

# The 10 Commandments for Community Inclusion

OR HOW TO GET OUT OF THE SYSTEM AND INTO YOUR COMMUNITY

Revolutionary Common Sense by Kathie Snow, [www.disabilityisnatural.com](http://www.disabilityisnatural.com)

1. See yourself as—and become—an “ordinary” (not “special”) person or family. Focus on strengths and abilities, not perceived deficits and problems.
2. Expect inclusion. First and foremost, inclusion is a state of mind. See yourself and/or your family members as citizens of your community who belong!
3. Develop and nurture relationships with people in natural environments and typical activities: community activities, church, school, leisure, etc.
4. Use natural supports and generic services instead of services and programs from the system (e.g., soccer, ballet, swimming, etc. in place of traditional therapy; regular babysitters instead of respite care; ordinary activities instead of “special” activities; etc.). What would we do if there were no system? Would we really go without or would we find what we need in our communities?
5. Ask for others’ help, and then give back to others—however you can—in return. Community is all about reciprocity!
6. Be specific about what you want and need from the community, but also be flexible.
7. Be patient with others and with yourself as we all try new ways of doing things. If your first effort fails, learn from the experience and try again.
8. Experience the “dignity of risk.” Be willing to try things you’ve never done before!
9. Be proactive, not reactive, when dealing with others. Think “win/win” not “win/lose.” Negotiate and compromise.
10. Act as if—no matter what—you cannot fail! See yourself as successful. Attitude is everything!