



Are We Victims or Creators of Change?

By Dr. Linda Hancock

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled "All Psyched Up" for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of "Life is An Adventure...every step of the way" and "Open for Business Success" is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email office@drlindahancock.com

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When I was a little girl, growing up on the prairies in Canada, I remember the extremity of the weather. In minutes, fingers and noses would freeze and skin would turn from red to white quickly. Snowbanks were deep and snow fell frequently during the winter months. I remember watching plows work feverishly to clean roads so that families and vehicles were freed from their captivity within houses that were surrounded with banks of the white stuff. There were times when one could easily walk up a drift onto the roof of a bungalow. Winter was strong and fierce!

Summers were the opposite. The blazing sun would soften tar on the roads and turn our delicate skin to a berry brown colour very quickly. Gallons of water was required daily in order to save the withering lawns and flowerbeds. During the years before air conditioning, we would close all windows and drapes during the day and then open everything during the evening to invite the cooler breezes into the living area. We would run in the sprinkler, add ice to our drinks and wear the minimum in clothing. Summers were HOT!

Well...things have changed. I have noticed that our weather on the prairies is much more temperate and we do not experience the extremes of my youth. There seems to be less snow and fewer scorching hot days.

Other changes have occurred over the last half century... I first learned the word tsunami a couple of years ago. Hurricanes are frequent and seem to be more destructive than I remember hearing about in the past. Ice flows are melting, and volcanoes are active. Some deserts are expanding, and ocean's coral is disappearing.

There is also more and more talk about global warming and holes in the ozone layer around the earth. In fact, the debate about whether we need to do something about pollution seems to have grown into a full-blown green movement. The stance that we had in our youth of being victims of the weather who needed to adapt has moved to a general understanding that we have a role in preventing further harm to our planet and can, in fact, bring change.

There's an old expression that states "The more things change, the more they stay the same" but when it comes to the weather - I really don't think this is true.

The weather has changed and now we, as global citizens, also need to change. The perspective that we had about our interaction with the environment seems to have shifted from vulnerability to responsibility.