For many people, asking for help is not as easy as it sounds. Yet, not asking for help, or asking too late, can turn a manageable situation into something more serious, which ultimately may require more care, and therefore more time.

Not asking for help or asking too late can affect not just one’s health and well being, but also that of one’s family, especially one’s children.

‘Asking for help’ is something we are taught from a very young age. We learn to ask politely, communicate what we need, and then say ‘thank you’ once help is given. As we get older, asking for help is often confused with or feared as a personal weakness or vulnerability. In fact, asking for help is most often viewed as a sign of strength and good judgment.

The stress of deployments, single parenting, family reintegration, and changes in family routines due to separations or the injuries of war make ‘asking for help’ an important skill for service members and military families.

This Courage to Care fact sheet provides 4 simple steps involved in ‘asking for help’ as well as some reminders on how to ask for help. Using these steps and reminders will enable you to engage individuals and a multitude of available resources for health and mental health care, financial advice, spiritual support, and many aspects of every day life (childcare, school, and community services) that can be of benefit to you and those you love.
Just as with any skill, asking for help gets easier the more you practice it. Remember — asking for help is a sign of strength. Being able to identify needs and act accordingly are essential for success. In many ways, asking for help has many benefits. It can make life easier for you and your family, and give the individual who helps you a sense of accomplishment and goodwill.

_Courage to Care_ is a health promotion campaign of Uniformed Services University and its Center for the Study of Traumatic Stress (CSTS). CSTS is the academic arm and a partnering Center of the Defense Centers of Excellence (DCoE) for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury.