
It really is the thought that counts!

✧ Present ✧
Perfect



127
creative,
one-of-a-kind,
no-to-low cost,
wow-em gifts
they'll never
forget

 by Sherry Richert Belul

Present Perfect

Wanna Give Great Gifts?

It ✨really ✨
is the thought
that counts

by Sherry Richert Belul

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Here's what some happy readers have told us...

This is a wonderful collection of ideas that bring about happiness for the giver and the receiver. Just reading it made me feel good.

—Holly B.



I made one of your gifts for my boyfriend and when he read the "Love List," he was totally floored. It was an amazing, sweet, fulfilling moment and I couldn't help but silently thank you for suggesting it in your booklet. He said it was the nicest thing anyone has ever done for him, and that he'll keep it forever. This was one of the strongest experiences I've had where the monetary cost of something means ZIP, while the amount of heart put into it really is priceless. Thank you, thank you, thank you!

—Grace S.

I love your message. I wrote a long love letter to my husband, telling the many things that I love about him; and spent months of my life putting together scrapbooks for my daughters full of favorite memories from childhood to graduation. I always also try to remember to send words of love and encouragement to my daughters in the form of cards. Not only does it mean so much for people to receive these kinds of gifts, it feels SO good to give them. These kinds of things keep the love alive!

—Holly F.

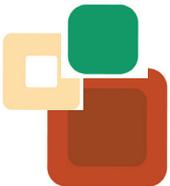
Life is short. If you're like me, you want the people in your life to know how much they mean to you. You want to find ways to express your appreciation and to create lasting connections. Gift-giving occasions can be a chance for you to do this. But then, why does it so often feel more like a burden than a blessing?



I'll tell you why. Because the old adage, "It's the thought that counts," seems to have been replaced by the expression, "money talks." Over the years, gift-giving has gotten less personal and more expensive. Less about relationship and more about trends, fads, and what those darned Joneses got.

I'm on a mission to put the connection and creativity back into gift giving.

I grew up in a small town in Ohio. My family had plenty to eat and a nice place to live. But we really didn't have a lot of disposable income. When it came time to buy my friends birthday or holiday gifts, I always felt a little embarrassed that I couldn't afford the same kinds of designer brands or high-quality items other people seemed to easily purchase. I found a way to circumvent the embarrassment by giving different kinds of gifts. Gifts I made. I loved writing silly poems for people and using snapshots to illustrate them. I created memory books with photos and stories. I made lists of things I loved about people.



I started making these gifts because it was a way to save money. But then I noticed something. Often my gifts seemed to be the ones that people lingered over. They made people laugh. And cry. They were the ones that my friends pulled off the shelf five, ten, twenty years later, a little tattered and still greatly loved.

Skip ahead to years later. I started a company called Mad Moon Creations — one-of-a-kind celebration books full of stories, photographs, memories, and wishes about the recipient.

As I continue to work with clients all over the country, I realize that what I am really creating with each project is a mirror to reflect back all the love and joy that is shared between the book recipient and his/her friends, family, and community. It's a touchstone, to help the person always remember why they are loved and what makes them unique in all the world.

What I create for people is simply an opportunity to express their love, admiration, and deep respect for someone in a way that often doesn't happen until funeral strings are playing, and that person is unable to hear a thing.

We all know this, but we forget: life is short. Birthdays, holidays, anniversaries, and other gift-giving occasions are our chance to stop the clock for a moment, look someone in the eye, and make the moment count.

Don't miss your chance. The next time you want to give someone a gift, rather than heading to the mall, why not sit down under the backyard oak tree, quietly and intently focus on that person, and then create a gift that lets them know you see them and love them.

Think about what it is you really want to offer. And more importantly, what it is they really need to receive.

Listen up. Do it now, while they can hear you.

Sending you the way it feels to be laughing with friends while doing dishes together after a shared meal,

Delights,
Sherry



Quick Start Guide

The two golden rules of gift giving:

Put thyself in the other person's shoes.

What's the number one mistake that people make when giving gifts? We buy or make something that we'd like ourselves. Sure, I swoon when my beau makes me jewelry. But my friend Jen doesn't wear jewelry. She'd much rather have tickets to the upcoming Coldplay concert.



What makes a great gift giver is taking the time to think about the other person. This crucial step is most often forgotten.

