

Just  
because...

# 2021 Breathe

December 2020 Newsletter



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Article:*

**2021: Here we come!** | Before we know it, 2020 will be in the rearview mirror. [Read more about how to say goodbye to 2020 and hello to 2021...](#)



*Monthly  
Awareness:*

**Helping caregiver loneliness** | Taking care of someone who's ill or disabled is hard work and can be very isolating. [Here are ways to help caregivers feel less lonely...](#)



*Let's Talk  
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*Think Tank  
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## 2021: Here we come!

Around this time, we often look back fondly on the year that's coming to an end. However, 2020 is a little different. In fact, many will breathe a sigh of relief that 2020 is over.

Who hasn't felt the impact of 2020 in some way they'll never forget? Many of us have:

- Stayed in, worked remotely and shopped for essentials online
- Worn a mask and maintained social distance in public
- Helped kids with homeschooling
- Worried about keeping our jobs and homes
- Felt depressed and anxious

Surviving 2020 hasn't been easy. And if you lost someone close to you because of COVID-19, your grief won't lessen just because the calendar changes to 2021.

### Take a deep breath

The experiences of 2020 won't go away suddenly. But remember: You're stronger for having survived.

You've adapted, grown and worked hard to stay well. You may have found new ways to connect, learned new skills and started new hobbies. You've dealt with fear and sadness. And you may have grown closer to family members and friends — learning to appreciate them all over again.

With vaccines on the horizon, 2021 may provide some return to normalcy. As we move into the New Year, let's look forward to better times.

Here's hoping for a speedy recovery from 2020 — and a breath of fresh air in 2021.

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# Relieving caregiver loneliness

Family caregivers often suffer from isolation, depression and loneliness. Caregivers fill roles that give them the chance to care for and “give back” to those who took care of them or other disabled people in their lives. But they often suffer too.

## Why?

1. Caregiving can become all-consuming.
2. Others may not know how to help.
3. Outsiders may stay away because of their own discomfort about illness and disability.

## What can you do?

If you're a caregiver or know someone who is, there's help. Here are some examples of what you can give a caregiver in your life:

1. **Support.** Stay in touch by phone or video-chat. Be ready to let the caregiver vent or cry — or even talk about something unrelated. Try to put aside your own fears and feelings to be supportive. Avoiding contact with caregivers reinforces their isolation.

2. **Help.** Caregivers may have a hard time saying what they need. But if you offer to perform a specific task, it can help. Perhaps a grocery run or a ride to the doctor, as examples.
3. **Time away.** Caregivers can get bored, depressed and overwhelmed. They may find it hard to get any time for themselves. Want to give a great gift? If you are able to and feel comfortable doing it, offer an hour or two of watching the person they're caring for. Whether they go to a spa or just take a walk — every break helps.

Loneliness can lead to physical and emotional problems. A little help can go a long way toward making a caregiver feel connected.

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