

Step 5: Book in an Engaged Couple

You will need: advertising flyers or business cards | a Couple Kit | two pens | Mentor Guide & DVDs

Once you have familiarised yourself with the content of the course, we recommend you avoid leaving a long time period between your preparation and starting to mentor. In some cases Mentors can get started with an engaged couple once they have completed preparation up to Session 2 - you only need to keep one session ahead of the couple!

If you are providing this course outside existing parish, diocesan or other organizational structures, speak to your local parishes and leave your business cards or some advertising flyers with your contact details. You will need to give some thought as to how you will manage the administration of the course. For example, how much the course will cost an engaged couple? when they will pay? Will you keep stock of the Couple Kits or just order when you get a booking? etc.

Remember to encourage your engaged couples to register on the SmartLoving website so that they can receive ongoing information about being successful in their marriage through the online resources and e-Newsletters.

Step 6: Keep Loving!

You will need: Love, joy and passion!

Keep nurturing your own love and you will become more and more effective in your apostolate. The SmartLoving Marriage Seminar is designed to renew your marriage and consolidate your skills as a Mentor. Also, take advantage of the conferences and in-service opportunities hosted by MRC and other local marriage education associations. In some locations training intensives for new Mentors are available and are well worth attending.

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The **Starter Kit** includes:

- One **Mentor Guide**
- The **Mentor DVDs** to use in the course itself
- One copy of '**A Total Gift of Self**' (family planning CD & booklet) for your own use
- One **Couple Kit** (two sets of couple handouts and one '**A Total Gift of Self**' DVD and booklet).

Using the materials provided

Engage is a marriage formation program for couples marrying in the Catholic Church. It is designed to seamlessly integrate both relational skills education and sacramental preparation. Ideally presented over a two month period, the course is comprised of six 2 hour sessions with 'take home activities' of 1- 2 hours in duration. This represents a curriculum of 20 hours in total.

The course is has been designed to be presented by a married couple within a mentoring format with one engaged couple at a time. This is widely considered to be the optimum method for marriage preparation and allows the course to be conducted in the home environment under a parish-based model. However, while this is the ideal, the course is sufficiently flexible to be used with small groups, in correspondence situations, or in a parish group environment (see the introductory notes of the Mentor Guide).

As part of your preparation to become an Engage Mentor you will need to complete the exercises designed for the engaged couples. If you wish to keep the enclosed Couple Kit intact for use with your first engaged couple, you can use the reprints of the couple handouts that are printed throughout the Mentors' Guide. However, in this case you will need to purchase a second Mentors' Guide which has the added benefit that each spouse has their own copy when running the course.

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Getting Started

Step 1: Experience “Engage”

You will need: The Mentor Guide | Teaching DVDs | a Couple Kit | DVD player | pens.

