

HAPI Playbook

So you are going to Haiti! Congratulations on saying “yes, here I am Lord, send me!”

Every team sport has a ‘playbook.’ We’re pleased you have chosen to be part of ‘Team HAPI!’ Here are guidelines that help to ensure a healthy, mutually-beneficial team experience that exemplifies culturally appropriate and Christ-like behavior.

A personal covenant statement developed by United Methodist Volunteers in mission follows the HAPI-specific guidelines.

1. Please stop at HAPI Boutique before shopping elsewhere.

The boutique at Merlet Center is open at any time for you. If you find something you want over the weekend, put in Paul's office to pay for on Monday. HAPI's administrative assistant will prepare a receipt for your record and theirs.

****You will be approached by independent community vendors with requests to purchase their items, which may or may not be produced within the community or which may or may not have been produced under fair local wages or conditions. Cultural manners do not allow Paul to keep them away. Out of respect to HAPI artisans and your partnership with HAPI, please shop first in the boutique. No one is obligated to purchase. HAPI artisans do not produce a full spectrum of Haitian arts and crafts, therefore, you may choose to purchase from other vendors or shop in Jacmel to compliment your boutique selection. We simply ask that you keep in mind that **your purchase with a HAPI artisan empowers and encourages her, directly provides for her family and supports the sustainability of the program.****

2. Your word is your bond: please do not make any promises (or even a *suggestion* of a commitment) to individuals to prevent raising expectations. If you do have intent, please see point 3.

Haiti is referred to as the ‘graveyard of good intentions.’ Good intentions often lead to statements that are meant to encourage but later come to represent ‘broken promises’ by the expectant individual. Simple phrases such as “let me think about it” may be understood as a commitment on your part. Or, “I’d be interested in supporting your tuition” may lead to an expectation of a ‘full ride’ for several years rather than a smaller, one-time contribution. If the perceived promise is unfulfilled, persons may also come to believe that the organizational leadership has withheld a gift intended for them, placing the leaders in a difficult ‘middle’ position. While uncomfortable, it is much kinder to say “no.”

3. Inform your team leader to contact Valerie or Paul if your heart feels led to give something or help someone in any way. They can confirm the existing need or its critical importance. Everything is given through Paul to the individual.

Please read our ‘Giving’ document! This is almost always a bad idea. We seek to create a culture of dignity, equality, respect and opportunity. Giving to individuals stirs up jealousy and encourages behavior and a hand-out mentality that works against the vision of the organization with whom you are in relationship. That same young man who just told you he has a sick baby at home has also said that to the team who was there before you and will continue to tell that story, if it is financially rewarded. Listen and pray but don’t get out your wallet. Most individuals who approach you will be young men who know some English. The woman who is earning less than \$25 a week in her micro-business is not going to ask. Nor are most girls

who need tuition. If you have remaining funds, why not consider supporting a microloan, HAPI product, or sponsoring a mom in the maternal care initiative, 'Start Right?'

4. Only share clothing, gifts, food, etc. with individuals in pre-arranged settings.

See point 3 above: we seek to create a culture of dignity, equality, respect and opportunity. We do not wish to foster dependency or 'free for all' individual solicitations. There are appropriate giving occasions such as an item that supports a training seminar and is disbursed within that group setting. Never hand out food or gifts in a public arena, such as the Peace Park, without pre-arrangements with your host and enough for everyone.

5. Please be cautious about male/female relationships. When someone mentions 'love' to you, you need to identify what type of love it is: romantic or friendship. If you are a volunteer for HAPI, long term or short term, sexual relationship is strictly forbidden while you are on 'Team HAPI.'

The Creole word for love is the same as the word for like. The words can also be used interchangeably by an English-speaking Haitian. They may be expressing gratitude or a desire to continue a friendship without a romantic or sexual intent. If you have any doubt, bring it to the attention of your team leader immediately so that they can discuss it with Paul and / or Valerie. HAPI has also experienced Haitians and / or Americans who have approached one another with a clear romantic interest. Please remain focused on your purpose in coming to Haiti to serve and do so in a manner that exemplifies Christ-like behavior. Additionally, if a relationship continues beyond the time in Haiti through social media, calls, etc. and you believe it is leading to an intimate relationship, please inform your team leader. We will also request our staff to inform HAPI leadership if they are approached with a romantic interest from a team member.

