

RELATIONSHIP GIFTS

24 'activity' gifts that create positive relationships.

1

Time

Wrap it in whatever way most suits the recipient. Maybe it's time with you, time to think and prepare or time away to reset and recuperate. You can even offer the gift as a voucher and let them choose how they spend it.

2

Non-judgmental language

We often pass judgment without realising it. Try adjusting the words you choose by swapping the word good for the word useful, helpful, or practical and replace bad with unhelpful, inconsistent or incompatible.

3

Agency

Research suggests that we are happier and more productive if we believe we have agency, influence, and control in our lives. So, offer someone that control by giving them a choice. That might be the meeting time, venue or whether they go first or last.

4

Listening

As gifts go, this is a golden oldie. We all want to be seen, heard, and understood, and listening is the gateway to that. Think you already do it? Then add the phrase 'so what you mean is...' to check your understanding and make sure.

5

Going

Open door policies are for those who expect or hope that others will come to them. Be different and go to them instead. Take a step towards someone you normally expect, want, or wait to come to you.

6

Secrecy

Have you ever tried secret gift giving? Why not give the gift of a SECRET good deed, like positive anonymous feedback or secretly giving to a colleagues' chosen charity.

7

Second Impressions

It takes seconds to make a first impression, but not everyone knows that, so why not gift someone who didn't impress you the first time a second chance.

8

Acknowledgement

Teams I meet love giving each other positive feedback. Have a go at telling someone whose contribution you rarely acknowledge, that they add value and in what way.

9

Apology

This can be a relationship game changer. If the word 'sorry' is a stumbling block for you... try showing sorry by doing something they'll appreciate or explaining that you want to do better next time.

10

Perspective

$4 + 8 = 12$, no $6 + 6 = 12$... or was that $7 + 5 = 12$. Just because you see an outcome doesn't mean it's obvious how you got there. It can be very powerful to share a new perspective on a situation, or a part of the journey that shaped you.

11

Curiosity

Curiosity opens the doors to awareness. Try gifting the phrase 'Tell me more...'

12

Repetition

Repeatedly smiling at someone activates tiny muscles in their face, even if they don't smile back, so give the gift of repetitive smiles and know that you are making a difference!

13

Fantasy

Some people thrive on ideas and possibilities even when these are impractical. If you know something won't work, just let them have it in fantasy instead, with a phrase like, 'It really would be a game changer if we could, wouldn't it?'

14

Conversation

Desmond Tutu said, 'If you want peace, you don't talk to your friends, you talk to your enemies' Try re-opening the conversation with someone you think isn't on your side. Go in search of common ground.

15

Acceptance

What often holds us back from better relationships is the idea that is SHOULD be different, as if wishing hard enough could somehow change the past. Today give the gift of accepting that 'we are where we are' and choose to move on.

16

Self-Compassion

Self-compassion is an underutilised relationship fuel source. Being kind to yourself increases resilience and makes you more supportive of others. Gift yourself a kind word, and let it ripple out around you.

17

We and Us

Work can be a lonely place when we feel alone with our challenges. Relationships are all about taking the 'me & I' and turning it into a 'we & us'. Seize an opportunity to turn a 'you' into an 'us', and a 'me' into a 'we'.

1 8

Emotion

Many of us think we are sharing emotions when we are sharing our thoughts. Today swap a thought disguised as an emotion like 'I feel like you are rushing' for an actual emotion like 'I feel disappointed/sad/frustrated about the errors in this document'.

1 9

As If...

Do you ever treat the people you like, differently to those you distrust or see as a challenge? Try treating someone you find challenging 'As If' you know they're amazing.

2 0

Receiving

Some people love to give. They love being of service, adding value or watching the eyes of others light up with joy. If you're a giver it's time to gift others the joy that you feel. Give the gift of receiving, and let others enjoy the moment!

2 1

Advice

Feedback seems to win all the interpersonal skills awards, even though it often goes badly wrong. Sometimes people prefer to get advice. Try asking if they'd like to know what works for you... as an alternative to feedback.

2 2

Status

Have you noticed that some people's opinions seem to have more clout than those of others? 'Opinion status' is everywhere. Luckily, we can gift status to someone whose voice is not being heard by supporting them to speak up.

2 3

Calm

When the sea is choppy, the harbour provides safety from the storm. When others are stressed or hurting, we can provide that calm for them too. Try being calm for someone who isn't and let them bask in it for a while.

2 4

Vulnerability

This is a rewarding and powerful gift to give. To be vulnerable is to show weakness. It is a door to connection. Try gifting someone that open door. No need for big confessions, sharing a mistake you made or something you find hard is a good place to begin.