Before rushing out to the mall or logging on to an online store, set aside some quiet time to think about the person for whom you want to buy or make a gift. What hobbies does he enjoy? What new interest has she talked about lately? Has she dropped any clues recently? You might pick up a photo and reflect on being in that person's home. Is there a material gift that they need? Some service or assistance? Or would they most appreciate a heartfelt handmade gift?

Enjoy thyself in the process.

I mean it. Really enjoy yourself. A gift is a way to share something with another human being. It's not a one-way street. Believe it or not, there are no "givers" or "receivers" in my kind of giving world. It's one big love-fest of a circle gift. Just sitting down to think about someone you care about is FUN. Let yourself feel happy and connected. It is a gift to yourself, as well as the other person. Soak in the feeling. Don't be stingy with this part!

I bet this is what you're thinking:

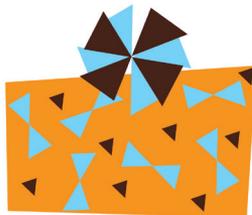
That's all well
and good, but how
in the world can
I come up with a
great gift for my
wonderful wife
or my best friend
or my amazing
son when money
is tight and ideas
are even slimmer
than my wallet?

Here's what I have to say:

Listen up!

What follows are
127 specific gift ideas

- * 60 of 'em won't cost you a dime.
- * 36 of 'em cost less than \$20.
- * The other 31, well, sometimes you gotta splurge.



Make something personal & one-of-a-kind

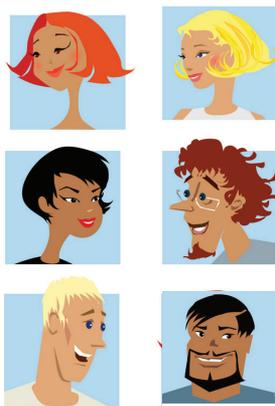
You know why giving someone a one-of-a-kind gift can be the very best gift in the world? Because what you're really giving someone is connection. You're saying, "I see you. I get you. I know what is important to you. I love you so much, that I am reflecting it all back to you in this unique gift that is yours and yours alone."

Wow. No matter how many material things someone has, he or she still wants and needs to feel loved, seen, and acknowledged. Who do you know who gets enough of that stuff?! With some creativity you can wow your loved ones in a way that even the shiniest diamond ring or fastest new vroom-vroom car can't do.

On the following pages, I list a whole bunch of one-of-a-kind possibilities. But I'm gonna start you off with my all-time favorite customized gift. This one is so good that I guarantee you, if you do it just once, you'll reap the rewards of having bought and read this ebook a hundred times over. You won't be able to put a price on the joy you bring someone. I kid you not. This is not hyperbole. It is hands-down the best gift you can ever give someone. Now promise me you'll try it at least once!

It's called **The Love List**. And it is simply that: a list of all the reasons you love someone.

Quick! Turn the page to find out more!



1. Create a Love List



Set aside some time, without distraction. Then, simply sit down and focus on all the things you love about the recipient. Things they do. Things they say. Loving habits. Funny quirks. Your list can be funny or sweet or silly.

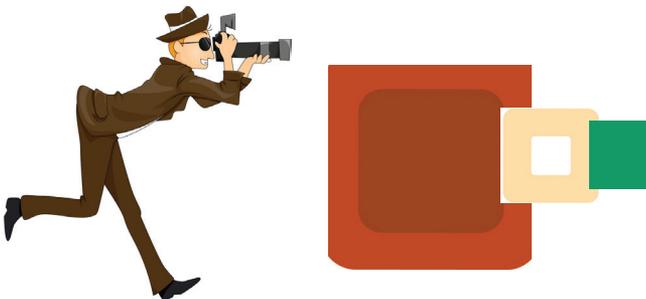
If you get stuck, think about favorite times you've shared and what makes them so great. Think about if this person died, what would you miss?

Write about the way he arrives with lilies in hand. Write about her high cackly laugh. Write about mom's love of crosswords. Write about the way her made-up stories always have bears in 'em. Write about the beauty mark on his cheek, the way he sings off-key, his beautiful feet.

When you're done, you can present your list as it is, handwritten on paper. Or, you can re-write in in calligraphy on fancy paper or type it in the computer and add photos or artwork. You can even write each "love" on a separate piece of paper, fold 'em up, and put them in a decorative box or bowl.

