

What Should I Expect

Joining a Circle is pretty much like joining any other group. You will make friends, and there will be people that you just learn to tolerate. Hopefully in this group you will find many of the first and none of the last; however it all depends upon how well people work together and how accepting they are of others.

No, you should not lower your standards. But on the other hand, there are reasonable people who just do things differently. I say that in order to cut wood, there likely are 40 different ways to do it. Of those 40, there could be 4 that are acceptable, safe, and efficient. Which of those 40 will you use to get the wood cut? But if another person wants to use one of the “other 40 ways,” then that is his business and/or problem. If, on the other hand, they jack up their car, duct tape an axe to the rear wheel, and rev the engine; I would consider it necessary for me to let them know that this is not only inefficient, but dangerous. I have a responsibility as a member of society to let them know the errors of their ways. But I am not the police.

Speaking of responsibilities. This is important. There are responsibilities that go both ways in the teacher student relationship.

Student responsibilities

1. Learn.
2. Be on time (if you can't be on time, then call on the phone).
3. Do assigned work in a timely manner.
4. Be awake and prepared to enjoy and learn in each class.
5. Step in and assist in tasks where you have the skill.
6. Step in and assist in tasks where you need to learn the skills.
7. Don't tell outsiders things that you are told in confidence.

Teacher responsibilities

1. Teach.
2. Be on time (duuh).
3. Have a prepared lesson plan.
4. Ask for help in doing things, particularly where it will help the learning process for the students. (too often it is much simpler to just do it yourself than to take the time to show someone how to do it, and then help them do it).
5. Oh yes, a teacher should really enjoy teaching and working with people.

Not mentioned here are the honesty between teacher and student. Both are trusting that each will act in an honest and honorable manner. In teaching in general, but more importantly in a Circle, a bond of trust is built. The bond is one of brotherly or sisterly love. Game playing, lies, gossip, and stuff like that don't belong in this situation. This is not a public school room where you are required to attend.

Instead, you asked to be allowed to participate. You are not paying money for classes, but instead are giving of your time and self in the effort. Such as this also the teacher does.

The Cost of Doing Business

There will be hidden charges when one joins an organization. Gas, food on the way to each meeting (and possibly afterwards), supplies, donations; are all hidden costs. While a teacher in this situation will not ask for money (against the laws-that's another lesson for another day), they may ask for donations of consumable items (candles, herbs, firewood). This is reasonable. However, if I were to keep tabs on everything, I would say that every time that I attend a meeting it costs me \$20-25 in gas and food. Multiply this time 4 times a month, and you get the idea. While the amount is not a lot, if it is unplanned, it can become a problem; particularly if you have a large household and money is tight.

Spouses

Many people will have spouses. The big question is how does your spouse feel about your new direction? Don't lie, it will catch up with you. However, there are ways to explain this path that are not blood and guts. My Mother in law thought it was ok, because it is a nature religion, like the Native American religions. Still she was a bit worried, until she actually attended an event and found out for herself that really we are good people.

At some point, early in your training, you should attend a circle with your spouse. This way he/she can see firsthand what you are doing, and more importantly, what type of people you are hanging around with on the weekend. It is possible that they may like what they see and join you in your chosen path.

If they do not like what they see or what you are doing, it is better to find this out early in the game. I am not saying leave a spouse because of a religious difference, but I am saying that a situation concerning religious differences has long term consequences. I have seen more households rendered asunder due to religious differences than I care to count.

This is easy for me to say. Remember that I will say what I think, but it is your life, and you have to live with the decisions that you make. Mixed religion marriages can be trouble. It all depends upon the individuals. Have a lot of dialogue with your spouse.

Children

Children can be another matter all together. Children talk. Children will bring you out of the closet at the worst time. Talk with your leaders about children and how things should be said around them. Again, we don't lie, but there are some things that should be said in certain ways. I guarantee that your child will quote you to grandmother. It is best to be prepared.