6. Do not put yourself in the position where the opposite gender may misinterpret your actions or words. It would be best if either gender did not isolate themselves with just one of the opposite gender. The 'buddy/partner system' allows for you to have a responsible witness about false interpretations regarding your actions.

Single men/women are in a more vulnerable situation. Consider never going anywhere outside the compound with less than a trio of team members. We are not opposed to enduring love which is natural for all human beings; however, we want solid relationships that cause no regrets and which are Christ-centered in their expression at all stages of the relationship. We also do not want rumors which harm the individuals and the organization. Privacy is virtually non-existent in Haiti! People are watchful as to our behavior.

7. Stay within the HAPI compound unless your team leader has checked with Paul. Team members should be at Peace Inn before dark. This is to keep you safe and prevent any incidents which will reflect badly on you or your team at a later date. Just because you have done it in the past, does not make it the right thing to do on this trip.

For those of you who do have relationships with community members, invite them to visit around the 'Thanksgiving Table' at Peace Inn in the evenings as an alternative to team members leaving the compound.

8. If you question the appropriateness of something, go to your team leader and then speak to Paul. This is part of the reason we always want you to stay with another team member. Our countries cultures, values and interpretations of behavior are different. Try to be mindful of your actions/choices and how it reflects on you, your team and your church.

9. Lights are off at 10 p.m.

10. Only team members and Paul's immediate family allowed on bottom, front porch or upstairs at any time. Please be mindful of the fact that some family and team members may be sleeping or resting by 8:30 p.m. If you are using loud voices, laughing, etc. adjourn to the table/eating area.

11. Invited guests may converse with you around the table area but ask them to leave by 9 pm unless it is a specially planned for occasion with your hosts.

12. Sharing a meal with community members needs to be *pre-approved* with both the *team leader and Paul* at least 24 hours in advance at an additional cost. Do not suggest sharing a meal *in front of* outside guests. As a good host, culture dictates that Paul/Amiable would need to agree, regardless of what has been planned and prepared for. Meals are prepared not only for guests, but also for their family: what you see on the table may be shared to more than you know according to their discretion. Please do not put them 'on the spot.'

13. Do not offer *team* food to others (items brought in your luggage) other than with persons who are working for the team (interpreter, driver). Once you do it, more will expect it. Plus, they will expect other teams to do the same: be considerate of those following you! Nothing stays a secret regarding handouts. It is appropriate to pre-arrange an event where the team shares candy or other item to *everyone* (such as Peace Pals). We want to share but we do not want to create beggars.

Likewise, do not share sweets, toys or phones with children. The children in Haiti are beautiful but we do not want to encourage them to beg from visitors. If your team hands out trinkets, etc. they **WILL** be asking the next team for the same. Instead, offer your time and create a memory: play a game, push them on a swing, show them photos of your family and ask about theirs....

15. Do not allow anyone else (except host family, staff and interpreters) to ride in team van when you travel to Port Au Prince. Team leaders may pre-arrange to invite an additional local guest to the beach, if approved by Paul. Guests are subject to team expectations.

We try to make our volunteers comfortable in our van. Based on team feedback, rarely are all team members comfortable with additional persons sharing the van. It creates a situation where Americans may feel uncomfortable saying "no" regardless of their discomfort.

16. HAPI does not accept alcohol drinking during your team experience nor smoking on any of our grounds or Peace Inn. If you go on an outing, please do not smoke or drink. If you are a smoker, please check with the host about the appropriate places to smoke and put cigarette butts.

Alcohol may be packed in your checked luggage—and Haitian rum makes a terrific cake!

17. When you meet someone on the street, feel free to wave your hand or say 'hi.' Bonjour. People may refer to you as white - blanc, blanc. Feel comfortable with this habit, it is not a slur.

