

Today's Gift - 9/20/2017

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Today's thought from the Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation is:

## Un-abling

It is not *helping* my child if I do things for him that he can (and should) do for himself. Instead, by diminishing expectations, I diminish his capabilities. I am *un-abling*.

*Un-abling* means that I am helping to make the son I am "helping" unable to manage his task--or his life--on his own. It is crossing boundaries, reducing responsibilities, removing consequences, and cheating him of things adults need to learn in order to live (and love) life on their own. It's providing an escape hatch from the realities of life.

So, I will not give in, hand out, set up, or fix up my child's messes and catastrophes until I am, inevitably, unable to enable. (Or unwilling. Or burned out.) I will not help to leave my child so *un-abled* that he is unable to handle the business of running whatever is left of his life--after he's endured a lifetime of my un-abling. (What happens to my child if he never learns how to rescue himself?) All I can (and should) do is help him to get the help he needs to help himself. That, *and love him*.

If he sneezes, I'm not the one who should leap for a tissue. And I'm not the one who should want to.

You are reading from the book:



### **Tending Dandelions by Sandra Swenson**

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