

Holiday Gifts for Seniors

By Judith S. Parnes, L.C.S.W., C.M.C

The holidays can be both joyous and stressful for many of us. With all the preparations involved, we often struggle to find the time to complete all of our tasks, let alone enjoy the holiday season. Yet, most of us have fond memories of this wonderful time of year. You and your loved ones need to remember to make this a special time, focusing on positive memories and family experiences. To help with possible gift giving here are some creative suggestions:

1. Fast food Holiday Basket: stocked with food items that are quick and easy for the senior and also fast and nutritious.
2. Health and Beauty Basket: an assortment of the vitamins that they take on a regular basis, soaps, lotions, shampoo, etc.
3. Pre-pay telephone and or cable bill for a few months. The payment will go as a credit on their bill.
4. Large face clock or telephone with oversized keypads and adjustable volume (pre-programmed of course by a family member with all the most frequently called numbers.)
5. Gift certificates for the barber or hairdresser, neighborhood grocery store, favorite restaurant, etc.
6. Memory Box – filled with pictures and mementos of significant events in the senior's life.
7. Home Safety Box – Batteries for smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, night-lights with built in sensors. Remember "The Clapper"? This is a great gift for a senior.
8. Videotapes or DVD's of old TV shows such as Lawrence Welk, I Love Lucy, Carol Burnett, Golden Girls, Milton Berle or old movies.
9. Dinner for One (or Two) Club: prepare several dinners complete with dessert, freeze and place in their freezer for their future use. Be sure to mark what is in each container.
10. Make a "Family Memory" video. To remind the receiver how much he or she means to the family and to express your appreciation for all they have contributed over the years.

Of course the best gift we can give our loved ones (and ourselves) is meaningful time spent together. It only takes a moment to create a lasting memory.

I wish you and your family a joyous holiday season.

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and management services to older adults and their families. Please visit www.elderlifemanagement.org or call (732) 493-8080 for more information