



How To Create a Giving Jar

An activity to help your child develop
a more generous heart

by

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Introduction

The season of giving and receiving will soon be at our doorsteps, in our homes and in our child's cries of "I want...."

You might be thinking, "How can I help my child be a little more interested in being on the giving end instead of on the receiving end this season?"

A [study](#) done by Dr. Lara Aknin at Simon Fraser University in Canada suggests that even toddlers (you know, the ones who scream, "MINE!" if you come within feet of their favorite toy) can be happier giving to someone else than in getting something.

The activity in this workbook will help us all to be more mindful of living with an open hand! My hope is that it would also unlock the door to a discussion of how families can live more generous lives throughout the entire year.

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What is a Giving Jar?

A Giving Jar is a mason jar (or any other container that works for you) where everyone in your family will deposit their loose change or a portion of the money received for birthdays, from the Tooth Fairy or at holiday time. It might be better to have a clear container so your child can see the accumulation of her efforts at being generous. After a designated time of putting money into this jar, your family will decide together who should receive your gift.

The holidays are the perfect time to launch this type of project and to begin talking about what happens as a result of us sharing what we have.

As we head out to get groceries, we will most likely cross the Salvation Army bell ringers asking for donations to help families in our communities. In our kids' schools, they may be collecting canned goods or toys for the families of their classmates. The Giving Jar could be your family's personal response to joining in the act of giving.



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What you need :

- A mason jar or other clear jar
 - Stickers
 - Glitter
 - Chalk markers
 - Ribbon/twine
- Cardstock/scrapbooking paper
- Glue to adhere decorations to the jar



Step One

Decorate Your Jar

Use the supplies you gathered to decorate your jar. Draw designs on your jar with the chalk markers. Glue on shapes you cut from the papers. Go wild with your stickers! Once your family decides who will receive your gift, you can use the chalk marker to write the name of the person or organization on the jar. For the finishing touch, tie the ribbon or twine around the mouth of the jar. Beautiful!



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Step Two

Become Aware of the Needs of Others

Help your child to become aware of the needs that people in the community or around the world might have. Try to get your kids to see the world through the eyes of the people they might want to help.

For example, you can go to www.heifer.org and check out the Gift Catalog. Once there, you can read the stories, see the pictures of kids with their chickens or goats, and learn about how their lives are impacted and forever changed by the gifts of others.

In some communities and places of faith at this time of year, families can take a tag that lists the toys or clothes that another child in the community might be asking for. You might help your child to understand that this may be the only gift(s) this child receives. Your child has an opportunity to put a huge smile on another child's face.

Underline to your child that he has the power to make someone's life radically different by being generous!



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Step Three

Give it Away!

Decide as a family who will receive your gift. Ask your child how they think the other child might feel when she receives your gift.

Make your online donation. Go shopping with your child for the Minecraft Lego set for the seven-year-old in your community, wrap it, and drop it off so it can be delivered to this child.

Now talk to your child about how she feels after collecting money over time and then using it to make someone else feel happy and loved.



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Step Four

Start Over!

Giving away the money you have collected doesn't have to be the end of the story. You can "rinse and repeat." You can begin a rhythm of saving money and giving it away.

Make this act of giving simply another part of what you do together as a family. You might choose times during the year in which you will again give away what you have collected (i.e. at the start of the school year, as a special gift to someone else for your child's own birthday, at the beginning of summer, etc.).

Have fun with this practice!