More one-of-a-kind gifts...

2. Doodle a cartoon or sketch something meaningful to them.
3. Embroider aprons or dish towels.
4. Bake a cake (& write something fun in the icing for goodness sake!)
5. Create a "What I've learned from you" book (if it is for your sibling, be sure to include things like "how to forge mom's signature!" or "Where dad hid the chocolate.")
6. Make a favorite memories/photo book.
7. Make a bloopers photo book with bad pictures and funny captions.
8. Write a story (& include them as a character!)
9. Create a custom DVD.
10. Interview a sibling, parent, or child of theirs.
11. Write a song 'specially for them.
12. Make a piece of jewelry using their favorite colors.
13. Create a piece of pottery they can use.
14. Knit a sweater or scarf or doggie shirt.
15. Carve a small totem pole with their favorite icons.
16. Make a wooden shelf or table.
17. Follow their kids or dog around for the day, snapping photos. Then make a "Day in the Life" photo book.



18. Create a family recipe book



Gather recipes that have been passed down in your family for years.

Maybe you always have the same dishes at Thanksgiving? Maybe Aunt Edna has her famous carrot cake that everyone loves? Maybe you've invented a dish called the "Smith's Delish."

Include `em all. Type `em in. Add some art or illustrations. Print `em out. Bind them in a 3-ring binder, with staples, or at a local copy place.

Voila. Not only do you have one great gift, you've got one great gift for every member of your family. Now, go take a nap in the hammock.

Even MORE one-of-a-kind gifts...

19. Make a set of cards by painting, collaging, stickering, or using favorite photo prints on a set of blank 5x7 card stock. Try to think of a sweet or funny theme that will really personalize the cards for the recipient. Buy matching envelopes at your local stationery store.

20. Brainstorm a list of all her accomplishments — everything from professional talents to mom skills to her fitness successes. They can be big, like promotions or sending a kid to college. Or, they can be small, like mastering a chocolate chip cookie recipe. When you get to 31, write them each on separate sheets of paper, put 'em in a jar, and call it the "Joy Jar." Suggest she randomly choose one a day to read for a month's worth of pleasure.

21. This is another all-time favorite!

Invite ten or twenty of their closest friends and family to write a letter to them, telling what they love about them, their favorite stories, happy wishes, etc. After you receive all the letters back, bind 'em together in an album. (Aside from the Love List, this is one of my all-time favorite gifts. My company, Mad Moon Creations, is based on this very concept ... and I can tell you from experience, this is a life-changing gift!)



Give 'em a Hand

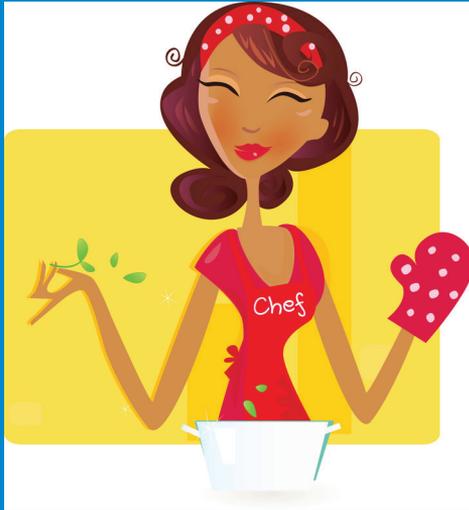
Not the creative type? If that last section had you muttering old fashioned curse words and sputtering on about “artsy-fartsy-glitter-glue using freaks”, than calm down and read on. If you have a little energy and lots of willingness to offer gifts that people really need, maybe something here will suit ya...

22. Babysit their kids on a Friday night so they can go out.
23. Sleep over at their house and let them sleep in while you get the kids ready for school during the week.
24. Take over the carpool for a week.
25. Drop off dinner one weeknight.
26. Wash or oil-change their car.
27. Do their laundry.
28. Polish their shoes.
29. Take over dog walking duties for a day.
30. Clean their house.
31. Backrub, backrub, backrub. Need I say more?

Helpful Hint



If you create handmade “gift certificates” for these things, people are more likely to take you up on your offer. That makes it feel more like a gift than a favor. These certificates could be quarter-sheet size, created on the computer with some clip art. Or, they can be cut out of construction paper and hand-written in marker, with a sticker or two to spruce 'em up.



