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The joy of giving and receiving gifts

Giving and receiving gifts is an essential part of our lives. No birthday, festival, or celebration is complete without giving and receiving gifts. While it's obvious to think that receiving gifts is more fun and could help the recipient feel better and improve their mood, as well. But giving a gift and the whole process of choosing gifts improves the mental well-being of the giver. Giving a gift to someone, the person has to decide the gift carefully, the way of presenting the gift; all

this effort goes into improving their relationship and strengthening it. Gift-giving can positively influence our psychological and emotional well-being.

Symbolic interaction

Gift-giving helps us communicate love and affection to our loved ones. We are reinforcing relationships and showing our gratitude to our loved ones for being in our lives. Gifts act as a symbol of communication; they communicate emotions and nonverbal cues, which we cannot express otherwise. Giving a gift to our loved ones shows them that we love them, that we care about them, that their happiness matters to us and we want to celebrate that by giving them a gift. Similarly, when we give a gift to a loved one, we express to them that they are special to us. If we add a personal touch to that present, by personalizing it, by writing a handwritten card or a letter, then it shows that we went out of our way to make them feel special. The symbolic interaction transcends time, with our loved ones as well as with us. Giving a gift to a loved one on their birthday symbolizes that you not just remembered their special day but also took the time to purchase a present for them. Besides that, this symbolizes that they are special enough to be remembered and celebrated as well.

Celebrations

Gifts are also an essential part of our celebrations. If our loved one has achieved a milestone in life, gifts are sure to help us convey more than what simple congratulation can convey. We can appreciate our friends, siblings, parents, and even employees. It would reinforce their performance as well as establish a stronger bond with them. So many festivals are known to have traditional gift-exchanging traditions. For example, exchanging gifts is an important part of Christmas celebrations. Eid is known for the exchange of Eidi, which are gifts given to

youngsters by elderly family members. One of the parts of celebrating Diwali is exchanging gifts. This shows the importance of gifts in our lives, especially in celebrating festivals. Although gift-giving is an important part of many festivals, gift-giving is a festive experience in and of itself. From the process of deciding what to give to the actual moment of presenting the gift, the excitement has a festive mode to it. That is why the joy of gifting cannot be overlooked.

Creating memories

One of the most beautiful aspects of gifting is that gifts help create memories, the way a gift is presented, and if it is meaningful, so much the better. It is going to add to the value of the moment. Every time the recipient looks at the gift or uses it, they are going to remember their loved one who gave them that gift. Because gifts are not just things, they feel like gifts to the loved one. The effect of the moment is going to stay with them for a long time. So, gifts allow us to create memories and beautifully cherish them. These memories become our special moments because they make us smile and they make us realize that we are loved and taken care of. These become beautiful memories as they are cherished by us. We frequently hear them tell us stories about their friends, parents, or grandparents, claiming to have received a gift from a loved one, which they consider special. The effect is so amazing that the listener wants to create meaningful moments like these as well.

Making amends

Sometimes, in a fit of fury, we hurt the people we care about and saying sorry may not be as helpful. Sometimes our rage has caused way more damage than we regret. We cannot do justice to a person we have hurt. When words are not enough to pave the way for our relationship because of our own mistakes, we can use the help of a gift to make amends. When you present

your sincere apologies with a gift that has meaning, it will reflect how much you feel sorry for your behavior and that you really are sorry for your mistake. When an apology is presented with a gift, it indicates that you must have thought about your mistake and that you feel bad about behaving the way you did. So, apologizing with a gift is a gesture that shows that although you were wrong to behave that way, you are willing to make amends but not willing to give up on your loved one.

Gratitude

Just like when we give a gift to appreciate someone, we can also present a gift to show our gratitude towards people who care about us and have helped us through thick and thin. Giving gifts is a sure way of increasing one's happiness and improving their mood. Especially when the gift is meant to express our gratitude, it would show that person that their support and existence mean something. Much research has shown that gratitude is an important factor in happiness. When gratitude is expressed towards someone presenting them with a gift, it will eventually make the recipient of the gift feel better and reciprocate the same gratitude towards the giver. (Dunn, B. Aknin & Norton, 2009)

Strengthening bonds

When people exchange gifts, it makes them feel closer to each other. Exchanging gifts can make people feel connected to one another and strengthen their bonds. No matter if it's a family member or a friend, the bond will grow strong. (B. Aknin, Sandstrom, Dunn & Norton, 2011)

A well-sorted gift can boost a relationship and develop trust between individuals. Giving gifts is a way of telling the other person that their presence is valued. A gift shouldn't always be

given on a specific occasion, but sometimes just to appreciate someone's presence in your life. Simply put, gifts are known to make people happy, so if you can bring a huge smile to someone's face, it is clear that they are going to give you more value and are going to try their best to make you happy as well.

