My fourth suggestion is the one I believe most strongly: Don’t believe anyone who says you can’t succeed at MIT outside of a particular living group. This is what I hate about Rush. Hundreds of people going around telling freshmen that MIT is an evil that crushes you with one full swoop. Telling freshmen that the only place to find support and help is in a living group. In polite terms, that’s crap.

If MIT is a terrible place, why would we come back, year after year — and why would we pay $25,000 a year to keep coming back? I don’t know about you, but my parents and I could find lots of nice things to do with $25,000 a year, if I had it in the first place. By one theory, this badmouthing of the Institute is something that psychoanalysts call “displace- able dependency.” If you really care, ask Jay Keyser, former associate provost for institute dependency.” If you really care, ask Jay Keyser, former associate provost for institutional life and all-around nice guy. (Also ask him to tell you the frog and light story.)

Forget what a living group might say. You can survive. In fact, you can do better than survive, you can excel and have a damn good time doing it. To quote The Oatmeal Guy, “It’s the right thing to do and a tasty way to do it.” (I don’t quote him very often, honestly.) Now don’t get me wrong — God knows there are times (e.g. around finals) when I pray for a concrete paradise on the Charles can probably withstand a direct ICBM hit.

Yes, “Tech is hell,” an epithet that alumni know well. But you’re here because you can and will make it through and enjoy yourself.

No particular living group has a monopoly on support. Saying that living groups have a lock on support is absurd. MIT employs lots of people whose only job is to get you through life and all-around nice people. (Look in your Hitchhiker’s Guide for more details or call the R/O Center.) Move on and you will find a place to live.

My final suggestion is the most important and the most cliché: have fun. I don’t want to be maudlin, but these days are hard to duplicate. MIT will not be the same again after this week. You will be teased like kings and queens for the next week or so. Eat all the free meals you can get your hands on, even if you never intend to live at that house. Trust me, after next week, asking appreciations for a steak and lobster dinner (medium well) will get you a drink from the Charles. That’s it — my quick and dirty suggestions for Rush. As for me, I’ll be sitting back with a remote in one hand and an ice cold beverage in the other. If you happen to stop by, close the door behind you because your sir condition will be on.

Have a good Rush and welcome to MIT!