

5 Things

Newsletter



Corley Caregiver Consulting, LLC

Hello and welcome to November's 5 Things Newsletter!

I hope you had a peace filled Thanksgiving and were able to take some time to revel in your many blessings.

This time of year I always find myself in "reflection mode". With the holidays and the New Year approaching, I find myself looking forward in preparation for a New Year, but also back over the year that's been.

Especially at Thanksgiving, I like to remember those moments that didn't seem like blessings at the time, but actually turned out to be blessings in disguise. In my experience, not all blessings arrive in a shiny, beautiful and happy package. Some need time to reveal their benefits.

I can geek out on this subject, so I'll leave it there and just finish with my hope that you had a lovely Thanksgiving, regardless of what it looked like for you. Not everyone has the large family gatherings as portrayed in media, and frankly, I don't believe that's a bad thing. I hope you were able to create a holiday that was good for you.

For this month's newsletter, I decided to do something a bit different. I decided to make this a gift giving guide. I hate to give a gift that just fills a box. I make it my mission during the holidays to get thoughtful gifts for everyone on my list each year. I actually have a reputation for being a creative gift giver, a title I wear proudly.

I love to read caregiver gift guides, but often find them dull, to be honest. I rarely find anything exciting on them and the ideas don't often have any sparkle. Caregiving is an emotionally and physically difficult journey and sterile gift giving ideas feel like they just remind me of that fact, so I'm working to counteract that with my list. This is a list I'd love to receive as a caregiver, and

would get me excited about the holidays.

If you're a caregiver for someone with a disability or illness that limits their access to the world around them, then you know firsthand how difficult gift giving can be. I've lived that my entire life having a sister with developmental disabilities and physical limitations. I live that daily as well due to my husband's limited mobility from years of bodily abuse in the military. When their world gets small, creative gift giving becomes a challenge. I believe there are still ways to come up with creative gift ideas they'll love and you'll be excited to give them without spending a fortune. As caregivers, money is often a very significant concern so I've pulled together items on a conservative spending range.

Words that appear in a lighter blue color are clickable links that will take you straight to the item or website.

The best part of this list is you're receiving it in late November, and if an idea strikes you, then you still have time to take action in time for the holidays!

Disclaimer: I get no monetary benefit from sharing any of these options. I am not an affiliate for any of them, but I am a raving fan!

Fair warning, if you can't tell already, I geek out on this topic too, so you'll likely sense my excitement with this.

Let's dive in!



1. **Lighted Gloves**

I bought these last year for my parents and was really impressed by them. When you are working with your hands, sometimes you just can't get enough

light to make the job at hand easier. These are a great gift idea for a caree who struggles in low light. I could see these being a great option for a caree who loves doing puzzles, but struggles with vision trouble; a caree who loves to knit or crochet; a caree who loves to repair small things.

They are easy to put on and take off and the LED bulbs are strong enough to brighten up the area you're working in.

2. Adult Bibs

As a caregiver, bibs can be a lifesaver for preventing stains on your caree's clothes, which saves you hassle with laundry. For carees, bibs can be demoralizing for some and a reminder of decline in ability. They are a necessary evil on both sides, so if your caree needs to use them, why not make them fun!

We use adult bibs for my sister at every meal. Our standard routine was a dish towel with clothes pins to hold it on. I happened to stumble upon these lovely adult bibs on Etsy. I can speak first hand to their quality. They are exceptionally well made and hold their color! The Velcro closures are ideal.

I loved them so much I emailed the shop owner and she couldn't have been lovelier. I do a lot of shopping on Etsy to support small businesses, but I especially love this little shop for the gift of her talents that she offers to caregivers.

3. Audiobook Subscription

If your caree enjoys reading, but a visual impairment has put a damper on that hobby, I encourage you to consider an audiobook subscription. A few years ago, we discovered that my sister loved having books read to her. Turns out, apparently, we are boring readers because she started to enjoy it less and less. That's when we got the idea to try an audiobook. The narrator's job is to make it engaging, something that wasn't our strong suit. Since that discovery, we've been able to expose her to so many stories. From fairy tales to Dr. Seuss, the options are truly endless.

This is also a strong option for adults as well. Most audiobook subscriptions have an endless list of titles and subjects to choose from. I have experience with 3 options for you.

[Scribd](#) is an annual subscription. You pay for the entire year in advance and get

access to their entire library. This doesn't have a lot of the more popular titles, but we still found some interesting content. You can access it via an app on your iPhone or iPad or via their website.

[Audible](#) - This is a new one for me and is actually one of the gifts I'm giving my sister for Christmas this year. I changed from Scribd so we could have access to Lemony Snicket books, which she's recently discovered.

