



Your Belief About Asking for Help

Ask yourself, how do you feel about seeking help from another? Do you ask? Be very honest with yourself! Do you believe that seeking help undermines your independence and conflicts with your ability to be in charge of your own life, or do you believe we are social beings who need to "ask" in order to cooperate with one another and ensure we grow and thrive?

[1]There seem to be strong opposing views held by those who hold fast to maintaining personal independence ("I don't need help/never ask") and those who support gaining independence through interdependence ("Asking is good"). **The first group often sees taking help from others as a weakness.** It's a learned and ingrained pattern of thinking that may be hard to overcome. Research shows that **the second group, those who support interdependence, are more likely to see asking as strength. *Still there can be discomfort with actually how to increase ease with asking.***

At PSN, our goals include helping people understand the benefits of asking for help, and offering methods of being better prepared and able to undertake the task of asking for help. Too many of us run away from asking for help because it feels too difficult.

[2]Let's focus on the idea that seeking help is a sign of weakness. If you're in this camp, we're definitely out to change your mind! We want to help you overcome this belief and allow you to develop a healthier sense of interdependence with those around you.

Dig deep; consider exactly why - the reasons - you think asking for help is a sign of weakness (?). Do you feel that you're totally independent and don't need any help? Do you see any person offering you help as doubting your ability to remain independent? Are you frightened of rejection or have a tendency for perfectionism? Do you feel vulnerable when you have to seek help? Have you been let down in the past and have sworn never to let that happen again? Do you worry that needing help serves as a sign of a lack of professionalism? Do you think that friends and family will see you as weak or inferior if you ask for help?

People who tell us they don't want to ask for help often use these as reasons. Their beliefs are reinforced in three ways; FIRST by movies, books and even games in which a hero gains the highest glory if he or she faces "impossible" problems and magically overcomes them on his or her own.

But most heroes have helpers, supporters and others, unacknowledged behind the scenes. Their success often depends on a lot of plain luck. These "helpers" may not be obvious but they are there, and a good hero benefits greatly from the assistance, advice and input of others.

[3]The first step is to stop comparing yourself with such unrealistic portrayals of heroes.

SECOND: a common tendency is to think you "should" be able to cope alone and manage without help. This tendency to use "I should" presents a very unrealistic standard. Are you building an invisible barrier around yourself that wards off the potential for new relationships and friendships? Are you taking the opportunity to learn about the value of give and take, and the compassionate cycle of love, care, and generosity for all?

THIRD: the idea of your own expertise. Being trained in one field of expertise does not provide you with immunity from continuing to seek help from others within that same field or from other sources.

You will be all the better for asking for help from others.

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Links

[1] <https://personalsafetynets.com/file/282>

[2] <https://personalsafetynets.com/file/283>

[3] <https://personalsafetynets.com/file/284>