18. If members of the team wish to go to market, it needs to be prearranged by the team leader - not individuals. At least one interpreter must go, never team members by themselves. When requesting staff to accompany a team spontaneously, please remember, these are paid people that should not be taken away from the mission project or work if it interrupts their day or the team's purpose.

19. The team's schedule should reflect assignments for everyone. Send a schedule that specifies what each person (or subgroup) has agreed to do or be responsible for on a daily basis. The reason for the detail is: 1) we don't want teams to have 'floaters' who do not have a designated responsibility, 2) everyone should be working with at least one other team member, and 3) identify any 'gaps' in time, ie: one part of the team only has activities until 1pm while the rest of the team is busy until 4...need to plan how to utilize the 1 - 4 time. The team leader and local staff will then know where all team members are at any given time.

20. No artisan / staff should invite the team group or individuals to visit their own business on behalf of HAPI.

If you have any question as to whether or not what you are invited to is a part of HAPI or not, please ask! We have had persons use our name or a portion of the name to mislead individuals or to use their association with HAPI to attempt to raise support for a private business for self-interest. Please do share this to your team leader, should it occur, so that Paul and Valerie may address it with that individual.

21. No team member should visit other artisans' homes or private places of business without consulting the team leader and host. If agreed upon, it should be done as a *team*, not as individuals.

22. Please put your wifi equipment into 'airplane mode.' HAPI's bandwidth is both limited and of considerable expense. It is there to support the work of the staff, students and cyber café clients. The team will be provided an opportunity to post their safe arrival and the team leader may request to post official team updates. Any other usage for personal email and social media should be paid, whether utilizing a HAPI laptop or on your own equipment. Our local rate is 35 gourdes which is around .80 cents. Better yet...go 'off-grid' for a week! 😊

23. All tips should be processed through the team leader to give to host with the exception of your interpreters. Please tip interpreters directly, if you wish to do so. Normally one tips the cook, washing women, house man..... General guidelines are not greater than 15% of your total bill, whatever service you are tipping. Please do not exceed and set an expectation that the next team may not be able to meet. At airport luggage is usually \$2 per bag. Some do tip drivers, some do not. You do not have to tip. Tips should be a result of exceptional service.

24. When you take a walk some youth or people may try to communicate with you. ('Try' their English!) Be polite but do not let them guide you somewhere that your team leader or host did not plan.

25. Be sensitive about taking photos. Extend the courtesy of asking before you take a picture. Someone may ask you to pay for it. Be resistant and do not take the picture.

26. If you play cards during your free time and someone you're not familiar with wants to play with you, show discernment in your decision. You may want to check what type of relationship that person has with HAPI or the host family.

27. We do not want youth on the playground area after dark unless accompanied by team leaders.

28. Conserve water.

Conserve shower water by rinsing off, turn off water, soap up and then turn water back on. Drinking water will be found in five gallon containers near the water cooler. If water runs out, feel free to ask for assistance. If you just want to wash your feet, feel free to ask for a pail with a few inches of water so you can soak and clean off.

29. There are two bathrooms upstairs and two downstairs. Feel free to use any of them. You will want to knock before you open. If something is wrong or unacceptable with them, let your host know.

30. Breakfast will be approximately 7:30 a.m. Please bring your backpacks, water bottles and whatever supplies you need with you to breakfast. At 8 a.m. everyone needs to go to the activity assigned to them.

Dinner is from 5-6 pm unless the team leader has spoken to the host about extenuating circumstances.

If team or individual decide to eat somewhere else they need to inform host 24 hours before since they go to the market the day before and there is not the refrigeration to keep things. Do not expect a refund on room and board for decisions taken during the stay to eat out. If the team decides to sleep somewhere else for a night, the same applies.

We regret that this also extends to delayed or missed flights: funds cannot be reimbursed with less than 24 hour notice because food has been purchased and cooks and housekeepers hired for your care.

In some instances, the team has planned a night away on their agenda. In this case, room and board will be adjusted to reflect the schedule.

