



Mind: The Gift of You
Body: Snow Shoveling and Heart Attacks
Spirit: Compassion

The Gift of You



Socks, ties, perfume, and the latest kitchen gadget. Typical gifts that come to mind when thinking about what to buy for those on our Christmas list.

But what about the gift of us – the gift of time – the gift of memories?

When I think back to the precious moments in my life, they include the magical times spent with people I care about. Making chocolates with family and friends; cooking and baking days with grandchildren; movie nights curled up on the couch; and of course, the personal conversations of sharing deeper parts of ourselves and perhaps even solving major world problems over a glass or two of red wine! If these are our treasured times – the memories we turn to that warm our hearts, then why do we head to the local shopping mall with our list of names?

Imagine a boxless or trinketless Christmas. I know of some families who have made a commitment to do this, and instead plan a family experience for all to

enjoy. In my own family, for a number of years, my brothers and I did not exchange gifts, and instead donated to charities of our choice in the family name. Somehow, over time, the tradition was hijacked by ‘just this one gift.’ For us, it appears that we needed more diligence to protect the intention and practice.

What would make a difference for the folks on your list? Sharing time or helping to give them more time?

Sharing Time – Some Tips

If you are able to be together, physically or through a digital connection, there are dedicated ways to share the love.

1. Schedule a walk together to welcome the morning sunrise. Walking side by side or even a facetime or skype connection can share the beauty and promise of a new day.
2. Need an activity more demanding? Arrange a hike, snowshoeing or cross-country skiing event, cycling adventure, go-carting, fishing, kayaking or canoeing day.
3. Perhaps you are more cerebral. How about games night of trivial pursuit or scrabble? Make your own book club – identify books to read and discuss.
4. Take a course or two together, there are many options through your local community recreational centres, online academies,



colleges, and universities.

5. For the foodies out there – plan a meal together with menu items never before attempted.

Giving Time – Some Tips

For the extra busy folks in your life, how about giving them the treasured gift of more time. Take some time-consuming tasks off their plate to free them up to rest or play. You can either perform these tasks yourself or hire others to do this for them. Here are some ideas:

1. Spring or fall clean-up of their garden to prepare for the next season.
2. Babysit the children for an afternoon off or special 'date night.'
3. One-time house cleaning, or a routine facelift for their home.
4. Sort through that loaded shoe box for them in preparation of tax season.
5. Create some cherished respite time by offering to be a caregiver for a loved one who needs support.

Whether you are sharing time or giving time, you are only limited by your own creativity. If you are not sure where to begin, perhaps the best place is to communicate your intention, and ask your friend or family member what would make the biggest difference in their life this year.

I think I'll make this year less about stuff and more about us.

May you close 2019 with new enchanted memories to honour the promise and vision of 2020.

Rhonda Latreille, MBA, CPCA
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Snow Shoveling and Heart Attacks

According to Harvard Health, reviews conducted in both Canada and the USA show a correlation between snow falls and death by and/or hospital admissions for heart attacks. For snow falls greater than 8", studies cited between 16%-34% increase in hospital admissions compared to no snow days! This link was observed even for men with no reported history of heart disease or high blood pressure. Interestingly enough – no link between snowfall and heart attacks for women was observed.

It just might be prudent to hire a neighbourhood fit female teenager to shovel that driveway this winter!

Compassion

"A kind gesture can reach a wound that only compassion can heal."

Steve Maraboli

Happy Holidays from All of Us at Age-Friendly Business

