



Unglued

CO-CREATIVE
WORKS

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Happy (Creative) Holidays!

“As Christmas approaches, I panic because I hate shopping for gifts...especially when I have no clue what the person wants or needs.”

No matter which holiday you celebrate, you can avoid “shopping phobia” and remove some of the stress by taking a more creative approach.

Last year I decided to make hand-crocheted scarves for most of the people on my gift list. I hadn’t crocheted in years, but a trip to a local yarn shop, and a conversation with a helpful sales person, gave me the confidence to buy beautiful and unusual yarns. I found I could easily make a scarf in one evening. Watching a soft and sumptuous scarf emerge as I completed each row was delightful. An unexpected benefit – this activity involved sitting down, with my feet up (something I rarely take time to do), with a warm, very contented cat in my lap. And I rediscovered television, enabling me to have more intelligent conversations about current culture (or at least understand when someone said, “You know, that woman that plays Elaine on Seinfeld...”).

“But I’m not creative,” you say. If using your own hands to create a unique gift is not your forte, find an original gift that is hand-made by someone else. This is not as difficult as it sounds. This time of year local art galleries often feature small paintings, sculpture, or pottery that is very affordable. You might find a special ceramic cup to go with a package of her favorite tea. Or a tiny, original painting, perfect for a spot above her desk. Or a pair of hand-crafted earrings.

“But I can find those at the mall,” you say. Certainly, you could. But why not take some *creative satisfaction* in supporting a local artist and being able to tell your lucky recipient that it was hand-made locally.

“Creative” also applies to other kinds of original gifts, such as services provided or arranged by you. A gift certificate for a massage would be a welcome gift for almost anyone. Or how about a certificate for that shelf your wife has been wanting for her closet. If you’re not handy with tools, hire a friend or an expert.

“Creative” may also describe a carefully crafted surprise for that special person (or family) in your life. A day of skiing or snow shoeing? A quick trip to St. George or Las Vegas? A surprise visitor – a friend or family member who would enjoy collaborating with you.

My family typically exchanges lists of wants and needs to take some of the anxiety out of shopping. But I always put at the bottom of my very practical list, “...or surprise me.” And I always hope for the surprise.

Wishing you all a very blessed and happily creative holiday season.

- Sue Martín