

The Encounter Needs You - To Start a Sharing Group

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(An excerpt from the Spring 1997 *Matrimony* magazine)

For 44 hours on the Weekend, we are transported to a world free of interruptions where we can focus all our attention and energy on ourselves and on our marriage. Then, we are back in "the real world," struggling to keep the excitement of the Weekend alive in our relationship. Without some form of support, much of what we learn on the Weekend is forgotten.

The key to keeping it alive is to be part of a sharing group - a group dedicated to sharing their experiences of living the Weekend concepts in everyday life. It is encouraging when we can socialize with couples who share our values.

The need for sharing groups was recognized in the beginnings of Marriage Encounter. It is part of the M.E. mission statement. Support for the post-Weekend couple is one of the conditions for giving Weekends in any community.

There are two good reasons why couples start up a sharing group. The obvious one is that there is no sharing group available for them to attend. Maybe there aren't any in existence in their area, or perhaps the existing ones meet at a bad time or they are too far away. Another reason is that the couple belongs to a group, but it is not meeting their needs. This can happen, for example, when a sharing group becomes too large and the opportunities for truly intimate sharing are no longer present.

Whatever the reason, if you have no adequate sharing group available to you, the thing to do is to start a sharing group of your own. It may seem a formidable task at first thought, but it is basically very simple.

To start a sharing group:

1. Find one or more couples to form a group with you.
2. Agree on a regular time at least twice a month for your meetings.
3. Let your local M.E. leadership know that you are starting a group.

The last step brings you both benefits and obligations.