



**12 Gifts of Christmas for
Workplace Support and Affirmation
At Times of Stress and Uncertainty
2012**

November 28, 2012

This is the 12th edition of these 12 Gifts of Christmas published by the Global Business and Economic Roundtable for Mental Health since 2000. They have been downloaded and republished in Canada, the US and Europe. I have updated them for the current times because these particular gifts are needed more than ever.

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1. *The Gift of Helping Out*

Be observant and ask your neighbor at work if he or she could use some help of any kind. Look for ways to help out.

2. *The Gift of Explanation*

Your employees are probably worried about their savings, pensions and jobs. Even if no one specifically asks, offer seminars, help lines, advisers to answers questions.

3. *The Gift of Sharing Success*

Sharing the credit and not just the work.

4. *The Gift of Support for Single Working Parents*

In difficult times, employees raising children on their own merit thoughtful support and pregnant women who are still working are especially vulnerable to the health risks of job stress. Reach out.

5. *The Gift of Empathy in Official Dealings*

Tax department people, bank personnel, call centers routinely communicate with 20% of the population who are symptomatically distressed. In all your calls, be clear not legalistic, plain-spoken not harsh, kindly not bureaucratic.

6. *The Gift of Clear Expectations*

Managers: make doubly sure your people know what you expect of them these days. Unclear job expectations create the kind of tension and uncertainty that grinds people down.

7. *The Gift of Job Fulfillment*

Employers: know this. A paycheck buys bread for the table. Job fulfillment buys bread for the soul. Go out of your way to give your employees the tools and time they need to do their job.

8. *The Gift of E-Mail Relief*

Give the gift of personal contact. The casualties of stress mount daily from information overload and discourteous or uninvited e-mails.

9. *The Gift of Inclusion*

More than ever, include your co-workers and employers in meetings, going to lunch, share information that empowers everyone. A lot of us feel alone these days; emotional isolation predicts depression.

10. *The Gift of Listening*

Give this gift to someone everyday.

11. *The Gift of Being Fair*

Give the gift of fairness and create a 'trust account' that earns interest in the form of productive people and satisfied hearts.

12. *The Gift of Being Home*

Many of us have obligations to elderly parents, kids who are troubled and in distress, and being home is important. Be observant and supportive. Kept separate, home and work are both stronger.