

*He who is afraid of asking
is ashamed of learning.
—Danish proverb*

How can I ask for help?

All of us need help from time to time. It's good to think carefully about what you like to do, what you do well, and what you could most happily offer someone in need.

Tips for asking for help

- Remember: those who can ask for help are very brave.
- If you ask too late, help will probably come too late. That's how self-fulfilling prophecies develop.
- Ask for more than you need, earlier than you think you need it.
- Expect to get several "no's" before you get a "yes."
- Prepare: if someone says "no," ask if he/she knows of other resources.
- Believe: it's not the ability to pay back that makes you worthy of asking.
- Recognize: asking for help is a sign that you, like all the rest of us, are human.
- Know: most people take pleasure and find life most meaningful when giving help.

Ways to extend invitations

*Here is an example of a two-stage way to ask.
Practice your own way, but practice!*

Stage 1:

Bill, I've read a great new book called *Personal Safety Nets*. Can I take a few minutes and tell you some of the things described in this book? Then perhaps we can discuss some of them.

If Bill seems interested, you may choose to proceed and say this:

Stage 2:

Bill, I'd like to set up a personal safety net team for myself. I'd like to have a discussion with you about what it might look like and how, if interested, you could be one of the members. We can get started now, if you're interested, or we might set a time later, or you may read the book (I've an extra copy I'd be glad to give you) and then we could have a discussion. Do any of these ideas interest you?

Questions:

Would this work for you? Why or why not? What might be better? *Try it out, and practice!*