



Asking for Help is a Sign of Strength

We all need help every now and then. Financial, spiritual, physical and emotional help, coming from others can get us through difficult times in our lives.

Many of us, though, are unable to recognize when help is needed or are reluctant to ask for the help that others can provide. We want to try to do most things our self. Some of us take real joy or get pleasure from caring for our yard, cleaning our house, shopping for favorite foods or freely traveling for business and leisure activities. Then, maybe, comes the day when all that has to change.



[1]An injury left Rosemarie Rossetti in a wheelchair, possibly for the rest of her life. To many, it was obvious by looking at the wheelchair that she could use extra assistance. Sometimes she wanted this help, sometimes not. But the wheelchair was a visible symbol suggesting dependence, and early on she became dependent on people for very basic health needs. Eventually, however, she sought independence, gaining freedom to move by driving a new minivan equipped with hand controls and a power ramp. Then she reached another milestone towards her independence - flying on a plane by herself. It had taken two years in order to develop the strength and skill set needed to get on an airplane, maneuver in the community, and care for herself in a hotel.

Rossetti was amazed of the special help she received: "I was seldom really alone on this trip. People at the airport, airline, taxi service, hotel, restaurant and training facility all were eager to offer VIP service. Doesn't it amaze you at times when people do things to help you? There are an overwhelming number of people in this world who are amazingly kind and thoughtful. Doing things to help other people makes us feel better. Oftentimes we feel honored that another person asked us for help. It is better to serve than to be served."



[2]She goes on to query, "How can people suggest that they are dependent on others in order to reach their goals? **What's wrong with asking people for help? Asking for help**



is not a sign of weakness, but rather shows insight in knowing how to achieve the goal.”

We are all dependent on others in order for our achievements to be attained. Just look around you at the services that are performed for you that you take for granted. Someone delivers your mail, newspaper and packages, hauls away your trash, provides your residence with utilities, maintains your car, and grows and processes your food. You depend on their services for your everyday living, but seldom think of yourself as being dependent.

We strive to find a balance between being independent and dependent. The point of balance will be different for each person. There is a peace of mind in knowing that others will be there to help you when you are in need. Often our family and friends serve as our foundational support structure. Sometimes we need to build a support structure – to ask for the help of a community of others. You are asking for help, and offering help to others. This reliance enriches strong relationships. It gives the helping community (family, friends or friends of friends) a chance to bond as a team, to grow and to have new experiences.

Oftentimes we are afraid to ask for help. To many of us it is a sign that we are weak. We become reluctant to ask and try to do it ourselves or else abandon the thought and give up. We are missing out on so many opportunities due to our fear to ask others to lend a hand.



[3]We must simply ask! It's that simple, ask. Don't jump to conclusions and assume that the person we want to ask will not be in a position to help. Wait until they reach this conclusion themselves. If they can't help, then ask if they know someone else who can. It's the first step towards a new kind of independent and interdependent freedom.

~~Speaker and author of *Personal Safety Nets* conducts presentations that bring out the best in us, help us to help others, set goals, and take charge of their lives. She is the author of *Take Back Your Life!* and is *Ms. Wheelchair Ohio 2004*.~~

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