I'm still learning their site, but you pay a monthly fee (rather than the year as a whole) and can cancel it at any time. They have a limited catalog of books that come with your monthly subscription, and any books beyond that catalog you have to purchase either with credits or payment. I've learned a monthly subscription gives you 1 free credit per month, which means 1 free book of your choice each month.

They are running deals right now for the holidays, but at most you'll pay \$14.95 per month. If you have an avid reader, that might be a great option for you.

[Libby](#) - If money is a concern for you, then I highly recommend you check out Libby. It's an app or online website where you can sign up and connect to your local library network. You can get access to ebooks and digital audiobooks, all for free from your local library system.

4. Electric Nail Clippers

I have not tried this product yet, but I can really see the benefits. Nail clippers can be so cumbersome, especially if your caree struggles with arthritis or dexterity issues. This has the potential to make a frustrating daily life skill much less annoying.

5. Universal Yums

If you have a caree who is a foodie, enjoys learning about other countries and gets a kick out of a surprise in the mail each month, then I'd highly suggest you consider a subscription to Universal Yums. I found them a few years ago and have been gifting them to my Dad ever since.

He was always a meat and potatoes kind of guy, but started to show interest in trying new things. He's also a snack lover so this was perfect for him.

Each month, the company curates a box of snacks and candy from a different country. They also include information on each of the snacks included as well

as fun facts on the country for that month. You can choose a subscription of 3, 6 or 12 months, as well as choose the number of snacks you'd like in each box, which lets you control the expense.

We've been doing the subscriptions for so long that we sometimes get a repeat country, but never the same snacks inside. It's really been a fun gift for the entire family because the snack sizes are definitely shareable so you can experience it together.

6. Memory Foam Seat Cushion

This idea is similar to the adult bib idea I mentioned earlier. It's not super fancy, but can really be a game changer for a caree who spends most of their day seated.

My sister is non-ambulatory, which has limited the muscle development in her behind. Because of that, we have to be very attentive to her seating comfort so she's not uncomfortable or creating pressure sore problems. The technology in seating cushions has really improved beyond simple foam cushions.

I gifted this particular cushion to my sister last Christmas and it's been a great thing for her. I double checked the measurements and it fit perfectly into the seat of her wheelchair. She's used it everyday for the past year and it still looks brand new. No signs of wear or compression of the material.

Even if this particular cushion is not ideal for your caree, definitely consider checking into one for them if they are experience discomfort with their current seating option. There are tons of options on Amazon easily available without prescription. They range in prices and materials so you can find the one that's perfect for your caree.

7. Memo Mate

Does your caree have great stories from their life? Are they stories you'd love to collect and have in the future?

I recently discovered Memo Mate and while I haven't used it myself extensively, I did try it out and found it to be really impressive.

You can access it via app or their website and your caree can type or talk and have their stories captured and eventually printed into book form, if so desired. The best part about this app is it uses AI to ask questions and keep pulling

more information about the topic from your caree. It basically helps keep the story going. In some ways it's a nice conversation and I can see it being helpful for someone who struggles with loneliness. The AI is very personable and "human like" in conversation, which I found to be quite striking.

The last time I checked the app and site were free to use, but I don't know how much longer that will last.

8. Printed Compression Socks

When you think of compression socks you likely think of them as a daily wardrobe necessity for older adults. I know I do. I also think of them as plain and dull. Some people prefer that so they are less conspicuous.

Over the last few years, I've formed a different opinion on socks, whether they are regular or compression style. Why not have fun with them! I have regular socks with polka dots, crazy stripes and patterns and love wearing them. I recently discovered you can do the same with compression socks!

While I don't have circulation issues myself, I do enjoy wearing a pair of compression socks when I know I'll be on my feet a lot in a day. I used them years ago while working on hard concrete floors all day and they made an amazing difference. So you could say this idea is a gift for both your caree and you, their caregiver.

Here are a few sites I recently discovered that have some great pattern options. I purchased mine from Uniform Advantage and have been really happy with them.

Again, if your caree has to wear compression socks, why not have them add a little sparkle to the day. I find for myself they just lighten my mood a bit. Why wear boring socks when you don't have to!

[Crazy Compression](#)
[Wellow](#)
[Support Plus](#)
[Uniform Advantage](#)

9. Streaming TV channel subscription

This is an idea that came to me last year. My husband and I have a Roku rather than a monthly cable bill. We can watch a tremendous amount of programs for

free, but we can also add on our favorite channels a la carte as well.

We love British TV. British comedy to be more specific. So last year I gifted us a year long subscription to BritBox. It was something we could both enjoy together.

