



How to present a request or opportunity

When presenting a request or an opportunity to the group, be as detailed as you are able, giving other guests the context for your relationship with the individual, the background on the current situation, and some direction on how the group might help.

1. **Relationship:** Establish your relationship with the individual you are advocating for. Are they a friend, family member, colleague or neighbor? How long have you known them? What is the nature of your relationship currently?
2. **Background:** What led to the current need? Where is the individual at now and how could they use a little help? Have other avenues been exhausted? Have other relational networks been tapped into? Has the individual sought help from you or did you reach out to them?
3. **What's needed:** Make a tangible suggestion for how the need might be met and how the group can help. Break it down into specifics and a dollar amount.
4. **Invite the Wisdom of the Group:** Close off by telling guests how they can help and give input. Invite their questions or suggestions. Let them know if you're unsure about the best way to meet the need and be open to their input. Ask, "How might we..."

Example 1

A dear friend of mine, Amanda, lives in Los Altos. We were college roommates and remained connected over the years and she recently moved a little closer which has been great as we've been able to reestablish our friendship. She was recently diagnosed with Hodgkins Lymphoma and will begin 4 rounds of quite aggressive chemo therapy. Her husband has a secure, although not a high-paying, job but she's decided to stop working while she focusses on her treatment. This is putting strain on their finances – they're making ends meet, but only just.

I would like to give her a care package for during treatment, including warm hats or scarves when she loses her hair in a couple of weeks, and self-care items to address side effects of chemo (lotion for skin, special gum to help dry mouth). This feels like a small way that we can journey alongside her during this difficult time and help with items that may be considered "non-essentials" in light of them just trying to pay bills. I'm open to other suggestions for how we might help. I suspect that there will be other unexpected costs over the coming weeks. They have one vehicle and so it may even be difficult for them to juggle work and treatment schedules.

Example 2

Dale is a college freshman who has been friends with my daughter through high school. He is currently at a community college on a football scholarship and gets some assistance from the county for food – about \$50/week. Dale was a foster kid and unfortunately the family he was placed with were basically using him for the foster checks. He would regularly eat Ramen noodles for lunch and cold cereal for supper. He recently told me "all I remember is always being hungry." He is working his butt off trying to make his \$50/week stretch, even taking a bus to a Food4Less because the local Ralph's is "too expensive." He has to study, train & practice, so other employment is tough right now.

I would love us to help with a couple months' worth of grocery gift cards to help him out. \$100 a month will go a long way to subsidizing his food costs. I don't know a lot about what other support there is for kids who have aged-out of the foster care system but know that this is one area where he is totally on his own, struggling to make his way in the world. How might we walk alongside him as he finishes his studying?