



This is the 15<sup>th</sup> consecutive edition of our 12 Gifts of Christmas, developed and originated by the Global Business and Economic Roundtable for Mental Health in 2000. Each year, this timely gift list is published and posted online and in workplaces across Canada, the US and Europe – and we have even had a sighting or two in Asia.

Mental Health International will carry on this tradition of 12 Gifts of Christmas for Workplace Support and Affirmation in Stressful and Uncertain Times. In turn, we ask you to give one of these gifts to an employee or co-worker. A simple, generous act like this will pay dividends for the giver and receiver alike.

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*12 Gifts of Christmas for Workplace Support and Affirmation in Stressful and Uncertain Times 2014*

**01 THE GIFT OF HELPING OUT**

Be observant and ask your neighbour at work if he or she could use some help.

**02 THE GIFT OF SHARING SUCCESS**

Share the work and share the credit.

**03 THE GIFT OF AWARENESS**

Reach out to your employees who are raising children on their own and be especially aware that pregnant women still on the job are acutely vulnerable to job stress.

**04 THE GIFT OF EMPATHY**

Income tax people, bank personnel, call centre staff: be extra patient, clear and plain-spoken, not legalistic, bureaucratic or rigid in your dealings with everyone at this time of year. Christmas is not a joyful for the isolated and vulnerable.

**05 THE GIFT OF CLARITY**

Managers, make doubly sure your people know what you expect of them. Invite questions when you allocate work. Stay visible at times of change.

**06 THE GIFT OF JOB FULFILLMENT**

A pay cheque buys bread for the table. Job fulfillment buys bread for the soul. Give your employees the tools and time they need to do their job – well.

**07 THE GIFT OF PERSONAL CONTACT**

The casualties of stress mount daily from information overload and discourteous or uninvited remarks. This gift is especially important when people are stressed or afraid of the future.

**08 THE GIFT OF INCLUSION**

More than ever, include your co-workers and employers in meetings and lunches, sharing information that empowers everyone. Emotional isolation predicts depression.

**09 THE GIFT OF LISTENING**

The most precious gift of all in stressful and uncertain times. Give it to someone every day.

**10 THE GIFT OF FAIRNESS**

Employer fairness is a determinant of employee morale in difficult times. Employee morale is a stronger predictor of future corporate performance than financial results.

**11 THE GIFT OF EXPLANATION**

Employees are worried about their pensions. Employers, hold workshops to answer their questions. Clarity lifts the spirit. Ambiguity smothers it.

**12 THE GIFT OF TIME**

A precious gift. Time at home. Time to do a job properly. Time to say hello. Time to reach out to a distressed co-worker. Time to be – here, and now.