

*[DISCLAIMER: I have no specific expertise with regard to informal support and I haven't thought about this as much as I would like. These are obviously just very generic examples of things you **might** want to say or write, and may be inappropriate for your circumstances. In any case, you will likely want to adapt it considerably to suit your particular circumstances. The first is about autonomy, the second one is about overworked unpaid support, and the third is very generic.]*

Dear Mum/Dad/Friend/Sibling/Partner

Before I get on to the main subject of my letter, I first want to thank you for all the support you have freely given me. I would be in a worse position than I am now if it had not been for you.

I secondly want to talk to you about my future support. I want to be more independent than I am at the moment, and that may include doing things that you regard as unwise. Most adults are able to do things that their friends and relatives think unwise because they are not dependent on those very friends and relatives to do those things. But if I want to do something (no matter how small and insignificant) that you think is unwise and are reluctant to help me do it, and I need your help in order to do it, I can end up feeling frustrated. As an adult with mental capacity, I want to enjoy the same freedoms as everyone else in so far as that is possible.

Friends and family often give each other advice and try and influence each other's decisions. But supporting an adult with mental capacity is a completely different kind of relationship. The person supporting the disabled adult needs to be essentially passive to what the disabled adult wants and needs to do, unless the adult lacks mental capacity, which, most of the time, I don't.

I would like to discuss with you how to proceed from here. It may be that we should look into obtaining formal paid support for me so that I can properly be the 'boss' without it negatively impacting our relationship. Being a support worker AND a parent/friend may be possible, but it is difficult, as one has to be clear which role one is performing at any given time.

Yours,

John

Hi Mum/Dad/Friend/Sibling/Partner

I am aware that supporting me puts you under considerable mental/financial/physical strain and I want to talk about that with you. I am extremely grateful for everything you do for me, but I am wondering if there is a way I can reduce my dependency on you, perhaps by accessing formal paid support, or changing how we work together.

John

Hi Mum/Dad/Friend/Sibling/Partner

I feel uncomfortable being so dependent on you for support. I would prefer friends and family to be just friends and family as much as possible, not support workers as well. I'd like to discuss ways to change how I am supported, maybe by looking into accessing more formal paid support.

John