

When support feels right.. and when it doesn't

A plain-English guide for participants, carers, and stakeholders

Support is not just about whether someone is nice, available, or trying hard. Sometimes support looks fine on paper but still leaves a person more confused, more drained, or carrying more than before.

This guide is here to help participants, carers, and the people around them notice the difference earlier.

Green flags in support



Green flags in support



Things feel clearer, not more confusing

Good support usually reduces some of the mental load. You have a better sense of what is happening, what was agreed, and what comes next.



You do not have to over-explain yourself every time

The person starts to understand your pace, needs, preferences, and how life actually works for you.



Boundaries feel clear

*The relationship feels steady, respectful, and not **blurred**. You are not left managing the worker's feelings, personal issues, or role confusion.*



The person follows through

*They do what they say **they will do**, or communicate clearly if something changes. You are not left chasing basic information or carrying the whole plan in your head.*



Support fits your actual life

*It works with your **energy**, routine, communication style, and capacity. It does not expect you to function like someone else.*



You usually feel calmer, more capable, or less alone afterwards

Not magically fixed. Just a bit less burdened. Good support usually makes things easier to carry.

Red flags in support



Red flags in support



Things feel more confusing after contact

You leave interactions unsure what is happening, **what was agreed**, or what comes next. Support should not create **more mental load** than it removes.



You feel pressure to be easier, more grateful, or less honest

Support should not depend on performance. You should not have to shrink your needs to keep the relationship comfortable.



The relationship starts revolving around the worker or provider

Too much talking about themselves, weak boundaries, or making their feelings the focus can all shift the load back onto the participant.



They speak confidently, but follow-through is weak

Someone can sound great and still be hard to rely on.
Support needs to work in real life, not just sound good in conversation.



Support keeps missing how you actually function

It is too fast, too vague, too pushy, or too generic.
The person may mean well, but the support **still does not fit**.



You keep feeling more drained, on edge, or harder to settle afterwards

That does not always mean the person is unsafe.
But it does mean something is not working the way it should.

Important note

Not every red flag means a provider is harmful.

Sometimes the fit is wrong. Sometimes the **pace is wrong**. Sometimes the role is being blurred. Sometimes the support looks good from the outside but still leaves **the participant carrying too much**.

Either way, support should not leave the **person carrying more than before**.