



Celebrate Life Regularly

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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This past weekend I was at a wedding reception! What a wonderful event!

The bride and groom who live in different countries have each travelled extensively. She speaks seven languages! He is a pilot and owns a plane for recreation! They were introduced by a mutual friend and built their romantic foundation through long hours of internet conversations.

On Saturday, wedding guests arrived from across Canada, Norway, Holland, Russia and the United States, each bringing his/her own language, culture and stories. Everyone was dressed in their finest accessorized by big smiles. Even tiny nieces had lace gloves and nephews wore ties.

The tables were decorated with beautiful flower arrangements and after the delicious meal, we had access not only to the deserts but also a chocolate table.

There were photographers, musicians, speakers and dancers. Glasses were tinkled and kisses applauded. Lots of fun, laughter and visiting.

I know that weddings are supposed to be to honour a bride and groom, but they also provide a wonderful social event for family, friends and new acquaintances to interact and build memories.

The whole thing made me think about the opportunities that we lose when people choose to elope, not bother with funerals and devalue extended family celebrations on traditional holidays such as Christmas, Easter and Thanksgiving. Even birthdays tend to be ignored or acknowledged with a mere text message or one-line greeting.

I remember when my maternal grandmother's birthday arrived each year and every family member would spend time together to honour her. We all knew that March 24th was booked annually for this gathering and adjusted accordingly. Now shifts that can be scheduled anywhere within a 24/7 workweek and other activities interfere with gatherings so we seldom all get together as a group.

There is really nothing, however, that can compare with spending time together in a setting where the major goal is to spend time together in order to relax and build wonderful memories.

Weddings and funerals can be expensive but the benefits of having people come together are priceless.

There are many, many ways to celebrate life but usually the traditional methods of setting a date and inviting people to join together bring the most treasured results.

I am grateful to Anya and Dan who invested their time, energy and money into planning an amazing wedding which was not only enjoyed immensely by guests but also will be relived in our memories for years to come.

It is easy to get caught up in negative events and find yourself focusing on problems in the world but there are so many other choices that you can make.

What are you doing this week to plan and facilitate opportunities for celebrating?