

Gifts options that go beyond ‘stuff’

*By Ellen Waldman
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Still thinking of gifts? It’s rather last minute for many people, but still worth considering anyway. I’m specifically talking about a gift for an older adult, and one that’s not just more stuff. Or, as I’m calling it these days, more products. I’ve seen so many people who are ready to consider their next living options, but hesitate to move because of the number of products in their homes.

Here are some options that don’t involve having more stuff around the house. In fact, let’s begin these gift ideas with downsizing help. Even if you’re not planning to move this coming year, eliminating many items now makes it less overwhelming when the time does arrive. There are a few companies who are happy to step up and guide you through this process. One company, Assist Your Move (<https://assistyourmove.com>) might be a good place to start. They have a whole list of services to start this process, including managing the actual move itself. This overwhelming obstacle of too many items can be overcome gradually. For anyone reluctant to move, this assistance can make a big difference.

If the person you’re thinking about gifting still lives at home, make sure it’s safe from falls. The gift of a service that installs grab bars in the bathroom, hallways, or stairs, provides a safer environment. One company, GoodWork Handyman, (541-210-5060) has been doing this task and also building ramps for years.

Another idea is to gift someone with a local food delivery service. Rogue Produce (<https://rogueproduce.com>) brings you fresh and local food (produce, meat, desserts, etc.) year-round. When food shows up at the front door, it encourages healthier eating at meals.

If entertainment is their thing, there are so many ways to fill that need. Whether it’s theater, or music venues, a subscription or membership provides enrichment and fun, as well as companionship. Some local options include Britt Festival, Craterion Theater, and many others. Even a subscription to Netflix works.

OLLI at SOU (<https://inside.sou.edu/olli/index.html>) is a wonderful way to explore interesting subjects, keep mentally stimulated, and meet new folks, even if just online. It’s not too late to join as a member and sign up for the next round of courses beginning in January. There’s even one for solo agers and how to plan for their needs, presented by a team of professionals, including myself.

Next, think about a gift to stay active through exercise. If going to a gym or workout facility is still appropriate, then check into the local YMCAs and private gyms. Also, a facility like OsteoStrong in Ashland (<https://centers.osteostrong.me/osteostrong-ashland>) is a great way to increase bone strength and improve balance in a safe environment. Ask any facility about special “senior discounts” they might be offering.

Finally, for those who still enjoy more stuff, consider items that might make life easier. There is new technology that helps people remain at home longer and safer. Everything from automated medication

dispensers to laptops and phones that are easier to operate. For these sorts of items, check businesses like Best Buy and Connecting Point.

Most of all, and most importantly, make time for one another. At any age, it's the contact and friendship that's the best gift, after all.