; explain the basic elements of the weekend, its purpose, and follow-up dimensions which help us live a life in grace for the rest of our lives. Have the attitude that you are giving them a wonderful gift, rather than they need to go.
- E. Ask them to make a commitment by filling out the registration form. If the person is married, speak with both partners and encourage an equal commitment by both spouses.
- F. Continue to pray, prepare agape letters, and enlist the support of their pastor. Collect eight to twelve personal agape letters. There should be no personal gifts during the weekend.
- G. Support the weekend through your prayers during the 72 Hour Prayer Vigil, and your presence at Send-off, Sponsor's Hour, Candlelight and Closing. Support your participant's family by house-sitting, babysitting, watering plants, picking up mail, feeding pets, or just checking in with the family to see if any help is needed.
- H. Take new members to their weekend's Reunion.
- I. Encourage the new member in his or her 4th Day involvement. Give your friend an opportunity to talk through and appreciate the experience. Help them find a Group or be prepared to start a Group with him or her for a period of time until they find others to be in a Group. Take them to Gatherings as your guest for a couple of months.
- J. Help the new member consider ways to live out their new commitment and enthusiasm.
- K. Help the new member to integrate into the Emmaus Community.
- L. Help the new member sponsor others by mentoring them.

SPONSOR'S DUTIES CHECKLIST

- PRAY, PRAY, PRAY!
- ACQUIRE COMPLETED APPLICATION AND TURN
- INTO REGISTRATION BY THE DEADLINE DATE
- COLLECT AGAPE LETTERS
- DELIVER PARTICIPANT TO WEEKEND SITE
- ATTEND SEND-OFF AND SPONSOR'S HOUR
- ATTEND TO NEEDS OF PARTICIPANT'S FAMILY
- DURING WEEKEND
- ATTEND CANDLELIGHT
- ATTEND CLOSING AND TAKE NEW MEMBER HOME
- BRING NEW MEMBER TO FOURTH DAY MEETING
- BRING NEW MEMBER TO FIRST GATHERING AFTER
- WEEKEND
- INTRODUCE NEW MEMBER TO A REUNION GROUP
- ENCOURAGE NEW MEMBER TO BECOME A
- SPONSOR AND BE THEIR MENTOR

SUGGESTIONS FOR SPONSORS

Here are a few suggestions for recruitment that should increase your effectiveness, and help you to properly interpret Emmaus/Chrysalis and recognize your responsibility in sharing God's Grace as a sponsor.

1. When you are talking to a married person, please talk with both husband and wife. We want both the husband and wife to make the decision together. Their applications should be turned in together.
2. Remember, Emmaus or Chrysalis is not for everyone. This is not just a fun weekend. These three days cannot rectify every problem marriage, bring enthusiasm to every disenchanted church member, cure disturbed persons, or make saints of sinners. This program is designed to change environments through Christian leaders. Participants should at least know where the path is, if they are not already walking it.
3. Feel free to share with a potential applicant what the weekend meant for you as fully as will help, realizing that all explanations will fall short. Answer any and all questions that are asked. It's not that we are not allowed to tell what went on, but it is difficult to explain. We want their experience to be fresh, especially for Candlelight and the agape letters, which will hopefully be surprises.
4. Don't assume the person you are sponsoring will experience the same things you did on the weekend. Each of us is at a different place on our spiritual journey. For some, the experience will be a mountain top, a new beginning. For others, it will be strengthening for the journey they are already on. We must not pre-judge our candidates or set them up with unhelpful expectations.
5. In order to assure the applicant you are personally interested in their attending, make plans to not only bring them to the site for Send-off, but stay through for Sponsor's Hour. All this is a form of prayer and sacrifice for them.
6. During the weekend, you and your family become a substitute for the participant. Leave your phone number with their family. Do something special for them during the weekend, like giving them a few hours during the day of personal time. Share a meal with them. Let the participant's family know that you love and care for them.
7. You have responsibilities to the participant. Pray for him or her daily during the weekend. Write agape letters and make sure others do likewise, especially those closest to them. Support your participant with your presence at Candlelight and Closing.
8. After the weekend, stay in contact and support the new member you sponsored. Be responsible for them getting to the Reunion following their weekend. Take them to, at least, their first Gathering. Help them become involved in a Group Reunion as soon as possible.

Interpreting the Equal Commitment Rule

From The Upper Room Handbook on Emmaus by Stephen D. Bryant © 1989, copied here with permission from The Upper Room Emmaus the Reason for the Rule

The Letter of Agreement* states that "husbands and wives should make an equal commitment to participate." How are communities and sponsors to interpret this? In the first place, the rule does not imply that Emmaus is primarily intended for married persons. Single persons are as welcome to participate in Emmaus as married couples. The rule does however; reflect a concern and a hope about the effect of Emmaus on marriages and families.