31. Get up close and personal with your motorcycle driver!

Riding motorcycles in the community is a trip highlight for many. There are risks and here are a few expectations to reduce risk: a) if you are a large individual, expect to ride solo behind the driver; 2 smaller individuals can share; b) NO SHORTS (capris or full length pants), c) sunglasses to shield eyes (or bring your helmet), d) hat or cap is suggested to prevent sunburned heads, e) SLIDE UP and tuck your pelvis against the driver, especially when climbing a hill; weight must be near the front of the machine / forget modesty; f) be prepared to get off and walk on steep inclines or other risky terrain if asked by the driver but do not dismount until the bike has stopped; g) if you carry a back pack, give it to the driver to put on the front of the bike; and h) try not to 'hug' the driver; place your hands on your knees.

32. Expect to hear other opinions.

There are 11,000 not for profit organizations in Haiti—and nearly as many opinions on how to help others. HAPI has developed a set of core principles, beliefs and values that guide our community engagement. We do have established community partners with whom we feel share our vision for the community and who complement our activities. For example, HAPI is not building a school but we support universal public education and collaborate with the local National School. With 11,000 organizations...there are many with whom we don't have a formal relationship either due to a lack of compelling reason, proximity, honest differences of opinion, or questionable accountability or practices. That is not to say that many of these organizations are not also doing good works; many are!

Some other organizations may solicit individual team members during your stay with HAPI. We ask that while you are on 'Team HAPI' that you respect and support our approach and efforts in the community. Our local staff, your hosts, and the US Director and Team Coordinator are all resources for you and have worked hard to prepare for your team to have a meaningful, inspiring and mutually-beneficial experience.

Please ask questions. (Why do you do this? Why not that?) It is impossible to understand a culture within a brief visit and all the dynamics under the surface. Read about Haiti. Read about differences in values. Be a 'sponge'. TRUST that your hosts and the leadership of HAPI have local wisdom. It won't always appear to make sense but we are trusting each of you and welcoming you into our 'home;' please extend the same trust to us.

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation on these matters.

Let your light shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

Matthew 5:16

I have read 'HAPI Playbook' of expectations and while I am an individual or team member in the Jacmel/Mizak area serving HAPI. I am willing to abide by them. The team leader or director has discussed them with me. For my welfare, the reputation of my team, HAPI and the glory of God, I am willing to follow them.

If upon my return stateside, I have concerns, or if anyone attempts to solicit money from me or communicates undesirable comments, I will immediately contact my team leader and/or the U.S. director. I will uphold in prayer the work of HAPI, the health and relationships of our team members with the community, our project progress and my ability to be helpful to others for God's sake.

Signature _____ Date _____

Individual Covenant – United Methodist Volunteers in Mission

I realize that the following commitment is crucial to the effectiveness, quality, and positive expression of our mission together. As a participating member of the United Methodist Volunteers in Mission team, I agree to:

1. Lift up Jesus Christ with my thoughts, words, and actions.*
2. Develop and maintain a servant attitude toward the people our team serves as well as toward each team member.
3. Pray for and support my team leader and his/her decisions.
4. Respect the host's religious views, realizing that different people have different expressions of faith.
5. Accept the ministry that is going on in the area where I am serving as well as the local approach to the mission, though it may differ from my own approach.
6. Strive for harmony among team members, hosts, and people of the hosts' society, keeping in mind local conditions and customs. To do this I will follow the teachings of Christianity, the Golden Rule, and local societal customs and laws; avoid local taboos; use common sense and good judgment in all things; be considerate, tolerant, and patient with other customs, beliefs, and needs; and generally set a good Christian example.
7. **Abstain from using alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs, and profanity; wearing inappropriate clothing; and engaging in other objectionable behavior, from the time of my departure until my return home.**
8. Refrain from negativism and complaining. Travel and ministry outside my church may present unexpected and even undesired circumstances. However, my support and creativity will improve the situation.
9. Refrain from gossip. If it is not true, good, and positive, I will not say it.
10. Remember that I am a servant of Jesus Christ called to be in ministry with the host team. I will serve as best I can so that both the spiritual purpose and the task of the mission will be accomplished.

Signature

Date