

Europe for us!

The Newsletter of the European Self-Advocates Movement

March 2004



Editorial

Hello everybody!

The spring will be soon here and we would like to discuss a very important issue with you!

Support and support person - most of you have your own experiences and things to tell about this theme. Inclusion Europe asks you to share these experiences with them.

Like this we can together create a very useful material for those who don't have much experience with getting support and working with supporter.

Ulla Topi



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What is support?

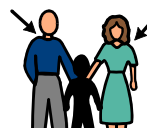
All of us need help at times.

Each person is unique and needs different kind of support.

You can get support from different people.

You can get support from your parents or from your neighbour.

Support means that somebody helps you with something that you cannot do yourself.



You can also give support to people.

You can help your friend with shopping or you can help older person to get on bus.



There are people that sometimes need more support than others.

- small children
- older people
- people who are seriously ill
- people with disabilities



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With support of the European Community

Supporter

People with disabilities often have support person or supporter.
This supporter helps them when they need.



The person that needs support and the supporter are very close.
They form relationship.

Relationships are sometimes difficult.

They can hurt or make people sad.

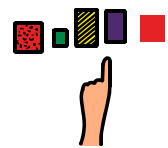
If the relationship is good it can help you a lot.



It is very important to form and maintain a good relationship with your supporter.

Here are some rules that will help you to form good relationship
with your supporter.

It will also help you to get the right support
and the support you want from your supporter.



**General rules of politeness and respect should always stay
in the mind of both supporter and person with disabilities.**

New supporter

Person with disabilities should decide about his support person.

People with intellectual disabilities and people with severe disability should also
be able to decided about their support person.

Here are the different steps that you should follow
before you get new support person:



1. Meet the person.

2. Tell the person what are your needs for support.

It could be difficult for you to describe and to express your support needs.
In that case ask somebody who knows you well to help you.

3. Tell the support person about your experience with support
and about you worries and expectations.

4. It is possible that you will find it hard to decide
if you want this person to support you.

In this case you can ask for trail period.

It is a short period when this person gives you sup-

After this period you can decide if the person is all right for you.



port.

You are not the only person who has the right to decide.

Also the support person has to make decision if he wants to support you.

Agreement with supporter

You should write agreement with the supporter before he starts to support you. The agreement is very important.

Here are the different things that are in good agreement between support person and person that needs support:

1. Description of the support that is needed.
2. When the support is needed during the week.
3. When is the beginning and end of this agreement.
4. Limits supporters will not exceed.
5. The way of communication between supporter and the person with disability.
6. Name of a person that the person with disability can talk to in case there are communication or other problems with the supporter.
7. Name of a person that the supporter can talk to in case there are communication or other problems with the person that is supported.
8. Signatures.



The agreement will defend your interest and the interests of the support person as well.

Receiving support

The relations between person with disabilities and supporter are very important.

Persons with disabilities and supporters need to trust each other.

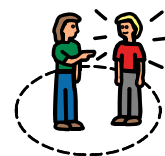
Persons with disabilities and supporters need to get on well.

Supporters need to know the person's interests, experiences, abilities and difficulties to be able to help in the best way.



There are things that are good to remember:

- Supporter is here to help you with the things you cannot do yourself.
- Supporter is also someone who can help you to learn new skills.
- It is important to tell the supporter what you want and what you don't want.
- If you are not happy with something the supporter does, say so.
- Don't misuse the help of the supporter. There are things that you can do yourself even if it takes time and effort.
- Try to be as independent as possible.
- Respect the supporter and the work he is doing.
- The supporter can also tell you when he is not happy with what you did.
- He will also tell you what he wants and what he doesn't want
- It is very important to speak to each other about problems.
- Remember that supporter is not responsible for everything.

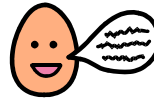


What to do when things go wrong

Relationships are sometimes difficult.
You can get to a situation with your supporter that will not make you happy.
You can get to situation that you will not understand.

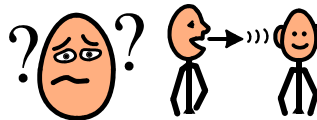


It is always important to talk to somebody!



You can talk to the support person or to the contact person that you have in your agreement.
If you are afraid you can also talk to your friend, colleague or parent.

Don't keep the problem for yourself!



- To get information
- To tell us about news and meetings

Please contact us!

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Conclusions

Everybody needs support.
There are people who need more support than others.
These people often have supporter.



Everybody should have the right to choose his own support person.
It is important to choose the right person because person with disability and support person get very close.



Sign the agreement with your support person.
Agreement is good start for good relationship with your support person.

Different people have different experience with getting and giving support.
Inclusion Europe together with EPSA would like to write guidelines for support.
We would be very happy if you helped us!
How?



Tell us how you liked this issue of Europe for us about support.
Tell us if you missed there something important.
Tell us about your experience with getting support.
Tell us about you supporter.

