

Reach UP

A Life Transformational Magazine Winter 2021

I Give You...



My Heart!



Lifestyle
Addiction Cancelled

Lifestyle
Freely Give, Freely Recieve

Dear Friend,

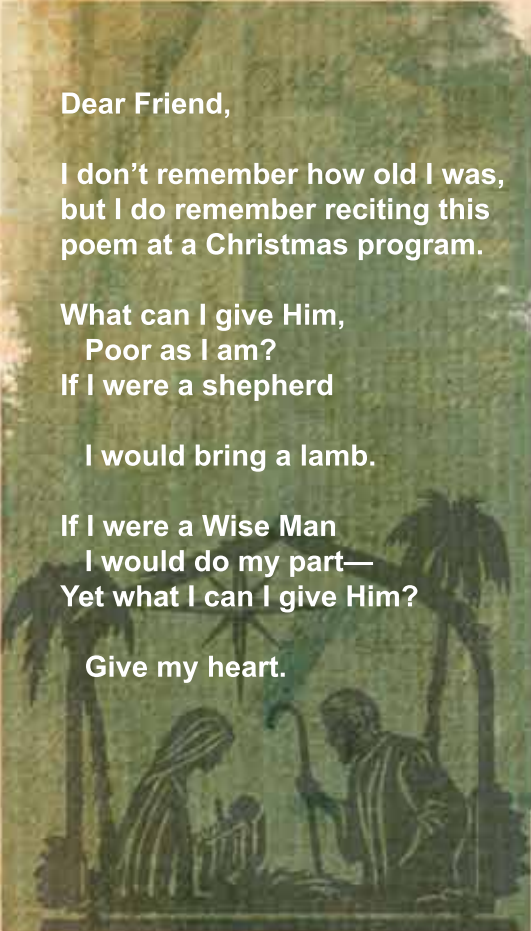
I don't remember how old I was, but I do remember reciting this poem at a Christmas program.

What can I give Him,
Poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd

I would bring a lamb.

If I were a Wise Man
I would do my part—
Yet what I can I give Him?

Give my heart.



It seems that is what Tanika learned. I met Tanika at a Convoy of Hope community event. Never in a million years would I have thought she'd been the alcoholic she describes in her inspiring story to follow: **Addiction Cancelled!** Today, she's the Research Coordinator for the Teen Challenge NorWestCal/Nevada. She gained a new life and new direction all because she gave Jesus her heart.

You may wonder what it means to give your heart to Jesus. We will explore that, but first I hope you get some good ideas from April McCallum's article on the next page. She's got great ideas for gifts from the "heart." These are the kind of things that do not cost much money but are personal and full of meaning.

Speaking of hearts, I like to think of our hearts as the sacred parts of us that can't exactly be described. Yet we can feel our hearts – they are real and deep. Each heart is personal and unique.

You were created with "heart" because you were made in His image. God has "heart" and you are on His heart—so much so that before you were born, God was creating purpose and destiny for you. One scripture verse describes you as being like poetry to his heart.

Just the mention of that makes me smile and want to dance for joy because I matter to God. You matter to God. You matter so much that God sent Jesus to earth as a baby so He, being God, would experience what it is like to be human. Jesus understands hurt, loneliness, rejection, pain, love, family, growth, and more. Jesus gets it. Jesus has heart.

When you give Jesus your heart, it is like saying you join with Him. He's God and you know He has the best life for you now—and forever.

And that, my dear friend, is the best gift you could give God the Father. It is the best gift you can give yourself, too, because you receive forgiveness for every sin you've ever committed and you also gain life with God forever.

With heart-love for you,

Crystal Knapp

Editor-in-Chief
Reach UP Magazine

The author of "**Breaking Free: Coloring Book Therapy for Addiction & Recovery**" will give a FREE copy to one of our readers! Write why you like *Reach UP* in an email to Crystal@reachupmag.org. The winner will be selected by a special panel. Be sure to include your full name and address!

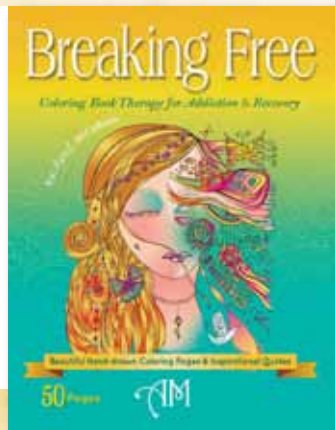


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Freely Give, Freely Receive

& Inexpensive

by April McCallum

20 Loving Gift Ideas

Everyone loves to receive a gift.

But giving a gift can bring even more joy to the giver and the receiver!

Giving doesn't have to be complicated or expensive. There are so many ways we can make a real difference in someone's life without spending a lot of money. The most important thing is that your gift comes from the heart.

Do you remember the feeling you got when

someone gave you an unexpected gift? Eileen Elias Freeman said, "It isn't the size of the gift that matters, but the size of the heart that gives it."

