

It's the most wonderful time of the year! But, amongst the carols, tinsel, mistletoe, work, Christmas functions, wreath making workshops and attempts to get to the bottom of your inbox before December 21st, deciding what to buy for who is the least of your worries. But you're still worrying. Right? This holiday season instead of just toasting to friends and family's good health, why not give it to them? These healthy gifts will keep on giving, long after the holiday parties have ended. Making it easier for your loved ones to put themselves and their wellbeing first. Goodies like healing essential oils, a health magazine subscription, and luxe face masks will have them feeling healthy, restored and energized to tackle their New Years goals. These gift ideas are perfect for foodies, fitness freaks, and wellness warriors alike. No matter who's on your list, hopefully there's a gift for anyone who wants to eat well, move, and live better.

I feel like aromatherapy was popular in the 80's, then vanished in the 90's and has been resurrected under its new trendy handle "Essential Oil Therapy". However, these plant extracts and their infinite benefits have always been there. For over 5,000 years, aromatherapy has been a trusted practice among cultures spanning the globe. Today, you're likely to find over 40 different therapeutic-grade aromatherapy oils available in health food stores and online. Ranging from \$20-\$100 a beautiful addition to any home or office an essential oil diffuser fills your space with healing benefits which have proven, powerful effects on improving physical, emotional and spiritual well-being. Well I don't yet have one myself, it is at the top of my Christmas list. Psst... Santa, I hoping to find one under the tree. (assuming I'm not at the top of the naughty list) 😊

OK, forgive me, I am a bit biased, but I think an inspirational, informative monthly health and wellness newsletter/magazine subscription is a great addition to anyone's day. The York University Staff Association Health & Wellness News & Views happens to be free... but most other health magazines also offer great tips for healthy eating/living, exercise, relationships and so much more. Readers can also enjoy feature-length articles that offer an in-depth look at recent or popular topics. For people of all ages looking for an up-to-

date resource on how to better their lifestyles, a health magazine subscription is a must-have.

Inspiring your loved ones by giving them the knowledge to make their health the best it can be in 2019!

Small but mighty, resistance bands are key to a killer workout. And at only \$15-\$40 they're perfect as either a fit secret Santa present or a stocking stuffer. Not only are resistance bands effective, portable and convenient they also meet so many other fitness needs. Someone with limited range of motion could use them as an assistant to stretch (grandpa perhaps?) and those who travel a lot and don't always have access to a gym or free weights can use the bands for almost any strength training exercise, anywhere, anytime. With resistance bands, you can do a complete body workout with a single band, and there are plenty of workouts available on line that show you how to use bands properly. It's yet another gift that keeps on giving.

While fast food appears to still reign supreme, slow cooking is thankfully making a resurgence. The cost of this one pot wonder ranges dramatically depending on features, size etc., as well as how much you love the family member or friend you are buying for, lol. Slow cookers offer a healthier, low-fat method of cooking and require minimum amount of effort. Really, what's not to love? It's not surprising then that in these hard times slow cooker sales are booming and that an ever-increasing army of devotees are returning to the time and money saving device with a newfound enthusiasm. For those penny pinchers on your gift list and time-conscious cooks, all that remains to do each evening is to soak up the aromas as they chop some veggies or slice a loaf of crusty bread before sitting down to a delicious and hassle-free diner. Cheers to you!

We all know someone who loves to get their "om" on. So why not make their next walk to yoga class easier by buying a yoga mat tote. They keep your mat rolled up, compact, and easy to transport, so you can just toss it over your shoulder and go. No excuses. Note: that these are not the same things as yoga straps, which help you to deepen stretches while keeping the correct form. That being said, a few can be used for both. Enabling your loved ones to get deeper into those poses they love hate.

Whether for yourself or a loved one, the holiday season (aka full throttle party season) can be a nightmare for skin. From late nights gift wrapping to sugary sweets to stressful family members,

there are a lot of reasons that you or your loved one may not be looking your best. However, you can help heal troubled skin by gifting a detoxifying face mask. Sleigh excess oils, (no pun intended) draw out impurities, shrink your pores, and banish any toxins lingering on the skin. From less expensive drug store brands to more costly department store brands, many face masks are formulated with powerful ingredients such as clay and charcoal that are proven to help revive the skin. This is a one-stop-shop for tired, congested skin that will give your loved one a glow bright enough to light up the north pole.



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More and more women are learning about the potential problems associated with preservatives and other suspect chemicals in cosmetics. This Christmas ditch the chemical-laden beauty products and treat your loved ones to the luxury of natural and organic cosmetics that are paraben, synthetic fragrance, and mineral oil free. There are now several natural and organic cosmetic companies that have introduced some stunning gift sets just in time for Christmas.

Not only will the lucky recipient of this gift be thanking you, so will their sore muscles. If your workout buddy doesn't already have a foam roller, consider this up there with scheduling them a full body massage. Foam rolling smooths and lengthens muscles and breaks up adhesions and scar tissue. Another benefit is that it helps muscles relax by activating the sensory receptors connecting muscle fibers to tendons. The net effect is better blood circulation, which in turn speeds workout recovery and boosts performance. Essentially foam rollers work out all the kinks in a gentle way. Give the gift that keeps on giving, a speedy recovery!

Well another year is coming to an end, and, making it to December feels a bit like crossing the finish line of a marathon. With laughter, tears, highs, lows and utter exhaustion—we could all use a little self-care. Hopefully the zen effects of these wellness-themed gifts will carry you and your loved ones into a happy healthy 2019.