

Don't give people what you like; give what they value

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“Nice iron. Your wife will love it. While I wrap it, you might want to go over to sporting goods and pick out a helmet.”

Self-centeredness is a powerful force. If left unchecked, it will sully every aspect of our lives. For instance, even when we want to give something to someone else, our preoccupation with self can pollute our act—we'll give what we value and would enjoy receiving instead of what he or she would like.

- For my honeymoon I planned a trip to Acapulco; I had been there before and loved it, so I assumed Mary would, also. She didn't.
- I recently gave a friend a copy of a novel that I enjoyed reading. My friend doesn't like fiction.
- I took a friend out to dinner for his birthday to my favorite Mexican food restaurant. His favorite food is Italian.
- I spoke words of instruction to my hurting friend. What he really needed was comfort.

So the next time you want to give, find out what the intended receiver wants. If you're not sure what he prefers, ask him. He will tell you.

To get the full impact of this essay, please respond to two topics.

Don McMinn

Think with me

- Think of a time when someone gave you a gift that he or she valued but you did not.
- Think of a time when you gave someone a gift that you valued but the recipient probably did not.

The antidote for self-centeredness is to focus on others. Think about others and put them first - especially when giving gifts.