

The following booklet was written by Miriam Troyer and Esther Keim, in hopes that they might help the ones who just left the Amish and are not yet aware of what they will be facing. They, of all people would know, since they both left the Amish themselves.

I Just Left The Amish: Now What?

By Esther Keim & Miriam Miller

WELCOME

First of all, I want to let you know that I think you are very brave. I know it's not easy to leave your parents, brothers, sisters, and all of your friends, but according to God's word, there is hope.

PSALM 27:10 says: *"When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up."*

I know how hard it is to get started in a completely new and different way of life. I went through it too. Of course, your parents are going to try to persuade you to come back. They will try to make you feel guilty, and feel sorry for them. Actually, they'll try just about anything. Remember ... Acts 5:29 tells us, *"We ought to obey God rather than man."*

This life is quite different than what you were used to. Amish have their own rules and they expect you to live by them. The English/American way of life also has its ways, and you are expected to live by those. After all, what is the point in leaving if you are going to keep your Amish rules and attitudes? Of course, you can choose to keep your Amish rules and attitudes. I will still love you, pray for you, and help you in any way possible, but you will be accepted a lot better if you change and adjust to the new life style. I know from experience!

I have put this booklet together hoping that it will help you adjust to the English/American way of life. May you take it to heart and not be hurt or upset by it. I'm only trying to help you. I have had a few bad experiences with people that had just left the Amish; I wanted to help them, but didn't I appreciate it when I felt used. I hope these suggestions can be useful to you as you learn a new way of living.

I wish you God's richest blessings as you begin your new journey in life. This can be an exciting and rewarding experience!

Manners

COMMUNICATION / RELATIONSHIPS

Proverbs 10:18 *"He that hideth hatred with lying lips, and he that uttereth a slander, is a fool."*

1. When meeting a person, shake their hand and say, "Hi, I'm . . ., glad to meet you."
2. Make sure you introduce the person who is with you.
3. Remember to say *please*, when asking for something.
4. Always remember to say *thank you*, when asking a favor or when someone helps you.
5. Say, *excuse me*, if someone is in your way, instead of just shoving your way through. Also, remember to say, *I'm sorry*, if you bump into someone.
6. Be sure to knock before entering someone's home (even if it is your closest friends).
7. Cursing is not acceptable. Deuteronomy 5:11 *"Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain: for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain."*
8. Never say someone is fat. Use words like well built or stocky, if you have to describe a big or heavy person. Don't ever use any racial slurs. Do unto others as you would like others to do unto you.

Money Management

Luke 12:42 *"And the Lord said, "Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make a ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season?"*

1. Start a savings account as soon as you get your first job.
2. Try to save at least \$20-\$50 a week for your next car, a future home, etc. Or try to save 10% of your income.
3. Pay your bills first and on time before spending it on weekend activities.
4. Shop at Good Will, thrift stores, and garage sales for clothes and household items until you can afford better. Early to bed, early to rise, until you make enough money to do otherwise.

Education

2 Timothy 2:15 *"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."*

Study for your GED (General Education Development Test). You can get information at the library. A GED is a form of high school graduation, and is necessary for most jobs.

Restaurant and Table Behavior

1 Corinthians 14:40 *"Let all things be done decently and in order."*

1. When the waitress comes to your table, be sure to use the words please and thank you
2. Leave a tip for the waitress: about \$2.00 per person, or 15% of your bill
3. Remember to be polite. Don't talk with your mouth full and don't slurp
4. Use your "restaurant voice." Keep it down since there are others around you
5. Avoid scraping your plate noisily and continually.

Personal Cleanliness

Job 19:9 *"The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger."*

1. Take a shower / bath every day and wear deodorant.
2. Put on a clean outfit every day. Not just a different one.
3. Brush and floss your teeth at least twice a day (morning, evening and before going out or to the dentist.
4. Boys should shave every day, especially before going on a date, or before an interview.
5. Girls need to shave their armpits and legs, especially when wearing a dress or at least a couple of times a week.

Manners for Dating

1 Corinthians 6:18 *"Flee from fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body." Keep your relationship Godly.*

1. Never let a door slam in a person's face, especially not your girlfriend / boyfriend.
2. Always open the door and hold it for the ladies.
3. Make sure your girlfriend has a seat before you take the last available one.
4. Don't honk your horn. Walk to the door and wait until she is ready.
5. Walk her to the car, open the door for her and wait until she is seated. Then close the door for her.
6. Pass up the urge to just say, "Let's go," and expect your girlfriend or boyfriend to follow. Instead, ask, "Are you ready?"
7. Respect each other. Men don't rule over women and neither should women nag or persuade men.

Employment

1 Thessalonians 4:11,12 *"And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you. That you may walk honestly toward them that are without and that you may have lack of nothing."*

1. You need your birth certificate and two other forms of ID, such as report cards, hospital/dental/Chiropractor record or an Amish directory to apply for a social security number.
2. You must have a social security number to get a job.
3. You need transportation to and from work.
4. Remember a low paying job is better than no job.
5. Don't be fooled by a newspaper ad. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
6. Check with a friend about your dress code and hair style.
7. Arrive 5-10 minutes early for your interview and for work each day.
8. Make good eye contact, sit up straight in your chair and be careful you do not talk too much
9. Never be late for an interview or work.
10. There are only two reasons why you should ever call off from work (sickness or death in the family).
11. Respect your boss, landlord or anyone in charge, even if you disagree with them.

Living with Others

Proverbs 18:24 *"A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother."*

1. Show appreciation by helping around the house.
2. Help with the dishes / cooking.
3. Do your own laundry or at least fold your own clothes and put them away.
4. Clean up after yourself.
5. Remove your shoes, especially work boots before going into a house.
6. If you take lunch to work, pack it yourself.
7. Keep music / TV down because not everyone enjoys the same thing that you do.
8. Be well mannered and don't drink all of the pop or eat all of the ice cream, etc.
9. Make sure that you ask before bringing others into a home that's not yours. Remember, they are strangers to the family with whom you are staying.
10. You should ask if you may answer, or use the phone before answering or using it.
11. When answering the phone (especially if it is not yours) say, "Hello, this is . . ."
12. When making a call, let the other person know who is calling (Example: "Hi, this is . . ."). It is not polite to ask the other person to guess who is calling.
13. Once you have a job, pay for rent and food. Electricity and grocery expenses increased when you moved into the home.