



December 2023

Helping caregivers through their journey one step at a time.

How to Cope With Loneliness

By Elizabeth Scott, PhD

Virtually everyone experiences loneliness from time to time. The feeling can be especially noticeable around the holidays, and times of extreme stress.

The sheer number of adults in the United States who feel lonely is quite large—in a January 2020 survey of 10,000 adults by Cigna, 61% of those surveyed said they felt lonely. However, people don't always talk about feelings of loneliness and don't always know what to do with these feelings.



Other than being emotionally painful, loneliness can impact people in many ways:

- **Depression:** A 2021 study published in *Lancet Psychiatry* found associations between loneliness and depressive symptoms in a group of adults 50 years old and older. Research also suggests that loneliness and depression may feed off of and perpetuate each other.
- **Physical health:** Several studies have linked emotional stress with depressed immunity. Other research links loneliness and depression with poorer health and well-being. Therefore, people who are experiencing loneliness are susceptible to a variety of health issues.
- **Physical pain:** Research shows that the areas of the brain that deal with social exclusion are the same areas that process physical pain, adding a scientific explanation to the oft-romanticized experience of a "broken heart."

If you're experiencing loneliness, there are some things you can do about it. Below are nine strategies for dealing with loneliness.

- **Join a Class or Club**
- **Volunteer**
- **Find Support Online**
- **Strengthen Existing Relationships**
- **Adopt a Pet**
- **Talk to Strangers**
- **Practice Self-Care**
- **Keep Busy**

If you are having suicidal thoughts, contact the [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) at 988 for support and assistance from a trained counselor. If you or a loved one are in immediate danger, call 911.

Let's stay healthy during the holidays!

Here's a great resource especially with cold, flu, and COVID season upon us.

Click here to find discounts, recommendations, and health information.

<https://haleoncaregiveraction.org/>

Hello! My name is **Alison Simo**, MSN, RN, CDCES and I am the Wellness Education Coordinator at Thrive Alliance, and Dementia Health Coach. Please reach out to me for suggestions at any time at 812-418-6690 or asimo@thrive-alliance.org.

This newsletter is for YOU!!!



Social Engagement Tips and Tools

Being socially engaged simply means connecting with others! There are many ways to stay socially engaged, including volunteering or working, taking art or wellness classes, and participating in social activities such as group meals, book clubs and more. All of these activities can take place in person, over the phone, on platforms like Zoom and Facebook or on public access television. Engaging with others in ways that feel safe can help you maintain connections with your community.

The COVID-19 pandemic led many of us to change our routines and cut back on in-person interactions. Following the tips below can help us engage our minds and bodies—and stay connected to our communities.

Maintain social connections

Connect with family and friends near and far over the telephone, through social media, on porch visits and walks, or through letter writing and emails. Share book, meal or television recommendations, reminisce about past experiences or plan fun activities for the future. Finding regular times to stay in touch with a friend can turn into events that you both can look forward to.

Stay Physically and Mentally Active

Reach out to neighbors and friends to plan group walking dates or participate in fitness classes to establish regular ways to connect with others. Activities like drawing, journaling, writing a poem or short story, painting and knitting allow for creative expression and are another great conversation starter with friends and family. Inviting neighbors and friends over for games such as cards, puzzles or checkers are other ways to stay connected with others—on your porch, backyard or inside your home! Invite others to join you in visiting museums

Build Purpose and Contribute to Your Community

Contributing your time and skills to support others through volunteering can benefit both communities and volunteers. Research shows that volunteering for as little as two hours each week can lead to improved mental, emotional and physical health, and helps us feel engaged and purpose-driven. You can volunteer by delivering meals or providing transportation to other older adults safely. Other volunteer opportunities include mentoring, serving on local boards or participating in a friendly caller program.



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COLD	SLIP
FREEZE	SNOWBALL
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December 2023

Super Easy Chicken and Dumplings



This recipe for easy chicken and dumplings could not be more simple and it tastes great too!

Recipe by ALLIE101 | Updated on December 9, 2022

Prep Time: 5 mins
Cook Time: 15 mins
Total Time: 20 mins

To make even healthier add in a vegetable, you can add in chopped celery or a can of carrots; be sure to drain carrot juice in can and wash carrots with water this will help remove extra sodium, then add into soup with broth and chicken.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 (10.5 ounce) cans condensed cream of chicken soup 3 (14 ounce) cans chicken broth
- 3 cups shredded cooked chicken meat
- 2 (10 ounce) cans refrigerated biscuit dough

Nutrition Facts

Per serving: 400 calories; total fat 18g ; saturated fat 5g ; cholesterol 50mg ; sodium 1924mg ; total carbohydrate 36g ; dietary fiber 1g ; total sugars 6g ; protein 22g ; vitamin c 0mg ; calcium 53mg ; iron 3mg ; potassium 243mg

DIRECTIONS

Step 1

Stir condensed soup, chicken broth, and shredded chicken together in a large saucepan over medium-high heat until it begins to simmer.