A study published in the journal of consumer research in 2016 found that experience gifts enhanced and deepened relationships between the donor and the receiver when compared to monetary presents. They demonstrated a substantial improvement in their connection. (Chan, Mogilner, 2016)

Boosting confidence

Giving gifts improves confidence because giving gifts gives us a sense of belongingness, and when our loved ones appreciate the gift that is being presented to us, it makes us feel good. In this way, gift-giving gives us a stronger sense of accomplishment and improves our confidence because we can see clearly what the gift is intended for. Our gift was not just accepted but also appreciated. All these aspects improve our mental wellbeing as well as our social connections. This will also help reinforce our gift-giving behavior.

Improved performance

Giving gifts has been shown to positively influence one's performance as well. A study conducted in 2020 showed that 32 friends were asked to exchange gifts halfway through a neutral activity, and their cognitive performance improve after the exchange. (Balconi, Fronza & Vanutelli, 2020)

Even if we want to promote positive habits in our loved ones, our words have not been successful in persuading them. . Gifting them can prove to be very helpful. Many psychological

studies have shown that if positive reinforcement occurs after desirable behavior is demonstrated, the probability of that behavior occurring again increases. If any of our loved ones' habits or gestures we like and we want to appreciate them, then gifting them would help them feel appreciated for their efforts. This will improve your relationship as well as cognitive abilities as well because exchanging gifts improves cognition as well. If gifts are given to highlight someone's performance and achievements, the likelihood of their performance improving increases as well. Managers and companies use gifts or appraisals to motivate their employees to perform better.

Improved mental well being

Gift-giving improves our mental well-being. There are plenty of ways in which gift-giving improves our mental well-being. Research has shown that gift-giving activates those brain areas that are associated with happiness, satisfaction, and pleasure. The process of gift giving secretes happy chemicals in our brains, such as dopamine and oxytocin, which are known to improve moods and make us feel compassion. Since gift-giving helps us build stronger social connections, gift-giving promotes altruistic behavior as well, and as a result of this, our endorphin levels increase as well.

- Improves our self-esteem level by strengthening relationships and receiving appreciation from our loved ones.
- Increases happiness levels and as a result of this our life satisfaction levels gets positively impacted
- Reinforces positive emotions which decreases the sensitivity of the one towards anxiety and stress.

- Promotes lower neuroticism levels, which lessens the risk of getting depression and anxiety.
- Promotes altruistic behavior because giving gifts makes us feel good about ourselves and thus we want to show more care and concern towards our loved ones.

Physical health

Giving and receiving gifts is a source of promoting and positively influences one's physical health. Gift-giving and receiving gifts affect blood pressure and lower the risk of high blood pressure. This acts as a huge benefit for our physical well-being. Many cardiovascular diseases are the result of high blood pressure levels because of gifting. Hence, this risk is reduced, and gifting both promotes our physical health and longevity. Gifting helps boost self-esteem and it is a way of stabilizing one's mood as well. The following are the positive impacts of gifts on our physical health.

- Lowers blood pressure levels.
- Stabilizes mood, by producing happy chemicals in our brains such as endorphin and dopamine.
- Reduces the risk of getting cardiovascular diseases by helping in stabilizing our blood pressure.
- Due to the lesser risk of cardiovascular disorder, life expectancy increases as well.

When we are unable to express ourselves through words, gifts help us express all that. Many festivals would be incomplete without gift-giving; we make memories that we and our loved ones will remember for a long time, and the benefits of gifting for our mental and physical health are numerous. Giving gifts boosts confidence, strengthens our relationships, and when we

hurt someone in the heat of the moment, gifts help us express our sincere apologies. There is no doubt that gift-giving and receiving leave a long-lasting positive impact on our lives. So, when we want to express our love for our loved ones, celebrate their accomplishments, or express gratitude, we give gifts and leave a positive mark on their memories.

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