



Group Member Commitment & Consistency

Benefits of Consistent Attendance

Any virtue or positive habit is exactly that, a habit. It takes time and consistency to form a good habit. The intention and vision of Emmaus Small Groups is to create an environment which encourages people to grow in virtue and positive habits to communally live their faith outside of Mass attendance. Although the benefits resulting from consistent attendance are too numerous to count, we've listed four fruits that can appear over time: 1. Faith becomes fortified through community support and discussion, 2. Personal growth and confidence in praying alone and with others, 3. Positive relationships are built, and 4. Confidence in sharing the faith with others.

What happens to the group when a member lacks commitment and consistency?

When Emmaus Small Groups members begin wavering on regular attendance it will not only have an effect on them as individuals but also on the group dynamics and conversation. A member's insights, reflections, prayers and presence provide the very essence that gives small groups their energy and uniqueness. The bonds and various benefits for each individual in the group suffer when members attend on an inconsistent basis.

Recommendations for Leaders:

- ❖ Begin by identifying the percentage of meetings missed by a person before reaching out to them personally.
 - If a person has missed 1/3 to 1/2 of meetings you've held, definitely reach out to them.
 - If a person has missed 2 or more meetings in a row follow up with them to see if they are ok and if they need any type of support.

- ❖ How to discuss consistency with the participant (*this needs to be done in person or on the phone*):
 - In your prayer, ask the Holy Spirit to guide the conversation and allow this individual to know how truly valued they are.
 - Share that they have been missed.
 - Ask how they have been? – drill down to find out why they have been missing
 - Share with them what is missed when they aren't there.
 - Share with them the benefits of attending on a regular basis (i.e. bonding, sharing their personal insights that offer more fruitfulness to the discussion).
 - Encourage them to attend the next meeting (note: if your group is a couple group, encourage one spouse to attend even if the other isn't able to).
 - **If they are unable to attend:**
 - Share that it's ok and you understand. (this will allow you to open a seat for someone new in your group).
 - If they have scheduling conflicts, offer to assist in helping them find a group that is a better fit for them and their schedule. Ask them their availability and let them know that you will forward their information on to the ESG coordinators to see if another group would be a better fit for them.
 - Be sure to communicate that you don't wish to bother them with future emails and communication so you will plan to remove them from your roster.
 - Let them know that if they wish to return in the future, you have an open seat for them and they will be missed.
 - Forward their information onto olsesg1@gmail.com so a coordinator can follow up with them.
 - **If they plan to Return:**
 - Provide them specific details on your next gathering and share that you are glad they will be re-joining.

Conclusion

ESG Coordinators and Leaders should strive to create and maintain the best possible environment and circumstances for each group to thrive and reach their potential. When a member's attendance is inconsistent the group truly misses out. The personal/relational component of Emmaus Small Groups is a core element of their power, importance, and impact. Every effort to maintain and protect this by supporting consistent attendance should be taken by coordinators and leaders. We hope and pray this handout assists in offering guidance on how to best approach members with charity and pastoral care.