An ADHD Christmas Wish List

by KRISTI LAZZARI

What People With ADHD Really Want for Christmas

It’s time to trim the tree, hang the stockings, bake the cookies, and ask the most important questions of the season. What are the best gifts for the non-neurotypical in your life?

I spent some time thinking about it and realized there are a few things that would make exceptional gifts. If you love someone with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), have no fear — here is the list for you!

1. More Time

Everyone would love to have the gift of more time, but if you have ADHD you know time can sometimes be your worst enemy. But unless you happen to be a time traveler, magician, or know some sort of quantum physics the rest of us don’t, I’m willing to bet you can’t figure out how to give the gift of time. You can, however, give the next best thing.

2. Help With Tasks

You may not be actually able to give someone more time, but you can still create just a bit more for them. An offer of help can go a long way; offer to cook a meal, take the car for an oil change, or straighten the pantry or cupboards.

3. Organization

From wall calendars, white boards, phone apps and timers, to drawer and closet organizers, chances are the person with ADHD in your life can use a little help with organization. A word of advice: if you give the gift of file folders or a filing cabinet, include an offer to help sift through those paper piles and organize them — it will definitely not be done otherwise!

4. Finishing Projects

Every person I know with ADHD, including myself, has a million unfinished projects. I don’t know many people who would turn down an offer to help finish up one or two. Organizing closets, painting the porch, cleaning out the gutters, cleaning the garage, putting photos into albums, organizing recipes — all those things are on my personal to-do list!

5. Useful Things

This can be tricky. I, for one, can get overwhelmed with too much clutter. At this point I’d rather have something useful rather than decorative items. Gift cards for gas, groceries, or even a dinner out are always appreciated.

I’d personally rather have something I really want or need, like a new frying pan or a great paring knife, rather than a beautiful vase. That’s just me. And even I can be fickle when I see something sparkly!

6. Personal Assistant

Who can’t use a personal assistant from time to time? Why not offer to help someone stay focused on an important job? Help them organize the task then help them stay focused by maybe offering to phone at certain intervals to check in on their progress.

7. Finder of Lost Things

Most mornings when I am frantically searching for my keys and my bag, I think one of those wireless electronic locators would be awesome. The time saved by not searching for keys alone would be a lifesaver.

8. Yard Work

I have an awful time keeping up with yard work. It’s boring so I don’t prioritize it. A great gift for someone who shares my procrastination of outside chores may be a little help with mowing the lawn, trimming the hedges, pulling weeds or raking leaves.

9. Hated Chores

Do you know what would be awesome? Someone gifting me with doing a chore I loathe. I would seriously be your best friend forever if you cleaned my ceiling fans or my baseboards.

Give the gift of window washing — someone will love you for it.

10. Anything Anyone Else Would Want

Don’t get me wrong; those of us with ADHD love the same things others enjoy. Gifts that relate to hobbies, passions and interests are always welcomed. Hobby and craft supplies, books, CDs, concert tickets, jewelry — we’re no different than anyone else!

11. Understanding

Perhaps the thing most desired by anyone with ADHD is a bit of understanding. We do our best every day. We give everything we have to fitting in with the “real world.” Sometimes we feel it just isn’t enough.

What do we wish our family, friends, co-workers, bosses and employees knew? That ADHD is an executive function disorder. We know what we are supposed to do and understand how important things are. Unfortunately, there is something akin to a giant schism in our brain that separates the knowledge from the ability to prioritize and make things happen.

We aren’t lazy, forgetful or careless. We will get things done. We just need to do them our own way.