

## THE TRUE GIFT OF GIVING

*By Dr. Cathy*

Sitting with my grandson Ethan (22 months) and after going through a 5-day boot camp of grand-mothering my youngest of four, it occurred to me what I have been experiencing was indeed the True Gift of Giving.

Ethan is so full of life and excitement hides ever so near behind his illuminated eyes, he wakes happily, talking gently to himself! Hi, Hi, Hi he says to no one, anyone or to himself perhaps. So full of wonder and then he is off, like a racehorse, tearing through my house, dragging Tupperware out faster than the speed of light.

I find my silverware in his little make believe kitchen, sticky from his fingers of oatmeal, strawberries, bananas and yogurt, or whatever else he has touched. I wonder at how he loves to touch everything I take for granted these days in my environment, feeling the texture of the living room lamp, a rough place on the carpet, almost lovingly he checks these things and mostly with just his pointer finger. Surely he is logging it onto his memory deep in his developing brain cells.

As I chase him from room to room, I find myself playing and loving this time. I feel like a youngster myself with him in his innocent wonderment. What we can learn from a child. He drags his blanket, throws his shoes, and pulls off only his left sock, all with giggles and amazement. He often gets this most tantalizing look of mischief in his eyes just before he goes for the TV remote, an adult glass, the mouthwash bottle of brightly colored blue green. He processes the "NOs", however chooses when to acknowledge them.

The 3rd morning of our visit he was particularly active and bubbly, laughing as I tried to have some semblance of order. We were on our way to the park and then the grocery store, my goals were big, perhaps a bit too much. I was in such a hurry to keep up with him I laughed when I realized I had washed my face with the same facecloth from cleaning his bottom the night before! When we returned I took a good look in the mirror and had to laugh; unnoticed oatmeal all over my clothes, hair needing a wash and comb, no makeup!

Best of all I looked absolutely happy, free and full of life. WOW! Who would think that life through the eyes of an almost 2 year old is the image of true giving and receiving! Ever ready to experience whatever comes his way without trying to be ready to receive it or figuring it out before it happens so he can be ready to intellectually try to interpret what it is and what it means. Never caring about how he fits into this world, just knowing he belongs to it and you. He is always ready to receive without question, so he can accept your offer of love, caring or oatmeal!

How do we as adults lose touch with the innocence of our innate selves that came in with our package? Even though it took everything I had to live alongside this bundle of energy called Ethan, I realize that the true gift of giving is really in receiving!

The true gift of life is having to make the best of whatever we choose. Ethan's visit helped me realize more than ever how these early years really are the formative ones in our lives, when we take life in like a sponge and no matter what the experience are ever ready to continue to take whatever life has to offer at each new turn.



Without knowing, Ethan gave me an experience that I will never forget nor would I want to. As I look into those flirting eyes perhaps he does know more than I what he brings to the world!

Nevertheless, this will be a Holiday Season to remember, through the eyes of a child, the renaissance of Innocence, the mystique of bottomless energy, the true gift of LOVE. I gladly accept. I hope you too will receive the bounty that life offers each and every one of us in the simplest of ways.

Let your gift be to receive the blessings of life and to give from the bottom of your heart without attachment to any preconceived idea of wanting, just to receive!

Happy Holidays!



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95 CLIFTWOOD DRIVE NE ♦ SUITE C ♦ SANDY SPRINGS, GA 30328  
404-257-0188 ♦ [askdr Cathy@clear.net](mailto:askdr Cathy@clear.net) ♦ [www.dr-cathy.com](http://www.dr-cathy.com)