



Truly Loving Christmas Gifts

It's this time of year again... and you are probably busy thinking about presents!

I don't doubt your caring or good intentions as a giver. This is exactly why I confront you with a rather uncomfortable truth today: MOST OF THE GIFTS WE GIVE EACH OTHER IN THE NAME OF LOVE ARE NOT LOVING AT ALL. Whether it's the box of chocolates for your already diabetic grandma, the bottle of whisky for your grandpa who already has high blood pressure, the video game for your kid who already spends far too much time in front of screens...

Ask yourself:

- Will this gift improve the receiver's HEALTH or well-being also in the LONG run? Or is it rather another "brick in their sarcophagus" (no matter how small or delicious a brick it might be)??
- Does the gift foster real CONNECTION between people or rather contribute to the disconnection and loneliness of today's "modern" world?
- Is it meaningful at all?

And of course the following questions don't hurt either:

- WHO am I supporting by buying this gift? A multinational? A local business? A start-up?
- WHAT practices am I supporting by buying this gift? Child labor? Employees abuse? Animal mistreatment? Pollution?
- Is it sustainably produced or "made in China"?
- Is it environmentally friendly? Can it be recycled or will it end up as plastic in our seas?

Of course these considerations are valid beyond Christmas and should also be taken into account whenever we buy something for ourselves.



Some inspirations for LOVING gifts:

- First of all: Give LOVE. Be kind. Show compassion and respect. Smile. Support. There are so many people / families that exchange "gifts" but then continue fighting...
- Give TIME instead of things. Give a voucher for an activity together. This doesn't have to be very expensive. From an invitation to a home-cooked meal or a visit to the cinema... to a luxurious journey together... it is possible to give your time to ANYBODY - no matter your budget! The sky is the limit for your creativity!
- Give them something that will foster their HEALTH or WELL-BEING: reduces their stress, helps them relax, gives them inspiration or impulses, helps them improve their diet or lifestyle (if they are ready for that of course...). For example, a voucher for a massage, a spa, a workshop... Or simply an inspiring book (they can be life-changing!).
- Give them an Oxfam Charity gift, like a goat or a chicken or some education...
- If you choose to give things (which can be completely appropriate in some cases), replace the alcohol, chocolates or even the home-made marmalade and cookies with something delicious AND healthy. If it's a Non-Food thing (clothes, toys, devices...), make sure it is not toxic if possible.

I hope you found some inspiration and will spend a Christmas full of LOVE!

Merry Christmas!