A Checklist

_____ Prayers – On the day of the celebration, contemplate on the event for a few minutes. Do longer prayers in the morning when you get up and before you go to bed.

_____ Family – Touch your parents feet or call them up and spend more time with them on the phone.

_____ Family – Call and/or visit your parents/grandparents and pay respect to them.

_____ Expectations – If your family, relatives, friends (or even your spouse) forgets this date, gently remind them without sarcasm and don’t hold grudges.

_____ Temple – Try to go to temple on that day or on the weekend after the birthday, graduation, or anniversary.

_____ Party – If you are having a party at your home, be sure to have eggless cake.

_____ Party – If you are going to eat out or cater, try to go to a vegetarian restaurant or a place that has plenty of vegetarian food. If you are paying, then you should pre-order only vegetarian health food. Alcohol should not be part of any celebrations.

_____ On these auspicious days, make one resolution for the next year.

_____ Gifts I – Only accept gifts that are non-leather, silk, and non-animal tested. Mention this on the invitation card.

_____ Invitation Card – Instead of accepting gifts, let your guest know that NO gifts are accepted – but optionally you can ask them to donate to a charity that protects animals (Beauty without Cruelty, PETA, etc.) (See below.)

_____ Donation – Give a donation at the temple (Appx. 10% of the amount that you receive in gifts).

_____ Exercise – On celebration days, make it a point to celebrate your wonderful body. Exercise, meditate, pray, and relax.

_____ Recycle – Recycle plates, glasses, bottles. In large multi-day gatherings, put names on cups/glasses. Avoid styrofoam.

Family Celebrations

Birthday, Graduation, Mothers/Fathers Day, Anniversary, Marriage, Baby Shower
Additional Checklist Items for Specific Celebration

- Graduation – Send a thank you note to some of your most supportive teachers, tutors, religious school teachers and mentors. Let them know how much their time and energy has made this day possible.
- Graduation – Donate some amount to your school over time.
- Baby Shower – Make a donation in the newborn’s name to your temple.
- Baby Shower – Instead of just throwing a party, also do a prayer.
- Anniversary – Spend quality time with your spouse and family.
- Anniversary – Go to the temple together.

Weddings with Jain Way of Life Mindfullness

| Cost | The tradition is that the parents pay for the wedding, and the girl’s side generally has higher expenses. However, if in North America where the parents may have already spent a considerable amount in education, the couple – especially if they are settled with a job or a strong future – must pay a significant portion of the cost. |
| Donations | 5%-10% of the wedding cost should be set aside to donation (local temple, JAINA, other charitable organization). |
| Gifts | No silk, leather, or animal tested products. |
| English Translation | Have English translation handouts of the ceremony. In the handout, have a small paragraph explaining Jain Way of Life. |
| Alcohol | Absolutely no alcohol, not even champagne for toasting, at any of the functions. No open bar. |
| Fire, Butter | Avoid large pujā/ceremony fires as they harms insects. |
| Vegan and Jain Food | Have provisions for vegan and Jain food. Label the food clearly for non-Jain/Indian guests. |
| Namokar Mantra | Start all functions with a prayer. Make the occassion spiritual as well. Visit the temple after a major ceremony. Have a pujā/temple function a week or so before the marriage. |
Gift Ideas (in Balance with JWOL)

For Children:
– Inexpensive toys
– Non-violent video or computer games (only educational) (Pay attention to ratings like M for mature and E for everyone.)
– A Jain coloring book or spiritual reading material

For Adults:
– Non-leather belt, wallet, shoes, etc.
– Books on health, business management, etc.
– A recipe book for vegetarians, vegans
– Non-fur/leather coat
– Massage chair, coupon for massage, etc.
– Jain books

For Family:
– Just visiting and spending quality time with parents/grandparents easily surpasses most any gift.
– Trip to JAINA convention
– Trip to India
– Relaxation, meditation CDs
– Jain video and/or CD
– Subscription to Jain/vegetarian magazines
– Jain books. Indian cultural books.

Food Items:
– Gift card to Trader Joe’s, Whole foods
– A nice fruit and vegetable basket
– Cook someone a nice vegetarian meal

“One who, even after knowing the whole universe, can remain unaffected and unattached is God.” — Mahāvīr