32. Make a book of redeemable coupons that are good for one each month to dish wash, house clean, babysit, backrub, or cook. Or mix'n match, a different helpful something every month. A silk tie never made his love gush like this; you'll see.

Pay Attention!

(Especially for sick or sad or older folks)

(But really, who couldn't use extra comfort?)

33. Create a coupon good for raking the leaves followed by a steamy cup of cocoa (you bring the fixin's).
34. Give coupons to shovel their drive four times during the snowy season.
35. Make a certificate for a standing Sunday afternoon date to watch a movie together. (Bring popcorn!)
36. Offer to help sort through photos, label 'em, and put 'em in albums. (This could be renamed: "Eagerly listen to stories.")
37. Buy her a few reams of yarn or fabric, or papers for her hobby.
38. Make or buy a crossword puzzle book and give a card good for ten sessions of puzzling together.
39. For super sleuths, make that a five-minute mystery book...
40. Dessert of the month club anyone? Sweets for the sweet, handmade and hand-delivered by you.



41. Make a family tree. There are lots of great online resources like Geni.com, which help you track all the kin and upload photos.



42. Choose four books available at the library or thrift store and list 'em on a handmade note or wrap 'em up with a "book of the season" club card good for "hours of read-aloud" services by the fire.

Put Your Talents to the Test

It's easy to overlook one of the most obvious gifts of all — something we do all the time. But chances are, you have some amazing skill or talent that you use professionally or as a hobby, that would be a tremendous gift to Aunt Sally or Sister Sue. Sure, if you're an accountant, you may not feel like adding one more tax return to the April deadline, but you could give a certificate for three hours of your time in January, helping sort and prep the mess of papers and receipts.

Create a gift certificate that offers a gift of your time and talents!

43. Handyman: Offer three hours fix-it help.
44. Computer whiz: Give 'em two emergency house calls to help troubleshoot.
45. Artist: Make up an afternoon art project you can do with their kids.
46. Cook: Cook a meal for them in their home.
47. Car mechanic: Tune up the car or change the oil.
48. Editor: Help with resume.
49. Yoga teacher: Teach an at-home individual lesson or a Friday morning series.
50. Massage therapist: Offer back-care massage.
51. Photographer: Photograph their children, dogs, or canaries.
52. Architect: Surprise 'em with the blueprints to that deck they've talked about for years.



53. Golf expert: Give `em a few beginners lessons or set aside time to help `em purchase a set of clubs.
54. Accountant: Offer up some tax consultation.
55. Seamstress: Sew buttons or tears or make alterations.

56. Personal Shopper: You don't have to be a professional; just take the time to focus on making Auntie Annabelle or your nephew Ned look fabulous! Anyone in your life who isn't a shopper will love the chance to spend an afternoon with someone who has an eagle eye for fashion.



Get a little help from your friends

57. Know someone who can trip the light fantastic like nobody's business? Ask her if she'd be willing to teach your sister and her fiance how to swing dance for their upcoming wedding.

58. Your cousin is a surfer dude? Ask if he'd be willing to spend an afternoon at the beach with your best friend, who has been dying to learn. Borrow a board and wetsuit for him. And you can bask on the beach reading a book while they "cowabunga!"

59. Your Grandma bakes great pies, right? Ask if she'd be willing to spend a couple hours with your best friend, Ginny, who has always wanted to know how to get that crust just right. (Note: this is also a secret gift to Grandma, who will love to be asked this favor.)



Time is of the Essence

One of the things people appreciate most in life is getting to spend quality time with the people we love. Sure, it sounds kinda trite. But think about it. I bet your happiest moments in life have not come from boxes. I'd bet anything that your most memorable moments are when you've been lucky enough to have been 100% present with someone who was also present with you. Sound easy? It's not. These days, getting someone to slow down enough to look us in the eye is no easy task. Be that present for someone.

60. Your book-loving friend might enjoy a trip to the library and an hour devoted to helping her find a few books followed by a cup of hot chocolate in a cozy café where you two share excerpts from your books.

61. You both wanna get fit. How about a coupon to "play personal trainer" and you can walk together every day for a month. You bring the motivation — and maybe the fresh orange juice.