The idea that someone was thinking of you before you even knew it touches us so deeply. It's the same with God's love for us. In its simple yet powerful way it says, "I see you. I love you."

Sprinkle a little kindness. Spread a little joy. Share a little love. When you do, that little bit of joy and kindness and love will boomeranging right back to your own heart in a big way!

Here's a list of 20 simple and inexpensive gifts that will bless someone without breaking your bank:

- ✓ Choose 7 things you appreciate about them. Give them a note a day for a week.
- ✓ Offer to do a cleaning or an organizing chore for them.
- ✓ Take them something tasty that you baked or cooked.
- ✓ Mend or sew a piece of clothing or other household item for them.
- ✓ Give them a break by offering childcare or eldercare.
- ✓ Record and send a video on your phone saying what you love about them, singing a song they love, or doing something to make them laugh.
- ✓ Offer a simple smile and hug. One size fits all! Wear a mask if they wish.
- ✓ Sing a song or play your musical instrument for them.
- ✓ Share a coffee, dessert, or meal together.
- ✓ Be there to listen and hold their hand in a time of need.
- ✓ Give a single flower or potted plant wrapped with a ribbon.
- ✓ Offer to pray for or even with them.
- ✓ Swap a book, recipe, or even a piece of clothing. Both of you end up with something new.
- ✓ Make a craft or piece of art for them.
- ✓ Ask them their story. Tell them yours.
- ✓ Read the Bible together. Take turns reading the verses out loud to each other.
- ✓ Do their hair, nails or make up.
- ✓ Do their shopping, laundry, or errands for them or even together with them.
- ✓ Commit to pray for each other's needs.
- ✓ Send an e-card or make a greeting card with a note or favorite quote.

The Bible says it is better to give than to receive. I believe in doing random acts of kindness. Even more, I believe in on-purpose gifts of love. Jean Anouilh wrote, "Love is, above all, the gift of oneself."

When we lighten the burdens of others and make their hearts smile, we've made the world a better place. When we choose to give ourselves away, even in small ways, we've made an investment. We've planted a seed of love that will grow in another's heart.

April McCallum is an illustrator, writer and cartoonist. She intermingles words and visuals, color and design, inspiration and humor to bring her unique brand and positive creativity to the world. Hand-drawn "heart art" infused with light, love and smiles. Her Breaking Free: Coloring Book for Addiction & Recovery is available on Amazon.com.

ADDICTION CANCELLED!

THE Tanika Mendoza Story

*as told to
Dr. Randy & Dana Rowe
with Anna Sharp*

Addiction could have taken everything from me, but God had other plans.

I grew up in a big family, and our house was the place where every party in the neighborhood happened. There was always alcohol in our home. Where I grew up, everybody drank. Other teenage friends grew up with alcohol as off limits to them, but to me it was a normal part of life.

As I got older and life got more stressful, drinking became a way to keep me from feeling hard feelings. My abuse of alcohol really started to get out of control when my marriage was falling apart.

My husband told me that he thought I had a problem, but by that point in our marriage I didn't trust him, so it was easy to ignore what he said.

As my children got older, they begged me to stop drinking. I would try, but

then I would sneak a drink, thinking they wouldn't know. They always did.

I knew I had a problem, but I had surrounded myself with friends who drank just as much as I did, maybe even more. When I told them that I thought things were getting out of control, they told me I was fine. In their eyes, there was no problem with the way we were living, or at least they didn't want to admit that there was.

After my marriage was over, I went in and out of unhealthy relationships. I started using cocaine, I lost my job, and I got arrested for drunk driving.

My kids begged me to get help, so I went to a 90-day non-Christian rehab program, which taught me the science behind addiction but not how to stay sober or deal with life when things get hard.

Intervention is not a bad thing ...

I was sober for about six months, but then I got into another abusive relationship and started drinking again and using cocaine and meth from time to time.



By God's grace, I got out of that relationship, and my cousin invited me to Miami for a week to celebrate her birthday. My cousin could see that I was out of control, blackout drunk and asking for cocaine and meth from strangers.

She called my brother and told him she was worried about me. My brother called me and told me I needed to get help. We had lost a close family member to alcoholism, and he said he could see me going down the same path. He told me that we had to fight this, and we'd do it together.

When he said those words, something in my brain just clicked. I started crying, and I knew I had to fight. I had to do this for my children and grandchildren.

So I entered another rehab program, but this time it was a faith-based treatment program called Teen Challenge that allowed me to get to the root of why I was using.

Before going to Teen Challenge, I knew what God wanted me to do, but I chose to ignore Him because I wanted to do things my own way. I was proud and stubborn. I spent my time, energy, and money on things that made me feel good instead of thinking about things that would last even after this life was over.

Now I know what's really important in this life and what I have to look forward to in the next. I can read the Bible and really understand what it means, and I'm eager to learn more.

