

## HOLIDAY GIVING? The Thought Does Count!

If you like to give gifts during the holidays, they don't need to be expensive. With a little mindfulness, you can give memorable gifts without spending a lot of money. It requires attention and being present to the moment, but it can reduce stress and create meaning in the recipients' lives.

How? Here are three mindfulness-driven gift ideas that top the list.



### 1. Time

If a friend or loved one is stressed out this season, schedule time to spend with them. It won't matter if it's in person or a virtual visit. If you're fully present in the moment, your gift will be appreciated. The holidays can be a time of great stress for many of us. Turn off your phone or notifications and just be there for the other person. Pay attention when you greet them and when you say goodbye.



### 2. A Task

Focusing on the needs of others can reduce your own stress. Volunteer for a cause you embrace or put a skill you have to work for a friend. You could bake cookies for your neighbors. Or, string some lights to brighten up a window view for someone who's homebound. Check to see if a local group is organizing a mail drop of holiday cards to military personnel deployed overseas.



### 3. Gratitude

Gratitude makes the recipient feel valued and contributes to your own health and well-being. Write a thank you note to someone who has helped you on your journey.

The bottom line: It's not how much something costs, it's the thought that counts.

Resource: [Webmd.com](https://www.webmd.com)



## When It Comes to Your Health, Every Step Counts

Walking may be the most natural and accessible activity to improve and maintain health and well-being. You can't beat walking for convenience, and you don't have to be an athlete to enjoy its benefits.

Skip the ride and walk when you can. You can walk anytime, anywhere, indoors and outdoors, rain or shine, alone, with a friend or your dog.

Walking doesn't require special equipment or memberships. You can even walk in place. All you really need is supportive shoes and comfortable clothes.

If you move at a brisk pace, walking can keep your body tuned up and increase your heartbeat and blood flow. Health and fitness professionals recommend 10,000 steps a day or a series of 10-minute walks totaling 150 minutes during the week.

Walking burns calories and fat. It also tones and shapes muscles and helps keep bones strong. It can give you a rosy glow, boost your mood and help your posture. You might even feel more confident if you find it helps your balance and coordination.

Plus, regular walking can help prevent and relieve many illnesses like heart disease, arthritis, obesity, osteoporosis, anxiety, and Alzheimer's. Hospital professionals know that the sooner patients walk, the better they recover.

Walking is good at any age. When disabilities or aging interfere, try walking with a cane, walker or other assistive device.

However, there are times that call for precautions. If you have a heart condition, diabetes or high blood pressure, check with your doctor before you start a walking program. Please stop and seek medical attention if you feel faint, dizzy, or short of breath while walking.

Once you have the go ahead from your doctor, remember that every step counts. It's as easy as putting one foot in front of the other.

**Resources:** [American Heart Association](#); [National Institutes of Health](#); [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

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## Sunday Best Fruit Salad Serves 6 to 8

### Ingredients:

- 1 (20-oz) can pineapple chunks, juice reserved
- 2 apples, peeled, cored and chopped
- 1 (21-oz) can peach pie filling
- 2 bananas, peeled and diced
- 3 kiwis, peeled
- 1 pint strawberries



### Directions

Toss the chopped apples in reserved pineapple juice and allow to sit for 5 to 10 minutes. In a large salad bowl, combine the peach pie filling and pineapple chunks.

Remove apples from pineapple juice and add to pie filling and pineapple mixture. Add chopped bananas to reserved pineapple juice and let sit for 5 to 10 minutes.

Slice kiwi and half the strawberries. Chop the remaining strawberries and set aside.

Remove bananas from pineapple juice and add to pie filling mixture. Add chopped strawberries and toss together. Alternate kiwi and strawberry slices around the edge of the serving bowl. Chill and serve.

*Recipe courtesy of [skinnytaste.com](#)  
for nutritional information click [here](#).*

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