62. Find a recipe, buy the ingredients and teach her how to make your famous cauliflower soup.

63. Create a day of painting, writing, or pottery-making in your home.

64. Two tickets to the theater or movies along with a certificate for popcorn and soda.

65. Plan a "Game Night" and pick up some fun board games at a thrift store or borrow them from friends.



66. Offer to go to the DMV or other government office with her and bring along a joke book to make the long wait more fun.

67. Make a "Joyful Jury Duty" gift by offering to wait with him —and take some fresh muffins and a game to play.

68. Give the book, "Simply Celebrate" and choose one of the celebrations to do together — like hiding money for people to find or creating a dream shrine. This is a two-fer gift, because it is also a gift to me! (See back of book for ordering info.)

69. Maybe the person who has everything loves to hike, but doesn't have the time to discover new routes. You could plan a day together and surprise her with a beautiful day of hiking in a new place. That's enough of a gift. But for added oomph, bring your camera and take some great shots you can send her later. Or throw some delicious treats in your backpack, along with a blanket, for a picnic.



70. Your music lover friend might like a certificate to visit a music store together to listen to new tunes and then you could buy her a CD.

71. You could take her to a free concert and then treat her to a glass of wine or hot chocolate.

72. You could invite her to your home to relax on the couch with a home-cooked meal and an hour of new music you picked out with her in mind.

73. You could call the local radio station and explain what a great music lover your friend is, and ask them if they'll give her a private tour.



Think experiential rather than material

All too often when we think of gifts, we think of some item we run out to the mall to buy. And this is great when someone you love really needs a particular thing or you know they'd delight in something specific. But consider giving a gift someone can experience.

74. For the dance lover: Tickets to the ballet or modern dance performance.
75. Artsy ones: Museum membership or two admission tickets and lunch in the cafe.
76. For the theater lover: Theater or circus tickets.
77. Self-help gal: Evening or weekend workshop with favorite speaker.
78. For a cooking aficionado: Cooking lessons.
79. For the sports buff: Tickets to local sports team events.
80. Writers: Writing workshop or an evening in a cabin to write.
81. Comedy lover: Improv lessons or comedy club.
82. Movie buff: Film passes at the local cinema or AMC gift card.
83. Book lovers: Tickets to an author reading.
84. Outdoorsy types: River-rafting trip or rock climbing lessons.
85. Daring ones: Skydiving or bungee jumping lessons.
86. Animal lover: Whale watching excursion or membership to the local humane society.
87. For the music lover: Tickets to the symphony or rock concert.





88.
Is there an adventure lover in your midst? Make her an invitation for a day trip but don't tell her where you're going. Use your imagination and some local guide books to customize a trip especially for her tastes. Get a couple bus passes, take the fat-tire bikes, or use the jalopy.

Forget the candy & roses; Woo 'er and Wow 'im like this

89. For her: Set up an at-home spa day for her, in which you play the role of masseuse, pedicurist, yoga teacher, and chef. Things you'll need: clean house, nail polish, sweet-smelling bath items, organic foods to cook up. Offer yourself as her "lady/man-in-waiting"!

90. For him: Set up an at-home "Your perfect day." Order his fave movie or make it a date when his fave team is playing a big game. Give him a massage, cook him up a great meal, rub his feet, offer yourself as his "slave for the day."

P.S. Don't listen to the title of this section: feel free to have some sweets and flowers to add to the romance!



P.P.S

Extra credit if you sing a song for your beloved or play an instrument or do a dance. (Sure, a little dirty dancing counts!)



91. Is his birthday or your anniversary in July? (If not, this is a great time for an unexpected gift!)

Create a "Super You" Scavenger Hunt, by foot or bicycle or car. On 3x5 cards, write your clues. Things like "The diner where we met." "The movie theater where you first kissed me." "The park where we fell asleep for hours after Suzy was born." You can either hide little notes at each of these places that lead him to the next one. Or you can meet him there, with the next clue in hand. (Stay for a coffee or movie or nap; then move on.)

The last clue could lead him to the town's firework extravaganza. Make the clue: "How it feels whenever we kiss" and see if he figures it out!

No kidding!