First, the equal participation rule guards against the Emmaus experience becoming a separating influence in a marriage. The rule is part of our heritage from Cursillo and is based on years of experience with the potential effects of these short courses in Christianity on marriages, positively and negatively. Emmaus can be the occasion for commitments to new life directions which one's spouse may not understand or appreciate at the time. Disregard for the rule will certainly not result in marital tensions in every case. But the Emmaus Movement should do all it can to strengthen marriages and to avoid practices which we know have the potential to affect a marriage adversely.

Second, when the rule is followed, Emmaus can indirectly strengthen the spiritual bond in a marriage and family. So sponsorship of married persons involves approaching both husband and wife together and encouraging them to make an equal commitment to participate. This is not only so they can grow together as a Christian family, but also because a strong Emmaus Movement and the church need our participation as families, not only as individuals.

Third, the equal commitment rule results in increased participation of many grateful husbands and wives that probably would not have attended an Emmaus Weekend otherwise, but did so in order to make it possible for their spouse to participate. While their initial motivation for going on a Walk may not have been personal, they came to realize in the course of the Walk that the weekend was meant for them.

What the Rule Does Not Mean

The equal commitment rule does NOT mean a wife can never go to Emmaus unless her husband has gone first**. While it is always best to schedule husbands and wives to participate during the same set of Emmaus Weekends so they can share their experience and support one another, circumstances may arise when it is necessary and reasonable for husbands or wives to take their Walks at different times or places. In these cases, the order of their participation is secondary and is a practical matter.

**The rule does not mean that a husband can never attend a Walk unless his wife also goes on the same set of Weekends.

Why Men's Weekends Precede Women's Weekends

It is important to point out that men's weekends are not scheduled before women's Walks for theological reasons. For instance, this scheduling pattern is not based on a belief that men are the spiritual head of the household and that wives should follow their lead. Rather the reasons for this scheduling pattern are historical and practical. Cursillo was originally an experience aimed at reclaiming men for Christ as committed members of Christ's Church; women's weekends were developed later.

The pattern of scheduling sets of weekend short courses, with the men's weekends proceeding the women's weekends, was also intended to cause more men to participate than might otherwise, and to break the machismo inclination to leave the business of religion and church to the women. Early on, Cursillo leaders observed that in the traditional family, husbands were sometimes less likely to go on a religious weekend than their wives and in some cases less likely to participate if their wives had gone first. They also observed that husbands were sometimes more likely to go on a weekend if it was necessary for their wives to participate. Women in the traditional family, on the other hand, seemed to be just as likely to participate after the husband's weekend as before. These generalizations are certainly not true of all husbands and wives today. But in families where these generalizations are true, the likelihood of that husband participating is increased.

The Rule is Wisdom, Not Law

It is important that the wisdom of the rule be honored in Emmaus Communities. The equal commitment rule represents a practical ideal to which Emmaus Communities should be committed and toward which sponsors should work in all cases. It is important to remember however, that the equal commitment rule represents wisdom, not law. There is a place for reasonable exceptions. Exceptions can be made by Boards of Directors when there is no possibility of the participation of both spouses and there is reason for assurance that the marriage will not be adversely affected by participation of only one spouse.

In some cases, spouses have never shared their religious lives and have learned to deal with this as a reality of their marriage. Clergy and their spouses have often dealt with a disparity in theological education and participation in spiritual growth events. Furthermore, the importance of involving Clergy in Emmaus will often warrant exceptions. Other cases may involve persons who want to go to Emmaus very badly, but whose spouse is unbending in refusing to participate time after time. Each Community must prayerfully decide how to handle these cases in grace and when to make exceptions in view of a person's and family's spiritual welfare.

Additional Procedures & Information — "Non-Participating Spouse"

(To be completed by Sponsor)

Sit down in person with both spouses together, preferably at their home. Discuss the Walk to Emmaus and "Interpreting the Equal Commitment Rule" together. The sponsor should discuss it, not just give it to the potential Pilgrim(s) to read on their own. For the following questions, please provide more detail than a simple "It's OK" or "No Problem".

Feel free to use the back of this paper for further comments.

1. How does the attending spouse feel about the Couples Guideline?
2. How does the non-attending spouse feel about the Couples Guideline?
3. Why does the non-attending spouse not wish to participate in a Walk to Emmaus?
4. What does the non-attending spouse think of his/her spouse's participation in the Walk to Emmaus and subsequent follow-up activities?

For more information visit <http://www.upperroom.org/emmaus/invitation/>



Invitation to the Journey: **SPONSORSHIP**

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Invitation to the Journey: SPONSORSHIP

Continuing Your Journey: FOURTHDAY

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▶ **The Aim of Sponsorship**

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▶ **The Sponsor's Responsibilities**

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▶ **How to Become a Sponsor**

In order to sponsor someone on Walk to Emmaus, a person must first have been on The Walk itself. A sponsor should also be active in [Fourth Day](#). [More»](#)

▶ **How to Find a Sponsor**

If you know someone who has attended Emmaus, ask your friend to tell you about his or her experience of the Walk to Emmaus. Your friend will help you decide whether you would find this experience helpful. [More»](#)

