

## #134 - How To Be Happy With the Gifts You Give

Hi, everyone! You're listening to The Lazy Genius Podcast. I'm Kendra Adachi, and I'm here to help you be a genius about the things that matter and lazy about the things that don't. Today is episode 134 - how to be happy with the gifts you give. It's the first week of December, and you might already have bought some Christmas or holiday gifts last weekend during Black Friday. It's that time. There's a shopping center in my city that I pass pretty much every day, and it's the biggest, most robust one we have. The traffic around there already is just bonkers and will only get worse as the month goes on. We're all in gift-giving and gift-buying mode and spending a lot of time on it or least are gearing up to. I want to help you be happy with the gifts you give and be more strategic and thoughtful about the time you spend on finding and buying those gifts. We'll go through a step by step process, and I think that by the end of this episode, you'll feel so much better about things.

If you like searching for and buying and wrapping and doing all the things with gifts, I think this episode will help you, too. It'll give you a framework for your thoughtfulness so you can have more space for other fun holiday things as the month goes on.

And while I'll mention a few specific gifts in this episode, if you're looking for actual gift ideas, I have a gift guide because I want to offer great gift ideas for you! But this gift guide is different than a lot I see around. Everything on this - I'm talking seriously every single thing - I have and use. I'm only recommending things that I know work and have enhanced my life and my family's lives. So know if you buy something from my guide, it's been tested for goodness. You can find a link to the gift guide in the show notes or just open your laptop and go to [thelazygeniuscollective.com/blog/2019giftguide](http://thelazygeniuscollective.com/blog/2019giftguide).

Okay, let's walk through a few steps so that you're happy with what gifts you give.

Step one: write everything down. Like, everything. I have a free download for you if you want to use it digitally or print it out to write in it, but it's so helpful to write everything down. Think through all the people you want to give a gift to - family obviously, friends, kids' teachers, coworkers, neighbors, your babysitter, just write down all the people. Also write down for each person the budget, gift ideas, when you're going to give that person their gift which helps with when you need to have it bought. I also like to have a place for if I've bought the gift or not because we forget what we've bought in late night scrolling sessions. So write everything down all at once. If you want help with that, again, I have a free download for you, so check the link in the show notes. Also by writing everything down, you see what you need to think about over the next few days. You have to decide what you're going to get people. That's why it's overwhelming. It's a lot of decisions about a lot of different people. And here's my biggest tip for that. Get something that makes them feel like a person. You can even have this in your sheet of info - what makes him or her feel like a person? Think about hobbies and dreams and ways you know they like to relax and recharge or have fun. That's such a helpful gift-giving lens, and

writing down that answer for each person is a lovely gift to yourself as you narrow down what to give.

So that's step one. Write everything down. Or type everything out. Whatever fits better with how you process information. And don't pretend like you can keep all of this in your head. It doesn't work. It's too much to carry, and don't we want our brains freed up for the fun things coming our way? Having all of your gift stuff written down in one place and out of your brain will do you a massive favor down the road.

Okay step two, name your gift-giving essentials. What is essential to your own buying or making experience? Maybe you want to shop local or from small business or at least not exclusively from Amazon. Maybe you care the most about efficiency, so you're going to try and get most of your gifts from one place. Maybe you're on a tight budget, so price is the most important thing. It could be quantity of gifts for people over quality or the other way around. Name what matters to you when it comes to the gift-giving experience. In the same way that it's incredibly stressful to try and have it all in meal planning and decorating - what I call House Hunters Syndrome where we expect everything for the price of nothing - go ahead and name what matters most in the process. I personally really love supporting small businesses around the holidays because I am one and know how much work goes into being your own boss and creating something that is meaningful to people, and I don't even have the type of business model that has inventory or a storefront. These businesses work so hard, and I would rather support and buy from them for as many Christmas gifts as I can rather than save a little bit of money on a Target sale. But that's what matters to me. It doesn't have to be what matters to you. Anything can matter to anyone, and it's lovely to have open arms to however people want to approach giving gifts.

Okay, number three, set your limits. Sure, there are budget limits, but limits help narrow decisions and often spark creativity. Consider what limits you might set for yourself to make the process of giving gifts a happier one. Maybe it's a limit of everything needing to be done by December 17th because you don't like being stressed out with last minute gift searches. Maybe it's a limit of only book related things. Or game related things. Or comfort related things. I love the idea of so many of those subscription gift boxes because they often have themes. Maybe give yourself a gift-giving theme to help you narrow in on what gifts to get people, especially the adults in your life. This is also where you can decide how to handle homemade gifts versus ones you buy. Set your limits to help you stay focused on what matters.

