

how to be a mutant

(a brief practical guide)

by Jay Edidin

1. Come to be.

Your mutation may be detectible--even visible--at birth. It may not. But it will be there, in every cell of your body; in your blood and your eyes and your skin and your heart.

2. Grow.

Growth is neither a comfortable nor a simple process. Sometimes, it may be intuitive; often, it will not be. Remember during this time that discomfort is a valuable tool: constraint and constriction indicate directions in which you need to stretch.

3. Manifest.

You will become. Every mutation is different; likewise, every manifestation. Some are gradual, seamless extensions. Some are painful and violent. Some are so gentle that they are nearly imperceptible. Your mutation is most likely to manifest around or in the years immediately following puberty; but manifestation can occur at any point in a mutant's life, from birth through old age.

7. Survive.

Never doubt that you are a future worth fighting for.

Manifestation can be, but is not always, triggered by extreme stress or trauma.

6. Seek.

Know that you are not alone, and you will never be unloved. Your mutant family is larger than you can dream. We will find you, or let ourselves be found; and we will welcome you with open arms.

4. Adapt.

How significantly your mutation impacts your day-to-day life will vary. Regardless your mutation, your life after manifestation will be different from your life before, even if those differences are only perceptible to you. Remember that change and growth are your allies.

5. Learn.

You are not the first mutant. You will not be the last. Know from whose shoulders you reach for the skies; and be ready to brace your own for the next generations. History is power; continuity is power. Embrace growth and change, but do not let yourself or your people be erased.

Some mutations will be functionally imperceptible; others, clearly visible. Some mutants will require specific accommodations or adaptive technology to interact with and participate in human society; many will need to navigate both overt and subtle hostility and discrimination. Every mutation is different; likewise, every mutant. How you choose to interact with your mutation, and the extent to which you choose--within the choices available to you--to be open about your status as a mutant or the nature of your mutation may vary.