



Gift giving is one of the many traditions of the holiday season. The i spa team has been sharing best and worst gift stories. There have been enthusiastic stories of fancy electronics, glittery jewelry, and delightful tropical locations. We've laughed at stories of dismay about oversized orange sweaters, ab rollers, and a zebra print snuggie. Yet, when we really got down to discussing the best gifts ever, our list went a little deep. We decided to share our list and see what other "deeper" gifts you could share with us.

1. The Gift of Family

Family - the relatives we are born to and the friends we adopt along the way through common experience and love. These are our people, the ones that exist within our circle of being. Whether a treasured few, or a beloved clan, our families define us, shape us, and nurture us.

And even though they may drive us bananas, these are the people we treasure the most. Especially the young ones. This week we find ourselves lingering at the doorways to our children's bedrooms. We quietly watch them sleep while we give profound thanks that they are safe and sound in their beds.

2. The Gift of Health

This was especially significant this year. You see, even though the i spa team members have been health care providers for more than a decade, we were overweight (with the exception of Doug, our wonderful yoga instructor, he's been fit as a fiddle for years!). In February of 2012,

after significant study and research, we chose to give ourselves the gift of health. We added the [Ideal Protein Weight Loss Protocol](#) as a service offered by the i spa Health Studio practitioners. Four of us, along with a trusted family beta group, participated in the program and collectively we safely lost over 300 pounds in four months. Inches dropped off and pant sizes went from sixteens to twos. Most importantly, we feel great. We are slimmer than we have been in decades. In fact, we look good! We have more energy to do fun things and we have reduced our risk for several life-threatening conditions including diabetes and heart disease.

3. The Gift of Helping Others

Sometimes the best gift is not the one you receive, but the one you give. We are very proud to share that this December we collected over 350 pounds of food and supplies, several hundred dollars in generous monetary donations and raised \$152 in a raffle. Everything was joyfully donated to the St. Petersburg Free Clinic.

The St. Petersburg Free Clinic provides temporary assistance to individual requiring help with basic needs such as food, shelter, medical care, limited financial assistance, and referral information. Learn more about the services provided and ways to give by visiting www.StPeterburgFreeClinic.org.

Have a great gift story to share? Use the comments section below to share your deep, funny, or even silly best gift ever. We'd love to hear from you!