

10 Tips to Ease Your Way into a New Community Group...

- 1. FOLLOW YOUR HEART**
Find a cause or a social activity you're passionate about - one that involves and satisfies you.
- 2. TWO'S COMPANY**
Take a friend along. You can support each other, and you'll have someone to discuss it with while you're getting to know the scene.
- 3. READ THE MANUAL**
There should be an induction manual, and there certainly ought to be a constitution and some other materials that will help you to get to know the group a little better.
- 4. FIND A MENTOR**
Ask one of the longer standing members to show you the ropes. Get them to write down people's names, too: you'll never remember them all on the first day.
- 5. THERE ARE NO STUPID QUESTIONS**
If you don't understand something, don't hesitate to say so.
- 6. CUT THEM SOME SLACK**
Unless you're joining the Utopia Paradise Club, you'll find that some people are sometimes irritating. Grin and bear it.
- 7. THERE'S NO SUCH PERSON AS SOMEBODY**
When you see something that needs doing, don't just say "Somebody ought to fix that," and walk away. Fix it yourself. (But try not to step on toes.)
- 8. LOOK TO THE LONG HAUL**
Don't expect to have everything hunky-dory immediately, and don't expect people to let you run the place on your first day.
- 9. PLAY TO YOUR STRENGTHS**
You've got specialist skills and things you're particularly good at. Make sure the group knows what they are so that they can put you where you're most needed.
- 10. THE FIRST TIME IS THE HARDEST**
You don't have to confine yourself to one community group. Widen your horizons and lend a hand over the road as well.

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