

When the thought counts

"What do you gift a person who has it all?" – this is an impasse that most of us have certainly faced at least once, especially when buying for someone who literally, and often metaphorically, has it all, in this day and age of consumption and love translating into more and more things!

But gifts are something that are usually, and ideally, given out of love. It may be anything from a crochet table cover to a print by your favourite artist. If you put a certain amount of thought behind it, there is a high chance she will like it.

What we do instead is get gifts for people randomly, with zero deliberation; sometimes getting things we didn't like ourselves. In that case, anyone has the right to trash it – super savvy or plain!

Then there are timeless options that no one can ever reject, like flowers, books and chocolates. Very easy to afford, and no one ever said no to this trio.

If you really want to make an impression, the best way to impress would be to find out his or her likes. Sometimes, these 'likes' are very easy on the wallet – maybe a rickshaw ride to old town, a movie ticket to watch a recent deshi hit... Chances are that she has never been to these places and would enjoy all the visits, even

if it is just as a mini adventure.

Another idea is to get her anything off the streets! Yes, you read that right. Street fashion is very much in vogue these days and sometimes, if you are lucky enough, and look at the right places, you may get your hands on rare items that are unavailable, even at the most expensive shops around town. But for this, you have to spend a considerable amount of time exploring and looking for unusual treasures. Examples could be exclusive bead jewellery, silver trinkets, scarves with nice prints, a quirky shoe and so on....

Then there's the antiques section-- if she is a collector, then you are in luck. Although this may be a bit heavy on the pocket, she will certainly like it, and appreciate the thoughtfulness.

And if you are a traveller, constantly roaming from one place to another, then there is certainly nothing you need to worry about.

At least not in this aspect, as everything you get her, from 'these special places' will each be a souvenir that she can cherish with all her heart, even if it is a rock that you collected from the shores of the Andaman Sea.

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Photo: LS Archive/Sazzad Ibne Sayed

IMAGES THROUGH A THEODOLITE

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Blessings only?

Wedding invites start pouring in as early as the last week of November every year. Given the fact that I had married not so long ago, the pile this year was somewhat taller, which means more outflow of cash on my part!

Holuds have always been a big NO for me; maybe because the tradition has lost the emotional touch, maybe the detestable 'Bollywood dhamakas' or simply the obnoxious dances that go along with it.

There were times, when one had to attend all four events — the holuds came as couplets to be followed by a Wedding and a Walima. For a thirty

than 10 familiar faces.

Some consider, 'blessings only' as god send. To me it is like a slap in the face!

Allow me to explain —

Marriage, the union between two people, or to be precise a new bond between two families, is somewhat a religious affair; no matter which religion you follow. Weddings and Walimas, however are social affairs. It is a celebration of a life through fun, frolic, and not to mention good food.

Since time immemorial, this has been the case. Weddings are part and parcel of human society, and gifts are an important part of it.

Maybe it is an exaggeration, but this is what I feel. If someone is requesting 'blessings only' for a social affair then why have a big fat wedding in the first place? A status update should suffice, no? Is it not a paradox that you are expressing your disdain for a thousand year old tradition, while inviting someone for another?

Every newly married couple will vouch for the redundancy of the gifts — blenders, micro-waves, etc. in multiples. But whatever happened to the 'thought counts' motto! Bengalis have always been the ones to keep up with Joneses, and in their desperate effort to get the better of another, we at times engage in unhealthy competition.

Perhaps, that should stop. People should gift what they feel like, and what they can afford. And just like the brides and the grooms and the two families expect you to honour their invitation, they should equally accept whatever the invitees wish to bless them with. After all, I see no harm in the blessing complimenting a bread toaster on the side.



something bloke who detests holuds, the equation has become much simpler — one big fat reception, the sole purpose of attending which is the kacchi. The hi-hellos have also disappeared because no matter how close you are to the bride or the groom, chances are you will not find more

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