Step 2

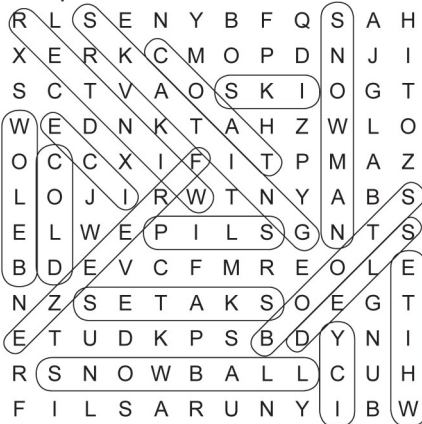
Cut each biscuit into quarters, and gently stir into the simmering soup.

Step 3

Reduce heat to medium-low, cover, and simmer until biscuits are no longer doughy in the center, 10 to 15 minutes.

Find Social Engagement Opportunities Near You

Local organizations such as Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) and Title VI Native American Aging Programs offer a variety of social engagement opportunities in communities across the country. Contact the Eldercare Locator, a federally funded public service for older adults, caregivers and others, to get connected to AAAs and tribal aging programs or other organizations that offer engagement opportunities in your community. You can reach the Eldercare Locator at **(800) 677-1116**, Monday through Friday from 9:00 am to 8:00 pm ET or online at eldercare.acl.gov.



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| COAT | SLED |
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| FREEZE | SNOWBALL |
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 <p>Winter Holidays: Hanukkah, Christmas, Kwanzaa The winter holiday shopping season is the top consumer spending event of the year, according to the National Retail Federation (NRF). The shopping rush goes strong all through the month of December until it peaks on Super Saturday, which is the last Saturday before Christmas Day.</p>					<p>1  World AIDS Day</p>	<p>2  International Day for the Abolition of Slavery</p>
<p>3  International Day of Persons with Disabilities Advent - Christian (Dec. 3-Dec 24)</p>	<p>4  International Day of Banks National Cookie Day</p>	<p>5  International Volunteer Day for Economic and World Soil Day </p>	<p>6 St. Nicholas Day - Christian Microwave Oven Day</p>	<p>7  International Civil Aviation Day Chanukah - Jewish (Dec. 7-15) National Cotton Candy Day</p>	<p>8 Bodhi Day - Buddhist National Brownie Day Pretend to Be a Time Traveler Day National Salesperson Day</p>	<p>9  International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of Prevention  International Anti-Corruption Day</p>
<p>10  International Human Rights Day Nobel Prize Day International Animal Rights Day</p>	<p>11  International Mountain Day National App Day</p>	<p>12  International Day of Neutrality  International Universal Health Coverage Day Gingerbread House Day Our Lady of Guadalupe</p>	<p>13 </p>		<p>14 Bill of Rights Day National Cupcake Day Cat Herders Day National Ugly Sweater Day</p>	<p>16</p>
<p>17</p>	<p>18  Intl Migrants Day  Arabic Language National Twins Day</p>	<p>19 </p>		<p>20  International Human Solidarity Day</p>	<p>21 Winter Solstice Crossword Puzzle Day National Re-Gifting Day</p>	<p>22 Festus Super Saturday</p>
<p>24 Christmas Eve National Eggnog Day</p>	<p>25  Christmas Day</p>	<p>26 Kwanzaa (Dec 26 - Jan 1)</p>	<p>27 International Day of Epidemic Preparedness</p>	<p>28 Card Playing Day National Short Film Day</p>	<p>29 Wounded Knee Day No Interruptions Day</p>	<p>30</p>
<p>31 New Year's Eve</p>	<p></p>					
<p>January Planning: Shopping typically stays strong the week after Christmas and into the new year as consumers take advantage of post-holiday sales and promotions and use gift cards. With the new year thoughts turn to health and fitness, organization, goal setting, and how to spend MLK weekend.</p>			<p>Get our seasonal planning tips delivered to your inbox. Subscribe Plan smarter with our omnichannel marketing calendar software. Learn More</p>			
<p> United States Federal Holiday</p>			<p> United Nations Observance</p>			
<p>ANNUM</p>						