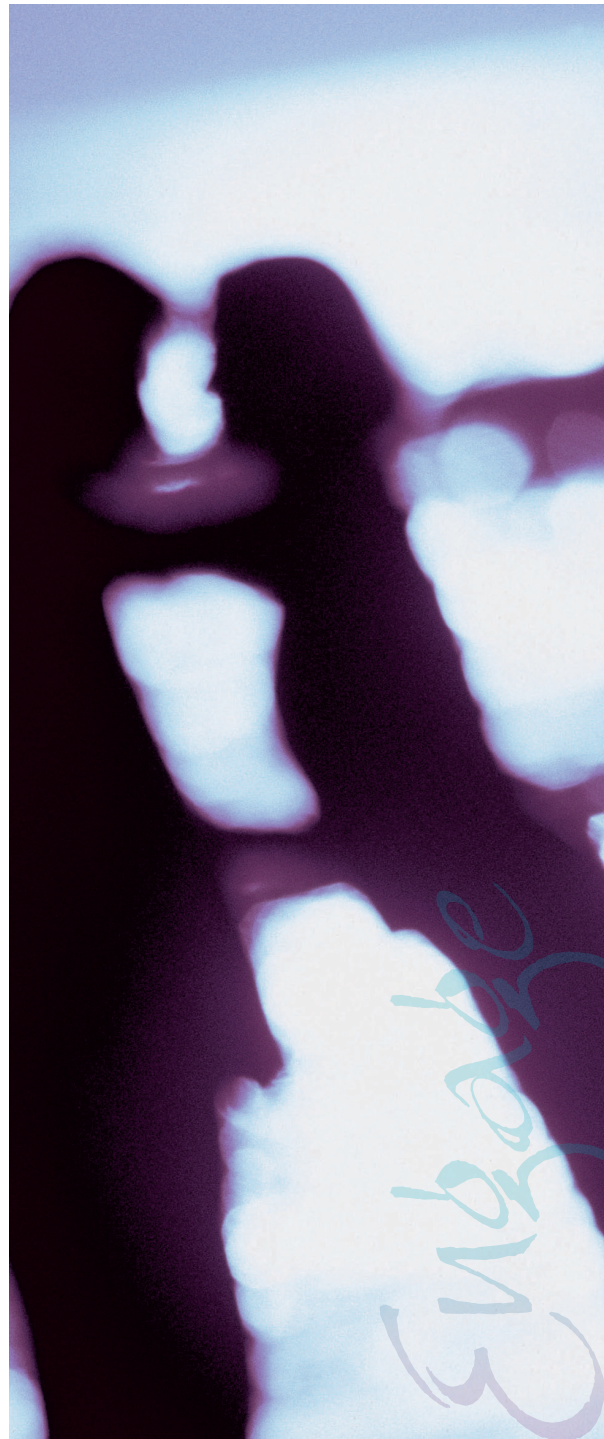
Begin by working your way together through the course using the Mentor Guide for direction.

- When you come to a Reflection Point, pause and discuss the topic together. There are full instructions in the Mentor Guide for every activity.
- Play the DVD at the time indicated in the Mentor Guide.
- For the Couple Exercises, separate to write and then follow the directions in the couple handouts for sharing. You may need to make some adjustments to the exercises to adapt them from the engaged to the married situation.
- Make sure you practice the ‘Tools’ yourselves and complete the Take Home Activities before proceeding to the next session.

You should experience the entire course before you begin mentoring your first engaged couple.

If there is another couple (or several) in your parish/organisation training as Mentors at the same time, there is much to be gained by doing it together. Simply take turns to prepare and guide each session for the other couples in the group. Use the ‘Notes for Small Groups’ as stimulation for shared discussion. Alternatively, ask an existing Mentor to run the course for you.

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Step 2: Mentoring Principles

You will need: The Mentor Guide.

Read the Introductory Notes in the Mentor Guide (pages 1-8). These notes outline the essential principles on which the course is based and provides tips for situations where the course is to be run under unusual circumstances such as by correspondence or in a contracted (‘crash course’) time-frame. There are also some notes regarding your Pastoral Care responsibilities (pages 6-7). If you are conducting the course under the supervision of an agency or organisation, check what procedures are in place regarding the pastoral care policy.

Finally, on page 8 there is an explanation of the organisation of the Mentor Guide itself providing you with a roadmap for speedy navigation.

Step 3: Prepare your Personal Examples

You will need: The Mentor Guide | your answers to the Couple Exercises | sticky notes | pens.

The Mentor Guide has instructions for preparing your personal examples which you will use in the teaching of the course. Work your way through the Guide together making some notes on ‘sticky notes’. When you have settled on an example for each sharing you can write your notes directly into the space provided in the right hand column. This way, when you are Mentoring, everything you need is at your finger tips in the Mentor Guide.

In each session, there are two ‘Key Sharings’ that you need to prepare. These are considered essential to the effectiveness of the course and should be prepared carefully. We strongly recommend that you ask another Mentor, married couple, priest or supervisor (as appropriate) to give you some feedback on your sharing to ensure that the example you have chosen illustrates the teaching point, is clearly articulated, and is respectful of both your own marriage and Church teaching.

Step 4: Register as a Mentor

You will need: internet access.

Important additional resources and support materials are available through the website. Register online as an Engage Mentor to:

- Order Couple Kits and upgrades to the course materials.
- Receive MRC eJournal - a free monthly e-newsletter with tips, ideas insights and advance notice of in-service opportunities and related personal development seminars and events.