

## How to Help Seniors Cope in Challenging Times

By Beverly Nelson



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Older people face many [challenges](#), including making decisions about healthcare, managing grief, and finding a safe place to stay. If isolated, seniors can worry about finances, so it's important to give them the support they need to overcome isolation and other challenges.

Older adults have a higher [risk for loneliness](#) or social isolation as they face factors like living alone, chronic illness, loss of family and friends, and hearing loss. Here are some ways to help an older adult adjust and soften the effects of living in isolation.

### Consider Home Care

There are many [companionship services](#) to make their life easier for older, housebound adults. These include help with light housekeeping, bathing, hygiene, meal preparation, and medication

adherence. Older adults will appreciate your assistance in hiring lawn care professionals and other services to keep their homes in perfect order. If you decide to hire lawn care services, make sure you search sites like [Angi](#) and read reviews from customers.

Organizations like [YES!](#) are a good place to start if you want motivation resources and guidance on cultivating a continued sense of purpose in life's later years. These adults have special needs but many also still have capacity to reach out and touch others as well.

If you're hiring [home health care](#) from a distance, you should team up with family members to consider things like finding a company that offers dedicated employees. You need a solid plan and a backup to ensure the older adult is sufficiently cared for. Check if the caregivers are licensed and certified, following state requirements.

### **Tech and Transit Assistance**

You can find many personal [emergency response systems](#), which are set up to detect falls. These services are connected to emergency call centers and make it possible to connect with family members. They're designed for people at home who prefer to age in place without losing their independence. You can help an older adult set up these systems to ensure their health and wellness are monitored around the clock.

Transportation is another challenge many elderly adults experience, as many of them cannot drive. This means you can offer assistance whenever they need to move around. You can personally drive them to clinics or help them take public transportation. Many communities have low-cost 'senior lift' opportunities.

### **Meet Basic Needs**

First, you need to meet the basic needs of an older adult. This includes [eating healthy](#) meals, talking to other people, taking medicine, and being safe. To make it easier for you and them, be sure to tap into local resources. There are many outlets that prepare foods suited for older adults, and you don't need to spend a fortune to get a package.

For example, you can connect with local vendors or food programs if you're looking for healthy alternatives on a budget. These organizations understand the different challenges seniors face and offer the right meal packages for older adults.

### **Support Their Independence**

In a major change, it's important to respect and preserve older adult independence whenever possible. As part of preserving independence, collaborate with them and offer choices. Support them in making the right choices, ensuring the options they pick are important to them. Keep all the choices well-defined to avoid [decision fatigue](#). Ensure they have a way to reach you, through calls, and help them find help to handle strenuous chores like shovelling snow and lawn mowing.

### **Identify and Support Coping Mechanisms**

From long walks to music and prayer, find what gives the older adult comfort and help them access it. Everyone has different ways to alleviate stress. If their past coping mechanisms are not easy to access, help them discover new alternatives or easier pathways. For example, if it's not possible to go on a long walk, you can find ways to bring outdoor experiences indoors.

### **Conclusion**

While aging often moves us closer to dependence in many areas of life, it doesn't necessarily equate to a total loss of independence. If you want to help a senior in challenging times, come alongside them as a companion and together look for practical solutions to help them overcome obstacles. Some solutions make work for a season, and additional adjustments are likely. Set up technology to get the emergency services whenever needed.

We hope many of these tips will help you set up an effective and resilient support network for a senior loved one.