

## Commentary

### Help Seeking Behavior: A Crucial Life Skill

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In simple words, seeking help is a basic ability to ask for assistance from others when one is in need. Humans are by definition social beings and we need each other not only to connect meaningfully but also to depend during the times of need. It's safe to say that the need for help is universal for humans.

One of the most common words and concepts learnt very early on in life are help and helping but interestingly the idea of seeking help still makes many people uncomfortable. It can be said that helping comes easy because it is associated with a power position of giving, virtue of compassion, kindness and a consequent feeling of satisfaction.

Asking for help on the contrary seems to be mistakenly associated with being weak or inadequate. There are fears of being judged, rejected or having to hear a no with asking for help. It also involves the feeling of giving another a superior place in one's life, becoming obligated and feeling pressured. These beliefs and assumptions surrounding help seeking behaviors discourage people from reaching out for assistance and they continue to feel emotional overwhelm, which affects their physical, emotional, social, occupational as well spiritual wellbeing.

It is commonly observed that there are significant gender differences in help seeking behaviors. Females and males tend to differ in their help seeking behaviors. Additionally it has been observed that seeking help in some areas of life comes easy compared to others.

Help seeking behavior has immense importance for one's well being. Thus, it is crucial to become open to seeking help. Following are some of the ways that can assist in help seeking.

Identifying one's irrational beliefs about help seeking: it is crucial to identify one's irrational and limiting beliefs about help seeking. Socio-culturally popular stereotypes, notions and beliefs can impact one's attitude towards help seeking. It is frequently seen that people are less open to seeking help in a culture that looks down upon seeking help. Thus it is important to identify the irrational cultural beliefs that discourage help seeking.

Logical understanding of help seeking: after identifying the irrational beliefs that stop one from seeking help.

Normalizing asking for help: It is very important to normalize the need to ask for help. Recognizing oneself as human, and accepting that one cannot do it all or be it all, all the time is key, needing help is human, and asking for it is intelligent as it helps in efficient resolution of issues.

Helping others respectfully: One of the most beautiful gestures is to help others, it brings joy and also makes one feel that it is okay to be in the place of a receiver. As helper and helpee both are humans and both are equally respectable. Helping respectfully shifts the negative perspective around seeking help.

Counting the benefits of help seeking behavior: It is important to count the benefits of help seeking behavior.

Keeping a diary and recording how a problem got solved easily, on time and did not exhaust one with help seeking behavior helps in the maintenance of help seeking behavior.

## **CONCLUSION**

Help seeking behaviors needs to be encouraged as an essential life skill in all the areas of life for all. Interdependence needs to be understood as a basic human need and schools need to teach the importance of timely help seeking behaviors to young children. This shall normalize the idea of seeking help in people and minimize the hesitation and stigma.

If only individuals could identify the need for help, had access to adequate help and reach out for timely intervention, most problems could be nipped in the bud.