

## 2c2

# Benefactor

### Do

Find a person who will fix up a welcome in the setting for the person.

### Story

Edgerton's' studies of the lives of a group of individuals who left California's Pacific State Hospital between 1949 and 1958 to live on their own are heartening. His original observations and interviews in 1960-61 led him to conclude that participants' success at community adjustment was dependent on finding and retaining a 'benefactor', but his

follow-up research of 1972, 1982 and 1985 demonstrated that reliance on benefactors decreased markedly across time. In fact, by 1985, Edgerton found not only that most individuals had personal relationships in which they both received and gave help, but also that four members of his sample acted as benefactors to community members without disability. (*Edgerton 1993*)

**Hints & Hazards**

It is better to be invited by an insider than taken in by an outsider. If that insider grew up in the same village or attended the same school, then they may be particularly willing to assist the newcomer to engage.

‘Another way to view this is to look out for the opinion formers and role models in the community setting. These people will be important in influencing the success of the inclusive effort. If people who need support infiltrate these roles then a double success might be achieved.

Robert Kegan (1982, p19) observed ‘Who comes into a person’s life is in part a matter of luck, in part a matter of one’s power to recruit others, but in large part a matter of other people’s ability to be recruited. People have as varying capacities to be recruited as they do to recruit others.’ (See Amado 1993, p14)

The benefactor may not be an active member of the group, but rather someone who can arrange for the person to be welcomed – a slightly different role from the Welcoming Host (see 6c1)