Gifts for children

92. Trip to the old-fashioned soda fountain and to the park.
93. Take 10 or 20 photos of them and create a storybook that tells an adventure story with the child as the main character.
94. Make a music CD of all fun songs with a common theme. Maybe you try to find songs whose titles all reflect an aspect of the child's life.
95. If the child is responsible enough and you are certain your household is ready for the long-term commitment — financially and emotionally— then go to the nearest animal shelter and let the child choose an animal companion to provide years and years of friendship and love.
96. Give a gift certificate for a trip to a thrift store or book store where he can pick out anything he wants up to \$10.
97. Most museums offer a free-admission day. Find out when the local children's museum or science museum is free, pack up a lunch, and have a great time.
98. Plan a super hero adventure day, princess day, or magical theme day that best fits the child's interests. Dress up in costume, visit unusual places around town, and delight in each other's company.
99. Make her Queen for the Day or let him be King for the Day. Make a crown and a certificate and let the child choose what she or he wants to do, eat, and play. The only caveat might be that it can't cost money. Or, you can set a dollar amount.



Go eco

So many people have so much stuff that is piling up in their homes. People are often overwhelmed with clutter. The most eco-friendly gifts you can give we've already mentioned — helping them out in some way—plan an adventure, write her a song, bring all the fixing's for dinner over and cook, etc. Below are a few additional green thoughts ...

100. Tickets to a fundraiser for the humane society or environmental group.
101. Donate to her favorite charity.
102. Buy seeds or plants for their garden or yard and offer to spend half a day helping outside.
103. Volunteer together at her favorite nonprofit then buy her something from the gift store.



104. Go fly a kite. Literally. Not only will it be a great way to spend time together, but you both will be so grateful for fresh air and nature!



Not the same ole song & dance

105. Play a musical instrument or sing?
Give "tickets" to a special evening concert
at your house.

106. Stage a play, either one you write
(that happens to have the gift recipient
as a character!) or check one out of the
library and do a reading.

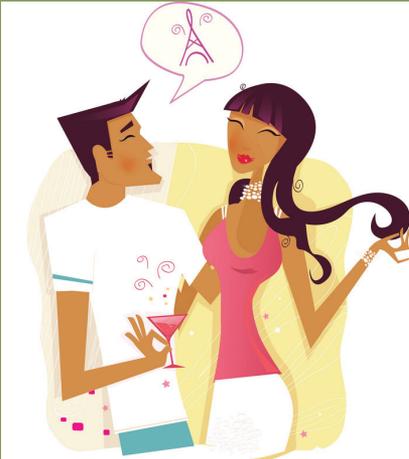
107. Make magic by performing illusions
and card tricks.

Super-Sleuth: Look for Clues

108. Did she recently say she wished you two could afford a trip to Paris? Obviously, buying plane tickets and planning a trip would be fabulous.

But if you can't afford that, you can still give a little taste of Paris by planning dinner at the best French restaurant in town, or buying a bottle of French wine and the DVD "Paris, je t'aime" or some French perfume.

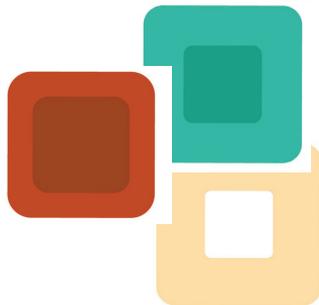
Even if you have a very small budget, you could rent a French movie and snack on French pastries. Or rent some language CDs from the library so you can learn the language together. (Be sure to woo her by sprinkling in a few je t'aimes here or there!)



109. Has he been swamped at work and misses time to play his guitar? You could book a getaway at a cottage someplace and take care of the cooking so all he has to do is play guitar all weekend long.

110. She's so excited about her upcoming trip to Spain, but money is tight: how about Spanish lessons or a dinner certificate at a highly-recommended restaurant in Madrid?

111. She's been wishing she could afford the new hair salon in town, so you make an appointment and drive her there without telling her where you're headed. Stay and chat with her ... and maybe bring her a latte from the cafe next door or her fave magazine from the local newsstand. Oh, and pay for her new 'do!



Pool together for a great group gift

Group gifts are fabulous ... and this is why: it enables the gift givers to give something more substantial. Also, right now so many people are living on reduced budgets and might not be able to replace that broken DVD player or buy a new set of dishware. Instead of getting a bunch of small, insignificant items, people can team up to give something really meaningful. About half of the clients at Mad Moon Creations are siblings or bridesmaids or groups of friends who pool their money to buy the gift.

