

LINDSAY LOGS IN

LINDSAY RANDALL



WASTE LOTS. WANT NOT.

With three children, all born within the four weeks leading up to Christmas, Lindsay increasingly finds herself the subject of interrogation by assorted flustered family members who just want to be emailed a link to the perfect present on Amazon.

“ Each year, the task of present idea generation falls at the (weary) feet of Yours Truly. This year I have really struggled, because more than ever before I am looking around the house and noticing the amount we already have.

I am forever tripping over VTech products making Dalek noises or a Hello Kitty keyboard playing woefully out of tune, and Iggle Piggle (who has been under the bath for the last few weeks) occasionally bursts into spontaneous song as another last bit of battery juice trickles out – quite the unwelcome surprise during a 3am wee. And of course there’s the multitude of plastic toys needing new batteries because finding the time or inclination to locate a tiny screwdriver and fiddle about with a plastic flap rarely reaches the top of any parent’s ‘to do’ list.

The fact is, like many fortunate offspring in today’s consumer culture, my children don’t want for very much, so trying to make up ideas for the sake of it feels shamefully First Worldy. And frankly, if I am expecting elderly aunts to part with their pennies, I’d like them to feel some semblance of return on investment.

Below: Finding the real spirit of Christmas.



The baby of the bunch turned one just two weeks before Christmas, and as we already had all the baby toys we could shake a rattle at from when the others were young, I was really stumped

and turned to The Husband for inspiration.

‘I can’t think of anything to get her; what does she need?’ I asked. ‘Representation’ came the reply as he walked out the door. He was right. We have a house full of pairs; because for the last four years we have been a family of pairs. So, there are two beautiful hooks from Cox and Cox where the children hang their coats, two fabulous Hot Hen egg cups by Martin Gulliver, two Pearhead photo frames charting their first 12 months in chubby cheeked glory. And so it goes on.

Yes the youngest has plenty of hand-me-down Boden applique and Fisher-Price from the other two, but she doesn’t really have her stamp on the house. I realised that actually while she wanted for nothing, there was stuff she needed to be part of the family.

As an aside – retailers if you’re listening – this could make a great campaign for parents with multiple children. Because these are the things we often

forget to do – and then feel guilty about. And guilt makes mummies spend money. Big time! So, rather than trying to sell us the latest 12-18 month activity centre, ask us if we remembered to buy the baby book, the beautiful keepsake box, the satin pouches for their first tooth and first curl. Because the chances are, we won’t have done and catching us at the right time could result in a lot of teary ‘adding to basket’.

As I set about correcting my house of pairs, and finding the time to adjust the balance, it got me thinking again about how Christmas and birthdays shouldn’t always be about the toys children want, but more about the bigger picture and the meaningful stuff.

I thought perhaps I had successfully imparted some of this wider appreciation when I overheard them discussing their faith on Christmas Eve (they are both, apparently, Christian. The Husband and I are not). Until my four-year-old added, “Did you know God invented the internet? He just flew around the world and saw lots of cool stuff to put on Amazon”. To which my seven year old replied, “Don’t be silly, God can’t fly. He’s made of Lego”.

I may have some way to go.



Above: You’re getting us MORE toys!?