

How to Cope with Loneliness during the Holidays

If you or a loved one is at risk of dealing with depression or loneliness during the holidays, now is the time to act.

For some people, the holiday season is the best part of the year. For others, it's more challenging. Loneliness, sadness, and depression are common during the holidays and winter months. A [2017 AARP Foundation survey](#) found that 31% of all adults have dealt with loneliness during the holidays at some point over the past five years. If you or a loved one is at risk of feeling alone this holiday season, now is the time to act.

Get Out There

- Even if you don't feel like being social, push yourself to connect with friends and loved ones on a regular basis.
- Because people's calendars fill up fast during the holiday season, schedule get-togethers.
- Even short phone conversations, email check-ins or video chats can help ward off loneliness.

Eliminate Negative Self-Talk

Feeling lonely and left out can spark a critical inner dialog that can make your struggle with sadness or depression over the holidays even worse. Check-in with your thoughts and perceptions and shut down any chatter. Try incorporating positive affirmations. They are [scientifically proven](#) to improve your self-view and ability to cope with challenging situations. When you're coping with loneliness over the holidays or any other time of the year, repeat phrases like these:

1. I am enough.
2. I am loved.
3. My future is filled with laughter and good times.
4. I am never alone, I am always surrounded by love.
5. I have the strength to make it through any difficult times.

Talk About It

- Share your sadness with a trusted loved one. Showing you are vulnerable does not mean you are weak. In fact, a heart-to-heart chat with a friend about your depression and loneliness during the holidays, can bring the two of you closer and create a stronger bond.
- If you feel left out of social gatherings, it's OK to ask why to better understand the situation. Often it is simply an oversight or the host didn't realize you would be interested in attending.

Supporting Others Who Deal With Holiday Sadness or Loneliness

- Check-in frequently with anyone you think may be lonely. [Follow these tips to learn how to talk about loneliness](#). A quick "thinking of you" text can make someone feel better if they are lonely.
- If someone shares with you they feel lonely, sad or depressed over the holidays, listen and offer your support. Give specific options for how you can help. Instead of saying, "Let me know how I can help," say, "Are you free on Thursday? What time can I pick you up and take you out to dinner?"
- Be a matchmaker. It can be hard to make new friends as an adult. Help those you know to connect with others by hosting an informal party or friendship date. Introduce people with like interests, then encourage your guests to get to know each other better, with or without you, in the future.

Build your Skills with Hello4Health:

- [Let's Talk About Loneliness](#)
- [Building New Connections](#)
- [Listening for Connections](#)
- [Deepening Conversations](#)
- [Reconnecting Tips](#)

More from Allina:

- [Dealing with Depression and Anxiety During the Holiday Season](#)
- [How to Be Happy with Dr. David Frenz](#)
- [Change to Chill: Affirmations](#)