

Gift-giving becoming difficult with Age

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With getting older comes a list of things that start to become more difficult to complete. One of the things is gift-giving. As age increases it gets harder to ensure that the perfect gift is being given. [Studies](#) show that a person who is over the age of 55 is more than twice as likely to consider themselves as not being a good gift-giver in comparison to those of a younger age group such as those in their 20s and 30s. There can be plenty of reasoning as to why with increasing age comes the difficulty of being a good gift giver. However, the ones explored in this paper are due to the impact of the hippocampus and frontal lobe with increasing age.

The hippocampus is a structure in the brain that is responsible for dealing with a human's learning and memory. The hippocampus is located deep in the temporal lobe and is a vulnerable structure that has the ability to be impaired due to a variety of stimuli including age. The cognition changes that occur in the brain with increasing age in the hippocampus and frontal lobe bring a decline in the performance of cognitive tasks. When performing a cognitive task such as gift-giving it requires the ability to process or transform information to make a decision and use measures such as the speed of the process, working memory, and executive cognitive function to achieve the task. [Studies](#) have shown that the mass of the brain decreases with age, and the structure affected is the frontal lobe and hippocampus. The frontal lobe is responsible for critical thinking and decision-making, as the hippocampus is responsible for the storage of the memories that we form. With both structures being affected and shrinking with age it makes tasks like gift-giving more than they would've been in earlier ages. [Columbia Mailman School of Public Health](#) states that in our 30s and 40s, the brain begins to shrink, and the shrinkage rate increases, even more, when approaching the age of 60.

When it comes to gift-giving there comes a lot of factors that play a role in achieving the task of getting a gift. First comes the thought of what the gift should be. This involves the cognitive functions of the frontal lobe to ensure a decision of what gift should be purchased and given. When having a range of gifts available, creates more difficulty in deciding. As mentioned before, the frontal lobe is responsible for decision making and with increasing age, comes declining decision making. As for this process, it may become more of a lengthy process than a simple task to complete. Also, it is important to note that memory plays a significant role in the process of gift-giving due to retrieving the memory of what the gift recipient would like and dislike in attempts to give a good gift. Regardless of age, gift-giving is a task that is not done with ease, however, with age, it becomes more of an obstacle to overcome due to all the factors that go hand and hand in order to complete the task of gift-giving. Essentially, the impact of age on cognition is to be taken into consideration when looking further into the difficulty that arises when gift-giving.

Hippocampus is also responsible for learning. Another factor that helps in gift-giving is learning what the recipient may be fond of when receiving a gift. However, with the hippocampus being affected with age, this increases the chances of not being able to thoroughly learn and remember information that will help make the process of gift-giving easier. For instance, usually during the holidays, gifts from grandparents are either a hit or miss and the majority of the time it is a miss. The reason for this is due to the impairments that follow from the shrinkage of the frontal lobe and hippocampus. In a lot of cases, it is common to see people of increasing age giving a gift receipt along with the gift in cases the recipient wants to exchange it for something of their choice. Receiving an unwanted gift from an older adult whether it be a

family member or a friend, most of the time leads to the present either being re-gifted, returned or exchanged, or tucked away in the back of the closet.

Especially when there are festive occasions such as the holidays that there is an increased chance of unwanted gifts from older adults. [Research](#) has shown that nearly half of those who are in their fifties, which is approximately 48%, have reported enjoying festive shopping less than they used to. The evidence of these studies demonstrates that increasing age brings frustration to completing tasks such as gift-giving. The results of the study suggest that every year we become older, it doesn't get easier, instead, it becomes more difficult.

In conclusion, with growing age comes a struggle with gift-giving. There are main factors that play a role in completing such a cognitive task such as the function of the hippocampus and the frontal lobes. With increasing age, comes a decline in the functionality of those structures which impact the process of carrying out tasks such as gift-giving. The shrinkage of the hippocampus and frontal lobe with age affects decision-making, learning and memory which are key components that play a significant role in the process of getting the perfect gift for someone. In essence, there is a great amount of brain power that comes with the process of gift-giving that with age becomes more of an obstacle than a simple task to cross off the list. Although there is a shift in confidence when it comes to gift-giving at an older age, it does not mean that older adults are doomed to give the worst gifts. It just means that there needs to be a lot more time and effort to be put in to accomplish the task due to the cognition changes that take place when older.