Number four, check gift guides. Here's the thing. Gift guides are everywhere and are often very helpful. If someone you love to follow on social media or whose podcast you love or something, if they have a gift guide, chances are you'll get a good idea in it. Don't set yourself up to read every gift guide everywhere. Don't look at every website that's ever existed or every store you can think of. That search is because you're after the perfect gift, but that's not a thing. Instead, use that lens of buying something that makes someone feel like themselves, and then go searching for that in trustworthy places like websites and stores you already love or gift guides from Internet people you genuinely love to follow and trust.

Number five, set aside time to shop. I know this seems like a no-brainer, but we actually forget to use our brains in this and just assume we'll squeeze it in. There's no squeezing it in! Look at the list you made when you wrote everything down. It's probably really long, and you haven't even thought a lot about ideas for half of those people. Set aside time to shop. Once you have that time scheduled on your calendar, you now have a deadline for knowing more specifically what to look for.

Based on how you like to shop and what you already named as your essentials, you might set aside time to shop at the mall or at a shopping center. It might be time set aside to shop online or go to a craft fair. Just carve out intentional time to shop so that it's planned and expected and can actually be enjoyed rather than forced into regular life and feel stressful. And be sure to set aside at least two blocks of time so you have a second overflow block in case you still have stuff on your list after the first shopping day.

Number six, set aside time to wrap. This is a personal preference for you, but go ahead and name if you like to have a big wrapping session for everything. If that's the case, everything needs to be bought and wrapped before the time you're giving that first gift. That's why it's good to write down when you're giving a gift to someone to help you reverse engineer the whole thing. I used to love wrapping everything at once, but then it made my back hurt so badly last year when I did it. I'm considering breaking it up this year, but I haven't decided. The point though is to go ahead and decide so you don't have to choose later. Will you wrap as gifts get delivered or brought home from the store? Will it be done in one or two big chunks? Will you do it alone? Is there a way to groupthink it and make it a thing with friends or something? Just think creativity and intentional for two minutes about what matters to you with wrapping, how you want it to look, and then set aside the time to do it. Don't leave it for the cracks.

And finally number seven, check your expectations. Again, you're not on the hunt to get every person the perfect gift every year. Perfect gifts don't exist. But there is something really lovely about giving someone a gift that makes them feel like themselves. That's why I love that lens to buy gifts. If you get them something that makes them feel like themselves, it's a great gift. And there's this invisible beauty to buying or making gifts in this way because you're reminded of the personhood of each person you're buying for. You're focused on them and what makes them special, not on impressing them with the coolest new gadget. So check your expectations. And if at all possible, please try and avoid giving a gift and leading off with the phrase "if you don't like it you can take it back." Just give the gift thoughtfully and don't put that person on guard or in a position to make you feel better for not being honest with yourself about your expectations. Write a card or say the words "I remember you're saying that you love to bake when you feel stressed, so I thought this pretty apron or this cool cake stand or this baking cookbook would be a fun way to unwind." Affirm the person with your words as well as with your gift, and help them remember their personhood, too. That's what I personally love about giving gifts. We get to think about how much we care about someone and the specifics of why that is and then remind them of that with something tangible. It makes me a little teary just thinking about it.

And that is how you can be happy with the gifts you give. I hope you feel excited to move forward with gift-giving this month, and again if you want a jumpstart on writing everything down, click the link in the show notes to get a free download to keep track of everything in one place. And if you're looking for specific gift ideas once you know what kind of thing you're looking for, my gift guide is up on the website at [thelazygeniuscollective.com/blog/2019giftguide](https://thelazygeniuscollective.com/blog/2019giftguide). Again, every single thing on there is in my house or has been used by me. Every single thing. And a lot of the gifts are from small businesses, so if you're hoping to spend less at Amazon and a little more there, there are some good ones in that guide.

Okay, that's it for today! I'm so glad you spend these few minutes with me, and I'm really excited to hear how these ideas shape your gift-giving approach this year. If you have any questions, I'll be live on Instagram this Thursday around noon to answer them. You can follow me on Instagram [@thelazygenius](https://www.instagram.com/thelazygenius). And all the links you need from this episode are in the info section of this episode on your podcast app, or you can find them on the website at [thelazygeniuscollective.com/lazy/happygifts](https://thelazygeniuscollective.com/lazy/happygifts).

Thanks so much for listening. Until next time, be a genius about the things that matter and lazy about the things that don't. I'm Kendra, and I'll see you next week!