

75 Things You Can Do To Build Community

Community grows stronger through hundreds of little and big actions citizens take every day. As you scan the list...

- ✓ Put a check mark next to any of these actions that you or a family member has done either in the past month or so, or for more occasional actions, in the past year or so.
- + Put a plus sign next to any of these actions you have supported a person with a developmental disability to do in the past month or so, or for more occasional actions, in the past year or so.
- ? Put a question mark next to any of these actions that a willing person with a developmental disability would find harder to do because of a service organizations' policy or current practice or routines or setting.

1. Attend a political meeting
2. Support local merchants
3. Volunteer your special skills to a community organization
4. Donate blood (with a friend)
5. Work in a community garden
6. Mentor a person of a different ethnic group
7. Surprise a new or favorite neighbor by taking them food
8. Avoid destructive gossip
9. Help another person outside your home fix something
10. Attend local school or children's athletics, plays, & recitals
11. Get involved with scouts
12. Sing in a choir
13. Attend a party in someone else's home
14. Get to know the clerks and salespeople at your local stores
15. Audition for community theatre or to support a production backstage or volunteer to usher
16. Attend a lecture or concert
17. Give to your local food or clothing bank
18. Play cards or games with friends or neighbors
19. Walk or bike to support a cause and meet others
20. Participate in a political campaign
21. Attend a local festival or parade
22. Find a way to show personal appreciation to someone who builds your local community
23. Coach or help out with local (youth) sport
24. Offer to help a neighbor with garden work or shopping or a ride
25. Start or participate in a discussion group or book or film club
26. Start or join a carpool
27. Plan a "Walking Tour" of a local historic area
28. Tutor or read to children or have children read to you
29. Run for public office
30. Invite neighbors over for a meal
31. Host a party
32. Offer to serve on a committee outside of work
33. Form a walking group (or a swimming group) with at least one other person & encourage each other
34. Play a sport
35. Go to church
36. Ask an elder to teach you something
37. Host a potluck supper
38. Take dance lessons with a friend
39. Become a trustee
40. Join a campaign & take action that brings you into contact with others (not just a donation)
41. Gather a group to clean up a local park or cemetery
42. Bake something for neighbors or work colleagues
43. Plant trees
44. Volunteer at the library or primary school
45. Call an old friend
46. Sign up for a class & meet your classmates
47. Accept or extend an invitation

48. Log off and go to the park
49. Say hello to strangers
50. Find out more by talking with a neighbor you don't know very well yet
51. Host a movie night
52. Help out with or create a newsletter
53. Collect oral histories to discover the interesting things people have done
54. Cut back on TV
55. Join in to help carry something heavy
56. Make gifts of time
57. Greet people
58. If you think someone needs help, ask to find out & do what you can
59. Fix it even if you didn't break it
60. Pick up litter even if you didn't drop it
61. Attend gallery openings & art exhibits
62. Organize a neighborhood yard sale
63. Read or listen to the local news faithfully
64. Attend a public meeting or hearing & speak up
65. When inspired write a personal note or send a card to friends
66. Offer to watch a neighbor's home while they are away.
67. Help out with recycling
68. Ask to see a friend's photos
69. Invite a local politician or official to speak to a group you belong to
70. Start talking to people you see regularly
71. Listen to the children you know and find out what matters to them
72. Plan a reunion of family, friends, or people with whom you had a special connection
73. Hire local young people for odd jobs
74. Write a letter to the editor
75. Join a group that is likely to lead to making new friends of different ethnicity, or religion, or income, or life experience

You Can Still Go to Hell

In Shop'N Save I'm trying to get Lorna to reach up
and grab a box of Little Debbie pink heart cakes
and though she won't lift her hand above her shoulder
and is making anxious honking sounds, still,
I'm trying to get her to do it, because reaching up
will strengthen her back and there's a hab plan written
somewhere that says she's going to,
when I realize a little French woman is repeating,
Excuse me, and Louise, hands glued to the grocery cart,
is frozen in place blocking her.
I reach over and touch Louise's right elbow and she
takes two big steps forward and says loudly, *Yeah right*,
while Leo, his mittens fastened to his sleeves,
flaps his arms like a seal and Lorna knocks
three boxes of Nutty Buddies on the floor.

The woman pats me on the arm and says,
There's a special place in heaven for people like you,
and even though I like being thought of
as a saint and want to go to heaven
I know this isn't really enough.
She only says it because she doesn't know
the people I work with or how normal they are,
and all of us, therefore, don't know,
as well, what normal is.

But I know Louise loves to sing,
We're off to see the wizard...
and sometimes, completely out of nowhere,
she'll walk up to Leo, give him a hug
and kiss him, gently, on top of his head.

Dave Moreau (2011) *If you're happy and you know it clap your hand*. Inclusion Press www.inclusion.com/bkifyouarehappy.html