



On Course

November 27, 2018

Volume 18, #11

Welcome! With Thanksgiving behind us, it's time to begin the holiday season in earnest. Below are some tips that we hope will give you some ideas on creative gifts with a financial slant.

You may have missed our recent series on retirement. For Retirement, Part 1 - Retirement Savings, click [here](#). For Retirement, Part 2 - Social Security, click [here](#). For Retirement, Part 3 - The Retirement Paycheck, click [here](#).

We at Compass Planning wish you all the best of the season. We hope that your holidays are wonderful and that you know that we appreciate you!

Jennifer Lane, CFP

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Holiday Gift Giving

With gift giving season upon us we encourage you to think about the gifts you give. Try to be creative -- and, maybe, encourage some financial health!

Your budget

- Set your gift giving budget and stick to it!
- Don't derail your year-long savings plan.

For your friends and family

- Consider donating to a charitable cause in the person's name.
- Give a personal finance book, for example, [Simple Money](#) by Tim Maurer or [Unconventional Success](#) by David F. Swensen

If grandparents or other family members want to help pay for college or private school, talk to the institution's financial aid office about having them write a check directly to the school. In some circumstances, this direct payment won't affect the student's eligibility for aid, and payments made directly to colleges don't count toward the tax laws limiting gifts.

Get more tips in

- Have a financial planner you love? Gift your friend an introductory meeting.

For the kids on your list

- Gift them a piggy bank to teach them to start saving money! We like the [Money Savvy Pig](#).
- Make a contribution to their 529 plan.
- For the teenagers who have everything, help them open their first savings account. Maybe give them a little cash to get started, too.
- For the younger set, easy reading such as [Bunny Money](#) by Rosemary Well or [Alexander, Who Used to Be Rich Last Sunday](#) by Judith Viorst.
- Buy them a game that incorporates money, for example, [Monopoly Junior](#).

Just because

- A meal delivery service, e.g., Plated, Hello Fresh, or Blue Apron.
- A gift card or voucher to an event. Families with kids might like a trampoline park; for couples or singles, consider dinner theater tickets.

Q&A

Q: Our family is growing, and I feel like the gift giving has gotten out of control -- too many things! I'd like to change our traditions, give fewer gifts, and encourage the grandparents to spend less too. How can I change a holiday tradition without hurting feelings or ruffling feathers?
-- Marissa, Foxboro

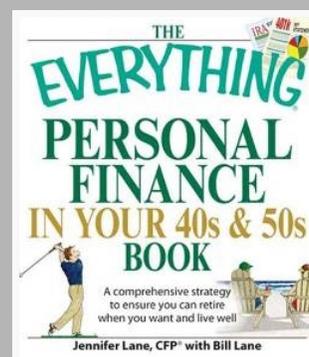
A: Marissa, keep in mind the possibility that others in your family feel the same way. Start by setting a good example and take small steps. This year give the family gifts and include an extra note telling them how special they are. That will help shift the focus off the gift and onto the thoughts. During the year begin the conversation about changing the way everyone handles gifts. That said, grandparents will be grandparents. If you are concerned about the "things," think about asking them to give experiences such as horseback riding lessons, ski lessons, sports or STEM camps. Research is showing that experiences create better and longer lasting happiness. And what grandparent doesn't want that.

Jennifer in the Media

Below are links to Jennifer's frequent contributions to financial planning articles.

- The [New York Times](#) featured Jennifer in an article titled, "**Balanced Funds Don't Inspire Fear or Greed. That's Why They Are So Useful.**" Click [here](#) to read the article.

Jennifer's book



[\(click here for link \)](#)

Helpful Websites

[Charity Navigator](#)

[Prosperity4Kids](#)



- With a contrarian view, Jennifer contributed to an article, "**People are enraged by the idea that you should have twice your salary saved by the time you're 35!**" published recently by *Business Insider*. Click [here](#) to read the article.
- Moving in together? Click [here](#) for the article from *Business Insider*, "**Five questions you and your partner should answer before taking the biggest step in your relationship.**"
- *Insider* asked Jennifer to contribute to an article on old fashioned ways to manage your money, "**Six money-saving tips your grandma used that are way more effective than any budgeting app.**" Click [here](#) for the article.
- Jennifer contributed to an article on *Business Insider*. Click [here](#) to read "**This is the best way to do your taxes online - according to experts.**"
- *CNN Money's Money Moves* featured Jennifer in an article on how to strike the right balance between retiring early and saving enough. Click [here](#) to read the article.
- Jennifer contributed to a *CNN Money* article "**When is the Right Time to See a Financial Advisor?**" Click [here](#) to read the article.
- Jennifer contributed to *The Wall Street Journal* article "**The Biggest Money Mistakes We Make -- Decade by Decade.**" Click [here](#) to read the article.

Compass Planning News

- AdvisoryHQ named [Compass Planning](#) as one of the ten best Boston financial advisors.
- Jennifer recently answered NECN viewer questions about **open enrollment for healthcare under the Affordable Care Act**). Click [here](#) to watch the segment on her blog.
- Jennifer appears on NECN every other Monday morning at 9:30 am in addition to her Tuesday 7:30 pm appearance.

[Compass Planning Associates](#) helps families, individuals, and small-business clients achieve financial security, knowledge, and control over their money. Our **fee-only, client-centered approach** provides education and guidance for achieving financial goals and dreams.

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