I know it's a struggle for a lot of people to stay sober, but this hasn't been my story. When I entered the

Teen Challenge program, I could feel something happening in my heart. It was as if something was being pulled out of me.

I was in a daze for the first three days. On the fourth day, I woke up and just felt refreshed. I knew my spirit was changed. My mind was different. And I haven't had any cravings since.

God has truly set me free from my desires for drugs and alcohol.

Now, when I see others drinking, I am at peace knowing that alcohol just isn't a part of my life anymore.

I know God has a purpose and a plan for my life. Whatever that is and however He calls me, I want to be sure that I am fully prepared for the mission with my mind totally clear.

If I could be sitting with you right now, face-to-face, I would tell you that if you're struggling with addiction, no matter how far into it you are, you can get out.

Addiction to drugs and alcohol is hurting you, and it's hurting the people who love you.

God loves you more than you know, and He wants a relationship with you.

Programs like Teen Challenge are all over the country, ready to help people just like you. With God on your side and a healthy community to be a part of, you can make it through anything.

If you're feeling stuck in addiction, I've been where you are. Let me tell you that there is a rainbow on the

other side of the storm you're in.

YOU CAN GET OUT!

When you obey God and live a clean life, you can feel real joy. The broken things in your life can be fixed. And then one day, years from now, maybe you'll be able to share your story and give someone else hope like I'm doing right now.

All you need is a little bit of faith to experience God's mighty works in your life. He can move mountains—even the mountain of addiction!



If you'd like more information about Adult & Teen Challenge, visit www.teenchallengeusa.org

3 STEPS

by Jen Mack

TO A BETTER HOLIDAY BUDGET

You can see it just ahead. It is in the flip of the next page of your calendar and in the ads everywhere you look. Yes, the holiday season is upon us. While children can hardly wait, adults often wish they had a few more months before it comes. Unfortunately, we cannot slow it down.

This year, don't let the giving season put the squeeze on your wallet. Take the time now to think ahead and budget. Check out this budget plan, which is broken down into three steps so you don't get overwhelmed.

STEP ONE:

Before you spend a cent, **start a savings plan.** Here's how you do it without a bank account.

- ✓ Figure out the total amount you can afford to spend. Be real. It's okay if it's not as much as you hoped. All of us have had to change what we can do.
- ✓ Divide that amount by the number of weeks between now and a few days before Christmas. This is how much money you need to save each week.
- ✓ Each week, put the money in an envelope or a coffee can that can be hidden from prying eyes. This is the special holiday savings fund you'll use when you go shopping.

The important thing is to **start saving now.**

STEP THREE:

- ✓ Start shopping. People often spend more than they planned with last-minute gift buying, so do not put it off. Take your list with you.
- ✓ Shop around for the best price.
- ✓ Use the cash in the envelope that you've set aside. That is what you have to work with.
- ✓ If you must use credit cards, do not charge more than you can afford to pay off in three months. That's very, very important to follow.

STEP TWO:

- ✓ Think about everything you will end up buying. Do not leave anything out—gifts, decorations, wrapping paper and ribbons, entertaining, greeting cards, postage, and charities. I've listed some categories, but make the plan your own.
- ✓ Figure out how much you would like to spend on each and write down these goals.
- ✓ Now make a list of what you would like to buy for each person. The more time you take writing your list, the less time you will spend wandering through stores. The less time you wander, the more money you save by not buying unnecessary or unwanted items.
- ✓ Then, total up the cost of everything on your lists. Here's the most important point: Make sure the total does not go over the limit you set in Step One! If it does, cut down your lists.

By using this plan to budget, you can reduce the financial headaches that often hit hard after Christmas. You may even find yourself looking forward to the season as much as the children are!



Track Your Progress

Step One: Total Savings Goal: \$ _____ Weekly Savings Goal: \$ _____

Step Two:

Spending Plan

Gifts: \$ _____ Greeting cards: \$ _____ Decorations: \$ _____

Postage: \$ _____ Gift wrap, etc.: \$ _____ Charities: \$ _____

Entertaining/People coming over and feeding them: \$ _____

Name	Gift Idea	Approximate Cost
_____	_____	\$ _____
_____	_____	\$ _____
_____	_____	\$ _____
_____	_____	\$ _____
_____	_____	\$ _____
_____	_____	\$ _____
_____	_____	\$ _____
_____	_____	\$ _____
_____	_____	\$ _____
Estimated Gift Total:		\$ _____

Is this more than the amount of the Total Savings Goal in Step One? If so, cut down your lists.



Making our own cards and decorations are so meaningful and will help your budget.

Do you reuse gift wrap? Use newspaper

Cut these costs by doing some of the suggestions from the "Freely Give" list on page 2

Jennifer Mack is a Senior Financial Advisor at Citadel Federal Credit Union in Lancaster, PA. She is a volunteer consultant for nonprofits in marketing and social media. Besides her career in business and finance, Jennifer has served as the head volleyball and basketball coach for University of Valley Forge.

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