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Our Mission

Reclaim Your Holidays helps Iowans create fun, meaningful holidays that are easier on the environment through practical, inspiring information, and opportunities to share ideas.

More learning opportunities

If you like this newsletter, you might also like Quality Teacher Tools. This 5 times/year newsletter for teachers includes lots of great ideas for naturalists, extension specialists, recycling coordinators, and other community influencers. It's filled with educational ideas around "stuff" and quality of life issues. Click here to subscribe.

Our Sponsors

Reclaim Your Holidays is helping educators use RYH resources

I'm happiest during the holidays when ....

Try this RYH resource to help your audiences Bring More Meaning and Pleasure to the Season. Resource activities will help participants determine what brings them joy during the winter holidays. They'll also learn what actions they can take to increase the meaning and pleasure of the season.

Try the Unshopping Challenge!

The 30-Day Unshopping Challenge and an accompanying 43-second Yerdle video provide extra ways to engage your audiences and yourself! Maybe some of you will decide to experiment with this concept for a day, for a week, for a month. Several UNI students took this challenge during a fall class. Read their blog here.

More fun, less stuff ideas

The More Fun, Less Stuff Holiday Gift Catalog offers hundreds of meaningful gift ideas to strengthen relationships and improve lives. The Center for a New American Dream developed this free tool for those who want to wrap their holidays in more of what matters (meaning, connection, and joy) and less of what doesn't (stuff, stress, and waste). Lots of gift certificate ideas and templates are available. Check out the RYH printable gift certificates as well.

Tiles repurposed and more!
Leftover 4x4” colorful tiles make a great coaster set on their own. Just add some felt squares to each bottom corner to protect your furniture.

Or how about using leftover tiles to display photos? Use tiles from a remodeling project or find them at a salvaged building material shop. Then check out the Crunchy Betty blog for instructions on how to use your photo collection to transform the tiles into keepsakes. Thanks for ECOConsumer in King County, WA, for sharing these fun gift ideas.

Add some “green” to holiday gift giving

Help your audiences reclaim their holidays by giving gifts that reflect their values. If one of those values is ecological concern, give Practical Environmental Gifts. They do good things for the earth, send a message about personal values, and may even shrink a family’s and friends’ carbon footprints for years to come. The handout contains ideas for biking, gardening, home lighting, and more!

What’s in your garage/basement to reuse?

Hands-on repurposing workshops might work in your community like they did in Iowa City. The workshops held earlier this year at the Iowa City East Side Recycling Center were on small furniture repair, mending, and more. In fact, they were so popular that ECO-Iowa City is offering more workshops in early 2017 to sell people on the idea. RYH trainers could use this angle to attract more participants and take a few minutes to talk about “stuff” and how it can sometimes detract from what’s important in our lives. Staff at ECO-Iowa City suggest starting with friends and organizations you know to find those passionate about helping others reuse and repurpose their stuff.

What makes you happiest during the holidays? Take just one minute to think about it and share it with those close to you.

Warm wishes for holidays that reflect what’s important to you!

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