



Navigating the Holidays With a Loved One Deployed

Stay connected, make room for mixed emotions and find new ways to celebrate together.

The holidays can feel different when someone you love is deployed. You may feel proud, grateful, lonely, disappointed or worried, sometimes all at once. Whatever you're feeling, give yourself permission to experience the season in the way that feels right for you and your family.

Stay connected when you can. A call, video chat, message or photo can help you feel closer. Be flexible, knowing schedules and circumstances may make it difficult to connect exactly when you'd like.

Keep your loved one part of the celebration. Save a gift to open together, prepare a favorite dish, display photos or find another meaningful way to include them in family traditions.

Create new traditions. This year may not look like other holidays, and that's OK. Adapt favorite traditions or create something new that works for your family now.

Make room for mixed emotions. It's possible to enjoy parts of the season while also missing someone deeply. You don't have to choose between celebrating and acknowledging that their absence is difficult.

Lean on your support system. Stay connected with the people who care about you. Let friends and family know when you could use company, practical help or simply someone to listen.

Take care of yourself, too. Deployment can bring added responsibilities and uncertainty. Make room for rest, set realistic expectations and give yourself some grace when things feel difficult.

Find connection across the distance. Being apart may change how you celebrate, but it doesn't have to change the connection you share. Focus on the moments and traditions that help you and your family feel close.

If deployment is making the season more difficult, you don't have to navigate it alone. Your EAP is here to provide free support for you and your family. Visit [EAP4YOU.com](https://www.eap4you.com) or call the EAP.