

It can be difficult to talk with someone about accepting help.

You may have concerns about someone, and you want to make sure this person is safe, healthy and getting the help they need.

For many people, acknowledging that they are no longer capable of being independent is hard, and accepting help can take time.

It's important to allow people the time and space they need to come to terms with how their situation is changing.

Common Signs Someone May Need Help At Home

Physical

- Weight gain or loss
- Falls
- Change in appearance or poor hygiene
- Trouble sleeping
- Unexplained injuries or bruises

Home environment

- Piles of unopened mail, unpaid bills, or clutter
- Odor of urine or garbage
- Not enough food in the house
- Failure to turn off stove or water after use
- Problems taking medications
- Unexplained dents or scratches on car

Emotional/Cognitive

- Disconnection from friends, family, activities
- Confusion or memory concerns
- Getting lost
- Asking repeated questions
- Hallucinations



Having a Conversation with Someone About Needing Help

Aging & Disability Resource Center of Dane County

2865 N Sherman Ave.

Madison WI 53704

Phone: 608-240-7400

Here are a few tips to help you prepare for a conversation about getting help:

1. Think about how you would feel if you were in their situation

People often worry about losing control over their own life. When someone feels they are losing independence, they may lash out at well-meaning people who are trying to help them. Be mindful of these feelings and try to approach the discussion with sensitivity.

2. Listen

Ask the person to explain how they are feeling about their situation. Where do they want to live? What do they find challenging day to day? What help are they willing to accept? Make sure you're really listening to what they are saying. Try not to interrupt them or tell them what they need. Remember that this is their life and they decide where they live and what help they will accept.

3. Plan the discussion

Why: Explain that you have some concerns, and you want to have a discussion with them. Put the person at ease by letting him or her know that you want them to remain as independent as possible for as long as possible. Explain that you want to have this discussion because you care, and you want to help them.

What: Explain that you want to problem solve some concerns and hope that with this discussion, you can come up with some solutions together.

Who: Invite only the people they want to have involved in the conversation. Limit it to a close couple of people. Too many people can make the discussion more difficult.

Where: Pick an area that is quiet and comfortable, preferably in the person's home. Reduce distractions- turn off the television and the phone.

When: Pick a time of day that works for them. Make sure you plan a time dedicated to this discussion. Ensure that they don't have another appointment beforehand or afterward so that they are not feeling rushed.

4. Remain calm and speak clearly

This will help ensure they are hearing what you're saying and that they listen to your concerns. Remember that this is a discussion, not a time to tell them what you think they need. You can offer possible solutions, but they get to decide what options to try.

5. Be open to a variety of options

Sometimes people surprise you and they may be willing to try something you never would have expected. The ADRC may be able to help you come up with some ideas or options for help.

6. Have realistic expectations

Some people are very resistant to accepting help. Ask the person if they are willing to try just one service or option. This can be a one step at a time process.

7. End the Conversation on a positive note

"This is a hard conversation for both of us, but I really appreciate you having it." Plan something relaxing or fun after the conversation.

8. Ask for help

The ADRC can provide assistance guiding these conversations.