112. Healing massage.

113. Overnight getaway at a B&B.

114. Collection of thoughts/wishes (Do yourself or hire Mad Moon Creations: madmoon.com).

115. Month of yoga classes at her fave studio.



Think unique

Has anyone ever planned something truly unique for you like a whale watching excursion, scavenger hunt, or hot air balloon ride? Use Google to find unusual adventures where you live by typing in "unique things to do in Your City." You can also ask friends about their most memorable adventures.

116. In Oakland, Ca one can take a gondola ride on Lake Merritt.
117. San Antonio, TX offers zipline tours.
118. Many beach towns offer parasailing.
119. In Santa Monica one could ride the bumper cars on the pier.
120. In Ashtabula County, Ohio there are 16 covered bridges that provide a fun day's adventure.
121. Many cities offer places where folks can drive a Nascar Stock Car.
122. A hot air balloon ride.
123. Indoor flying.
124. Elevator to the top of a hotel and then indoor picnic.
125. Google "Unique things to do in "City Name" to find some thing unique near you.



Let 'em choose

126. Offer a Chinese menu of delights.

For your beau, you could offer three choices from a long list that includes back rubs, foot massages, watching their favorite DVD, cooking dinner, going to a free concert, attending a book reading, etc.

For your sister you might offer three possible restaurant choices for lunch and three possible activities like taking her for a pedicure or going to ice-skate or going to comedy.

For your dad you might offer golfing lessons, tickets to the ballgame, a hike and lunch excursion, or mixing up a batch of his fave chili.



Yikes! Need a last-minute gift?

127. Did you wait too long and now it's her birthday or Christmas Eve or the day of your anniversary? Don't sweat it, here's what you do: make a card (using a photo of the two of you if you have one) that says: "This card is good for an absolutely amazing, love-and-admiration filled evening in celebration of you." When your loved one opens the card, tell 'em with a glint in your eye that you want to take some time soon to spend some wonderful time together in which you get to celebrate who they are. Set a date. Now, go back to idea #1, the Love List and write 'em down or record them so you can light a fire, prepare a special meal, and read or play them on the date of your celebration.



You're not done yet!

Other things to consider...

Now that you've got the perfect gift, there are just three more things to think about:

Wrap it up.

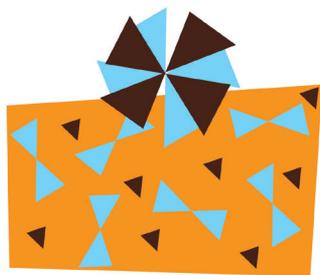
Presentation is so important. Don't wrap your well-thought-out gift in wrinkled brown paper or torn tissue paper you're reusing. While it may not seem like the wrapping matters, it does: it sets the tone for the gift and creates anticipation and delight. Wrapping doesn't have to be expensive. Be creative by visiting craft or thrift stores and seeing what original finds can house your next gifts.

Timing is everything.

Consider the timing of the gift. Even the best gift in the world won't be well received if she's given it while she's in the middle of cooking dinner for twelve or you're in a loud, crowded place. Make sure the recipient is able to fully focus on your gift. You've taken the time to create or buy something special; make sure your presentation reflects that.

Last, but not least.

Last, but not least, take the time to congratulate yourself on a job well done and treat yourself to something that might feel rewarding or nurturing— maybe fresh flowers, new music, a hot bath, or some time to relax. The best gift givers are the people who also know how to give to themselves. And chances are, you know exactly what the perfect gift for you would be!



Want to learn about some other extraordinary, artistic, or one-of-a-kind gifts?

Below and on the next page are a list of artists and entrepreneurs I know and trust. Check 'em out for more unique gift ideas!



For instance, think about giving someone a gift certificate for specialized coaching, a virtual assistant, or an online class. Or buy a few copies of an inspiring book or CD and give a "Creativity Club" membership for a couple friends and yourself. I'm sure the list below will spark lots of other great ideas!

These folks —and probably many you know yourself—are devoted to supporting themselves through their passions. Let's support them!

