

# 5n5

## Managing Holiday Stress



1. **Expectations:** It's important to have traditions, but you can't recreate your past. Set realistic goals for the holiday, don't expect perfection. Family problems won't disappear just because it's the holidays. Instead, try accepting others as they are. It doesn't have to be a Norman Rockwell scene for it to be memorable.
2. **Entertaining:** Try keeping it simple. Prepare food ahead of time and freeze it. You can also ask guests to bring a favorite dish. Order premade dishes from the supermarket or deli. Ask for help cleaning up.
3. **Shopping:** Before going gift or food shopping set a budget and stick to it. Use cash whenever you can or prepaid cards instead of credit. Avoid shopping at the last minute, marathon shopping only leads to frustration. Also consider shopping online to reduce impulse buying and long lines.
4. **Limit commitments:** There just isn't enough time to attend every party, buy gifts, and decorate the house and bake. Remember it's OK to say "no". You can also assign tasks to other members of the family, if you can let go of some control. Don't seek perfection.
5. **Self-Care:** Make time for yourself. Rest, take a walk, and listen to music. Reconnect with your spiritual side. Don't abandon healthy habits. Overindulging with food or alcohol can lead to guilt and shame.