

PARMA SUN POST

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Sun News. Really, really local.

Fitness gifts keep budget healthy too

Can you believe it? Christmas is only three weeks away.

For those of you who haven't finished your shopping duties, have you considered giving those you love a gift to benefit their health or fitness?

These gift ideas go beyond the usual socks, scarf, or sweater. These gifts can improve the quality of a person's life. Here's some gift ideas, broken down by price.

Under \$10

A set of dumbbells. Ever versatile, the range of exercises one can perform is limitless. A pair of small hand weights can yield enormous benefits to those willing to use them for strength training the entire body. Stick with 5-, 8-, or 10-pound weights. Any lighter, and you pretty much lose the benefit.

Under \$20

A yoga mat and instructional DVD. Or, a Pilates mat and DVD. If the person you are buying for is a Type "A" personality, go for the Pilates because they probably



Health & Fitness
Q & A

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won't have the patience for yoga. On the other hand, yoga can certainly help a stressed-out person (who isn't, at this time of year?) to calm their mind and relax the body.

A Swiss ball (sometimes called an exercise ball). These usually include a pump and an instructional book or DVD to explain the different core strengthening exercises that are possible on a Swiss ball.

Under \$30

A pedometer. These little things keep track of how many steps someone takes. A pedometer can serve as encouragement to walk more. The more steps you take, the more calories you burn, the more weight you will lose.

Under \$50

A session with a personal trainer. Purchase a gift certificate from a certified, qualified, and competent personal trainer. A good personal trainer can not only educate a person on the ways of fitness, but motivate the person as well. Oftentimes, the motivation is the most important part.

Under \$100

A membership at a fitness facility. Consider purchasing a one- or two-month membership at a fitness facility. Don't limit yourself to a traditional gym as education and encouragement since a qualified teacher is demonstrating correct technique to like-minded individuals set on accomplishing the same goals.

Whatever you do, don't purchase anything you see on an infomercial. The products sold tend to be inferior pieces of junk that can't deliver the results the ad promised.

Here's a bit of good news: Unlike the Ipods and Playstations you are trying to find for your kids, it's unlikely that any of the items listed above will be out of stock.

Good luck with your shopping.

Send items for Bryan McIntosh, of Dynamic Martial Arts & Fitness, to Sun News, 32 Park St., Berea 44017 or email the editor, lkramer@sunnews.com.