



# Stop Holiday Meltdowns Before They Start Checklist

## In General:

1. Use the right physical and energetic APPROACH.
2. Make sure your and your loved one's PERCEPTION match up; if not, get on the same page as your loved one.
3. PRACTICE your new knowledge and skills...you *will* get better and it won't always be awkward, promise.

## Shopping:

1. Cut 25-75% off your to-do list for a single trip.
2. Use respite care for your loved one if possible.
3. Shop at off-peak times.
4. Use assistive devices! Walker, wheelchairs, and motorized scooters help conserve energy.
5. Make sure you build in bathroom and rest breaks.
6. Stay hydrated (that means water!).
7. Keep blood sugar level steady--no skipping meals, no living on sugary snacks; the name of the game is protein.
8. Reminder: amazon.com exists to make your life easier :)

## Decorating:

1. Ask your loved one to help you; everyone likes to feel needed and useful.
2. Scale it down to keep from getting overwhelming and creating an unfamiliar environment.

## Entertaining:

1. Be super mindful of the energy you let into your household. If you don't like how it feels, chances are good your loved one won't, either.
2. Keep gatherings on the quieter side. Too much noise stimulation is overwhelming and makes it even more difficult for your loved to hear, concentrate, and stay in the moment with you.
3. Serve the meal in a timely manner--keep blood sugar levels consistent. Remember that a meal can take up to two hours to complete for your loved one.
4. Enlist your loved one's help with setting and/or clearing the table. This helps your loved one feel like a part of the action.

**Preparing:**

1. Use the template to send the expectations email. Do this as far in advance as you can so any ruffled feathers have a chance to smooth out.
2. Practice using the scripts with your partner or a close friend. The more you've practiced, the easier it will be when you use them in real life with your family.
3. Sleep. Your goal is 7-9 hours. Depending on where your loved one is in the disease process, their sleep needs could be 8-14 hours (or more at the end of the disease process).
4. Eat nutritious meals, consistently.
5. Drink water, throughout the day. The actual right amount to drink isn't eight 8-ounce glasses; it's half your body weight, in ounces. Example: Your sleek 120 lb frame needs 60 oz of water every day. Sleek XL size frames need more ;)

**Mindset:**

1. Keep your expectations low enough you can't trip over them.
2. You can only control you (and the environment in your home); you aren't responsible for anyone else's bad behavior--only for booting them out of your house, or leaving.
3. You are doing the best you can, every single day. Everyone else can either pitch in to help, or shut it!
4. Nowhere is it written you have to answer the phone. Or the nasty email. Or the doorbell, either.
5. Doing things differently feels a little weird at first, and you may say or do something that is part of an old "how we've always done it" pattern. Don't beat yourself up; instead, dust yourself off and keep moving forward, one step at a time. You can do this!
6. You are a grown woman who is entitled to have the holidays she WANTS--so go out there and make it happen. You got this!
7. Remember, you are never, ever alone. [I'm just right on the other side of the screen.](#)