

# Independence vs. Support

The next Dialectical Dilemma is between encouraging independence and offering support. Remember that the parent's goal with Dialectical Dilemmas is to find balance between these extremes.

**INDEPENDENCE**

**BALANCE**

**SUPPORT**

## Encouraging Independence

On this end of the dialectic, parents encourage independence and autonomy. This is a developmental task of adolescence that helps teens gain skills and responsibility, as well as create a sense of self separate from family.

Taken to an extreme, encouraging independence can be a problem. Parents who encourage too much autonomy may have adult expectations for their teen and hold him or her to a standard he or she has not yet reached developmentally (Miller, Rathus & Linehan, 2007). This could include expectations of emotional maturity, maintaining the household, caring for younger siblings or paying bills. Although teens need to learn responsibility to be successful as adults, they are not yet adults and still require support and guidance. Parents on this end of the dialectic stifle the development of independence, as their teenager is required to take on too much too quickly.

## Offering Support

On this end of the dialectic, parents offer support, guidance and problem solving, which teens need.

Taken to an extreme, parents become excessive caretakers and take on too much responsibility for elements of their teenager's life (Miller, Rathus & Linehan, 2007). There may not be clear boundaries between the teen and parent. Parents on this end of the dialectic may solve problems for their teen, rather than support the teen in solving problems himself or herself. Parents on this end of the dialectic also stifle their adolescent's natural development of independence, as he or she is not given the space to make decisions or mistakes or take ownership over his or her own problems or daily tasks.

## Balance

Balance with this dialectic involves encouraging teenagers to take responsibility for some elements of their life *and* giving support and problem solving in other areas. By finding balance here, parents are best supporting the developmental task of autonomy.

Each teenager is different, and areas for support or independence will vary. Completing homework, scheduling extracurricular activities and addressing problems with teachers are examples of areas where a teenager could take responsibility. When teens are "in charge" of areas of their life, they are learning independence and have the freedom they need to manage daily tasks in their own way (Miller, Rathus & Linehan, 2007). Balance can be found here with the parent offering suggestions or support if the management of these daily stressors becomes too difficult or the teen asks for help.

## Week 9 Aftercare Plan- for Parent Coaches

Client Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Discharge Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Our aftercare program runs for 6 weeks after discharge from DBTeens. In order to be eligible, teens must either have an outpatient therapist or a plan must be made (i.e. have an appointment) for an outpatient therapist.

Name of Outpatient Therapist for after the program:

Appointment Date:

Notes:

Aftercare has a few different parts. These are as follows:

**Weekly Aftercare Group - Tuesdays 5-6pm**                      \$150  
 Facilitator: Michelle

**Weekly Skills Coaching - 40 min session**                      \$150  
 Coach can be current coach or can have a new coach dependent on parent/teen/team recommendation

Experiential Evening Meetings- 3x/week                      \$0

Drop in Skills Coaching 11-12 Mon-Fri                      \$0

These services are often reimbursed by insurance. If the family would like us to obtain prior authorization for them, please email Beth (beth@dbteensnh.org). She will arrange those authorizations if possible. If insurance is unwilling to cover them, a sliding scale fee is offered if needed.

Clients do not need to choose all portions of the program. Attendance at the experiential evening meetings and the drop in skills coaching is included if a person chooses to do either the aftercare group or the weekly skills coaching.

Does the parent/teen seem interested?                      Yes                      No                      Maybe

Notes:

**Week 9 Aftercare Plan- for Parent Coaches (contd.)**

Should Insurance Be Contacted?                      Yes                      No

Notes:

Name of Med Manager for after the program:

Other mental health or community supports arranged/needed:

Other mental health or community supports arranged/needed for parents: