

Characteristics and Qualities of an Effective Support Person for Individuals with ASD: A Self-Check

High-quality support personnel have a specific set of beliefs and values and exhibit behaviors consistent with these beliefs. These qualities, when actualized, can improve meaningful interactions, facilitate positive behaviors, and promote self-confidence for individuals with ASD.

Rating Key				
1: Almost never (0-10% of the time)	2: Not very often (10-30% of the time)	3: Sometimes (30-60% of the time)	4: Usually (60%-90% of the time)	5: Almost always (90%-100% of the time)

Self-Check Questions: Beliefs and Values	Rating
1. I believe that the individual that I support deserves the same level of dignity and respect that I expect for myself.	1 2 3 4 5
2. I believe that the person I support has talent and potential regardless of diagnosis.	1 2 3 4 5
3. I show respect of the choices and preferences of the person/people I support by attempting to honor those choice as much as possible.	1 2 3 4 5
4. I value the information and ideas that the person I support is sharing, offering, or communicating to me.	1 2 3 4 5
5. I believe that when the person I support engages in what is often described as "behavior," he is trying to convey a message that he is unable to communicate in other ways.	1 2 3 4 5
6. I believe in a positive support system and believe that using punishment is not respectful and does not teach needed skills.	1 2 3 4 5
7. I believe that when the person I support experiences failures and engage in challenging behaviors, the program has failed, not the person it is designed to support.	1 2 3 4 5
8. I understand that my role is to encourage, advocate for, and work alongside the person/people I support and not to direct or manage.	1 2 3 4 5
9. As a support person, I do NOT have to be in control.	1 2 3 4 5
10. I believe that it is important for the person I support to connect socially and that she wants to have friends but that she may not understand how to make the connections or that others may misinterpret her attempts to do so.	1 2 3 4 5

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Self-Check Questions: Personal Actions	Rating
11. I show dignity and respect to the individual I support.	1 2 3 4 5
12. I understand the underlying characteristics of ASD and use this knowledge to help me create supports and to assist me in understanding behaviors that might occur.	1 2 3 4 5
13. I actively seek out ways to use or embed the person's interest, desires, and preferences in daily activities.	1 2 3 4 5
14. I listen to and try to understand what the person I am supporting is communicating to me.	1 2 3 4 5
15. I seek out opportunities and activities that the person I support can complete independently.	1 2 3 4 5
16. I make available communication supports that the person I support can use to tell me information or make requests.	1 2 3 4 5
17. I use/make available communication tools to ensure the person I support understands what others are communicating.	1 2 3 4 5
18. I monitor and pace my language. I use clear, concrete language in an effort to communicate clearly with the person/people I support.	1 2 3 4 5
19. I am comfortable being quiet and know that sometimes it is necessary.	1 2 3 4 5
20. I provide predictability in the daily schedule and in the environment.	1 2 3 4 5
21. I can wait patiently when someone is not ready to transition or needs more time, even if it means that I must change my plans.	1 2 3 4 5
22. When a situation becomes difficult or the person I support is not successful, I change the way I interact or change the way I am providing support.	1 2 3 4 5
23. I take into consideration sensory challenges and sensitivities when the person I support seems upset, withdrawn, in pain or is exhibiting other unusual behavior.	1 2 3 4 5