Art, Writing and Color:

- * [Gregory Dean Bracken](#) turns your photo into an oil painting
- * [Nancy Lefko](#) creates one-of-a-kind vintage-inspired collages
- * [Andrea Scher](#) leads "Mondo Beyondo" Dream Labs
- * [Jillian Thibodeau](#) travels the country shooting beautiful boudoir photos
- * [Laurie Wagner](#) coaches & teaches writing and creativity

Gift Books & Music that Inspire

- * [Trish Bruxvoort Colligan](#) produces/performs uplifting music, like the incredible CD, "Splash!"
- * [Patti Digh](#) wrote "Life is a Verb" and "Creative is a Verb"
- * [Jen Gray & Squam](#) sell "The Journal," chock-full of creativity
- * [Christine Mason Miller](#) wrote "Ordinary Sparkling Moments"
- * [Kelly Rae Roberts](#) wrote "Taking Flight: Inspiration And Techniques To Give Your Creative Spirit Wings"

Continued on next page ...

Gift Books & Music that Inspire (cont.)

- * **Maya Stein** sells “pocket verses” and leads poetry workshops
- * **Jenifer Yost** helps people unleash the power of joy with her book, “Bring on the Joy”

Fun Stuff

- * **Elina/ADS** makes “hats to make your head spin” (Just ask Sherry!)
- * **Mortified** produces fun books and live shows
- * **Ira Marlowe** writes personalized songs and sells fab kid cd’s
- * **Lucky Ray** inspires people to stay focused on the good things in life.
- * **Susanne Paynovich** coaches people on the techniques and benefits of water aerobics

Health & Happiness

- * **Sydney Ashland** offers energy healings by phone
- * **Jenner Beck** offers relationship coaching, products, and seminars
- * **Kenneth Christian** coaches people on actualizing potential and achieving success
- * **Rich German** helps people monetize their passions via coaching programs and products
- * **Cassandra Rae** coaches folks on following their calling and living without fear
- * **Lorna Sheveland** and husband, Bill Blazek, do online coaching and present live workshops on relationships
- * **Pam Sterling** offers online “Outrageous Joy/Detox Your Life” workshops

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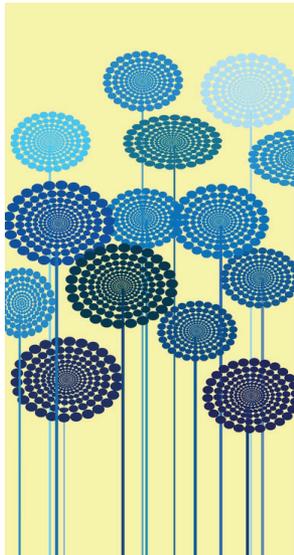


Spirituality/Compassion

- * **Living Compassion** offers retreats, books, and email classes on ending suffering through personal transformation
- * **Project Night Night** offers tribute gifts of “Night Night” packages for homeless children

Helpful (Virtual) Assistance

- * **Stefanie Renee Lindeen** offers virtual assistance that funds her photography & creative projects
- * **Skye Hall** provides virtual & personal assistance

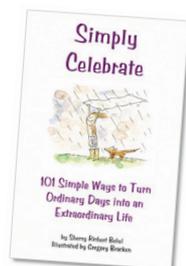




Simply Celebrate helps people create and step into their lives, moment by moment. You can find us online at www.SimplyCelebrate.net.

We offer a place to share stories, find inspirational products, participate in adventures of the spirit, and join a supportive community that can help you wake up to all the joy, spontaneity, color, and connection that is available in every moment.

“Simply Celebrate: 101 Simple Ways to Turn Ordinary Days into an Extraordinary Life” is a whimsical book of art and ideas that helps people bring more joy, color, vitality, and connection into their lives.



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Visit the Simply Celebrate [Artist Boutique](#) where you'll meet spirited folks who create customized arts and gifts that are sure to make magic for someone you love.

A portion of the proceeds from this ebook benefits these two wonderful organizations:

Living Compassion is a nonprofit organization that is creating a more conscious, compassionate world, moment by moment, one person at a time. They are creating a global community, connecting like-hearted people from around the world, each working toward a caring, peaceful planet. Living Compassion offers books, audio, workshops, and retreats.



Project Night Night donates over 25,000 Night Night Packages each year, free of charge, to homeless children who need our childhood essentials to feel secure, cozy, ready to learn, and significant. Each Night Night Package contains a new security blanket, an age-appropriate children's book, and a stuffed animal — all nestled inside of a new canvas tote bag.



Thanks for making this ebook possible:

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Holly Farone for test-driving other loving gift ideas

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Becky Richert Belul for teaching me all about gifts of the spirit

