



# Adapt

## Handling loneliness during the holidays

Aetna Resources For Living<sup>SM</sup>

### 'Tis the season to be jolly...or is it?

This year's holiday season will be different than others before it. COVID-19 will keep many of us away from holiday parties, celebrations — and loved ones. Even “normal” holiday seasons can bring up tough emotions. This holiday season may be even harder.

Maybe you've lost a loved one or ended a relationship. Maybe you've left a job or moved to a new area — leaving friends behind. If you feel lonely or sad, don't try to ignore your feelings. Take steps to cope.

### How to deal with loneliness this holiday season

- **First, be realistic.** You may be not able to get together with faraway friends and relatives due to travel restrictions, illness or safety concerns. That can make you feel isolated. Accept that you may have sad or lonely feelings. Who wouldn't?
- **Second, be proactive.** Realizing how you may feel ahead of time gives you a chance to plan. You may not have the usual house and office parties to attend. But that needn't stop you from connecting with others. How?

Technology gives us the chance to connect virtually. We can share meals, sing songs, open gifts and even cook together via video-chat on our smartphones, tablets and computers.

It's a different kind of "together" but it can still work. You can plan small, in-person, socially-distanced events with those who are nearby. And, even if it's just by phone, you can connect and get support from loved ones.

- **Third, look forward.** This year will likely be one-of-a-kind. While you may face challenges, remember that being grateful, keeping perspective and accepting how you feel are all keys to making the most of the holidays.

Do your best to adapt to this unusual holiday season. If you need help, our counselors are available to talk 24/7.



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