If your caree watches a lot of TV, then this might make a good option for you. You can access most of these via app on an iPad or iPhone, as well as a Roku, etc. My point being, you have options available to make this work for you.

Here are a few ideas you might enjoy.

[Curiosity Stream](#)

[Smithsonian](#)

[National Geographic](#)

[Disney+](#)

[Discovery Plus](#)

10. Create Your Own Gift Certificates

This is an idea I came up with a few years ago that was a hit! It can be an excellent gift idea if money is a concern for you.

If your caree enjoys a particular meal that you don't have very often, create a "gift certificate" for them to redeem for that particular meal one evening.

If they love a pedicure, create a "spa experience gift certificate" for them to redeem with you.

Think of their favorite things or even something out of the ordinary to gift them. Maybe it's an outing to a new shop in your town. Maybe it's a movie night with popcorn.

I know from my own experience that caregiving becomes a routine. You tend to do the same things day after day because there's a lot to be done. It can be rare to do something out of the ordinary. With my sister's care, for instance, we noticed we weren't going on outings regularly. Sometimes getting out of the house, even when there's extra work involved, can be good for the spirit. It breaks the monotony of our daily routine.

Something as simple as a movie night at home doesn't have to be expensive. Borrow a movie from the library for free. Grab a bag of cheap popcorn from the store, put on your pajamas and watch it together. It might sound strange, but it can be fun for both of you.

Choose your idea, create a “gift certificate” on paper and wrap it up! Your caree will have the power to choose when to redeem it and that can give them something to look forward to.

As the caregiver, you’re likely already tired. The focus is likely on your caree all the time and you are an afterthought. That’s why I encourage you to think of an idea you can do together that will be fun. It will insert some fun into your own day and breathe some fresh air into your routine.

Here’s a few ideas to help get your gears turning.

- Movie
(or
favorite
show)
night
-
make
it
a
routine
with
ceremony
(popcorn,
pjs,
etc)
- Pedicure
day
-
paint
their
toenails
and
yours
- Game
night
(cards,
board
games,
etc)
- Have
a
Tea
Party
(break
out
the
fancy
cups

you
never
use.
Have
tea
and
cookies.
Add
music
to
make
it
special!)

- Craft
day
(pick
a
simple
craft
to
work
on
together)
- Puzzle
Day
(work
on
a
puzzle
together
and
have
snacks,
etc)
- Road
Trip
(take
a
drive
around
your
area
or
to
your
favorite
park
-
get
in
the

car
for
something
other
than
a
doctor
appt)

- New
Recipe
Day
(Pinterest
is
a
great
resource
for
this.
Choose
a
recipe
together
and
try
it
out)
- Ethnic
Food
Day
(have
a
themed
dinner
night)

Again, none of these ideas have to be extreme or difficult to do. The goal is to inject something different and out of the routine for both of you. Speaking from personal experience, while it sounds like more work for you, it can actually breathe some life into you as well.

11. Aromatherapy

This is one of my favorite go-to ideas because its likely something a caree wouldn't get for themselves. I love to create sensory experiences for people. Taking a shower is one thing, but taking a shower with fragrant body scrubs, soaps, or bath salts takes it to an entirely new level. It feels special and outside a normal routine.

I like to support small businesses as a rule and I found a few great options on Etsy. Their products are amazing and prices are very reasonable.

[A Mom's Me Time](#)
[Hawaiian Candle](#)
[Sensation Bath](#)

If these don't strike your fancy, a simple Google search will find you loads of options. Many products like this are available at local grocery stores so you can take the idea and make it your own.



I hope this list has given you at least one exciting idea for your holiday gift list for your caree.

If you use one of these ideas, I'd love to hear which one you chose and how it was received!



Until next month, friends.

If one piece of information here supports, empowers, or makes you feel less alone in your caregiving journey, I am beyond thrilled.

As you implement any of the ideas, please share that with me. I'd love to hear

from you! I certainly don't have all the answers, but together we get stronger and smarter.

If you know someone who would benefit from this newsletter, please share it and encourage them to subscribe!

If I can support you in your own caregiving journey, please message me. I'd love to hear your story and offer you a safe space.

I'm always here to remind you that you are not alone and you can do difficult things.

Wishing you peace in all that is and strength to keep you moving forward.

Barbara Corley, CCC
Certified Caregiver Consultant
hello@corleycaregiverconsulting.com



©2023 Corley Caregiver Consulting, LLC | Circleville, Ohio, United States of America

[Web Version](#)

[Forward](#)

[Unsubscribe](#)

Powered by
GoDaddy Email Marketing ®