

Dear Editor:

The pandemic has taught us many lessons including how to live in and navigate this new world of social distancing and isolating ourselves. What we've all experienced is a constant reality for many older people and people with disabilities: loneliness and social isolation.

In the U.S., 40% of people who have a disability and 43% of people age 65 or older say they feel lonely some or all of the time. According to a 2020 report from AARP, two-thirds of adults in the United States are experiencing social isolation, with 66% reporting that their anxiety levels have increased during the COVID-19 pandemic.

So, what can we do? Let's all remember our friends, family and neighbors around the holidays, but afterward too. What can you do? Make a phone call or schedule a video chat to see how someone is doing. Ask if they need anything - groceries, supplies for a hobby, their driveway or walk shoveled. If you live nearby, knock on their door. Stand a safe distance apart. Have a brief conversation. They'll benefit from the human contact – and so will you. Encourage them to join you outside if they can safely do so – even if it's just for a few minutes. The simple act of showing you care can make a world of difference for someone who is alone and lonely.

When this pandemic is over - and one day it will be - remember how isolation has felt to you during this time and commit to reach out to those who experience social isolation and loneliness all the time.

For additional ways to help those in our community experiencing isolation and loneliness, please call

NAME OF AGENCY at PHONE NUMBER.
YOUR NAME
YOUR AGENCY