

Tips For How To Proceed After Discovering A Close DNA Match.

-Take a deep breath.

-Do not immediately contact the match. Remember people can opt out of relative lists, so you don't want to scare them off. Also, if they are unknown to you, it might be unknown to them that they were adopted or the results of a non-paternal event (NPE).

-Take some time to do some research, try to determine who they are and how they might related. Can you tell if they are part of the birth family you are trying to find? Or are they adopted and searching, or? Are they maternal or paternal? Look at a DNA Relationship chart or DNA Painter and determine the possible relationships. Gather all the clues you can find.

-Take screenshots of everything; the match on the listing page, the screen that shows the amount of centimorgans (cm) shared, the list of matches shared between you, trees if they have any, and their profile page.

-When you feel it is time to message them here are some tips...

1. Update your profile(s).
2. When crafting your message, keep in mind the info you found but don't necessarily share all that you sleuthed about them.
3. Be clear in your message and subject line.
4. Don't be too overwhelming or too underwhelming. Too much info might scare them off, too little and they don't have reason to respond.
5. Give them an alternate way to contact you (email, phone)
6. Ask them specific questions. Don't just say "how are we related?" Ask them if they will share their tree or give you the names of their great grandparents.
7. As a show of good faith, give them some info that you have. Tell them when and where you were born or what surnames you have determined are on your common side. (that sounds better than "I don't have any info").
8. Offer to help them with their tree or their search.
9. Be warm and kind in your tone. Not curt.
10. I highly recommend direct contact by the person searching, especially if match is an immediate family member.