

Demand avoidance and autonomy

Find More Choice in a Difficult Demand

Adults and teens 13+ | 10 to 15 minutes

A request can feel overwhelming because of its timing, uncertainty, pressure, effort, or loss of control. Choose one manageable example. Rather than deciding whether a label explains it, examine what the task asks of you and what options are available. Your need for support deserves consideration.

Choose one demand, identify the difficult feature, and consider changing the task, timing, format, support, or choice involved.

Locate the pressure point

Is the task unclear, painful, too large, unpredictable, or imposed without discussion? Is there a genuine safety requirement that needs explaining? Describe your experience without assuming that reluctance is deliberate opposition or proof of a condition.

Negotiate meaningful options

A useful option changes something real: starting later, receiving written steps, sharing the task, or declining a nonessential request. Avoid false choices that hide the same demand. When essential needs are involved, ask for support that makes participation possible without threats or deprivation.

1. What demand feels difficult, and what does it actually require?**2. Which feature creates pressure, overload, or loss of choice?****3. What meaningful adjustment or alternative could help?****4. How can I discuss it safely and review whether the plan fits?****Clinical use and adaptation**

Do not diagnose PDA or interpret all refusal through one explanation. Consider anxiety, pain, fatigue, trauma, communication, disability, and environmental demands. Avoid coercive compliance, deceptive choices, withholding essentials, or forced exposure. Where safety requirements apply, explain them and seek individualized accessible support.

Original educational resource. Adapt with a clinician; not a validated assessment or complete treatment protocol.

Conceptual references: R28, R20, S05, S12. Full sources are in the online preview and collection appendix.

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