



## **Book Review: Balancing Acts**

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](mailto:office@drlindahancock.com)

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"Balancing Acts" is a novel that focusses on the lives of four women who reconnect at a school reunion. Each of them has built a career but the main character, Charlie, seems to be the only one who is satisfied with hers. She left a high-paying position on Wall Street when she was only thirty years old and set up a yoga studio with two partners. The only thing that at first appears to be lacking, is paying clients.

Charlie prepared fliers for her yoga studio and went to the reunion with the hope that she would be able to attract interested parties who would sign up for her classes. She was successful with three women, each of whom decided to sign up for a six-week package of lessons.

Sabine had desperately wanted to become an author and write a novel but her career path had taken her into a role as a book editor. Bess was employed by a gossip magazine where she wrote captions while deep-down wanting to become a serious investigative journalist. Naomi's career as a promising photographer was curtailed by a pregnancy that left her as a single mother who made websites from her home office.

All four women were surprised by how much their yoga lessons changed each of them - not just by teaching them to relax but also through the friendship and support that they gained by being together.

Each week the women travelled to the studio thinking that they were there to learn yoga and left with sore muscles and a shift in their thinking. The plot describes the emotions and blindspots that the women expose as they begin sharing their private lives and problems with each other.

Naomi, for example, is faced with fear, anger and upset when the father of her child not only comes back into their lives, but also is warmly welcomed by their son. She wonders if there have been any positive changes in the man's life and definitely doesn't want to see herself or her son being hurt or abandoned by him again. But this relationship isn't the only difficult thing that confronts her. She begins experiencing medical problems and this causes her to wonder what will happen to herself and her son in the future.

Bess contemplates how she will move into the journalist role of her dreams. Her boyfriend, who has moved to California, questions the tactics that she is using to achieve her goal and, at the same time, tempts her to leave everything she has built to move from New York to be with him.

Sabine is puzzled by a new romantic relationship that seems to fluctuate from warm and close to silent and distant.

Charlie tries to maintain the role of teacher and feels that because of this she shouldn't share her personal life with the students but, as the weeks pass, so does her perspective regarding this.

The women's friendship becomes a valuable asset for each of the characters.

"Balancing Acts" is an easy and enjoyable read that I recommend.