

EXAMINING THE WORK OF CHRISTMAS

Look at the following list and circle the ones that you were primarily responsible for last year:

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| Making up a gift list. | Getting the tree. | Christmas shopping. |
| Decorating the tree. | Making gifts. | Hosting parties. |
| Mailing gifts. | Preparing company meals. | Writing cards. |
| Helping with school activities. | Helping out at church. | Home decorations. |
| Planning family gatherings. | Making Christmas dinner. | Holiday baking. |
| Extra grocery shopping. | Making travel arrangements | Sewing clothes. |
| Special holiday cleaning. | Preparing for houseguests. | Packing. |
| Buying stocking stuffers. | Advent preparations | Other: _____ |
| Other: _____ | Other: _____ | Other: _____ |

Spend some time remembering how you felt last Christmas as you were doing each of the tasks that you checked. **Put a star by the ones that you actually enjoyed.**

Write down the tasks from the above list that you did not enjoy last year. Beside each one, write down a few words that describe the reason (s) of your dissatisfaction. Here are some common reasons:

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| Not enough time. | Not enough money. | Not enough help. |
| Not enough family support. | Don't enjoy this kind of activity. | |
| Don't value this kind of activity. | Wasn't creative enough. | |
| My performance didn't measure up to my expectations. | | |

By completing these exercises, you now have gained a better idea of how much time you have available for holiday projects, how much you attempt to do each Christmas, and how you feel about those tasks. Now the challenge is to begin examining your values and thinking about how simple or elaborate you want Christmas to be.

ⁱ Jo Robinson & Jean Coppock Staeheli. *Unplug the Christmas Machine: The Complete Guide to Getting Love & Joy Back into the Season*. Harper: New York, 1991. pp. 30-33.