



Choose Health

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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Think about driving down the highway. You are going the speed limit but all of a sudden, unexpectedly there is a red light right ahead of you. You hit the brakes and think “Wow. I didn’t know I was going so fast.

Life can be like that. In fact, we have allowed society to ingrain the motto of the Olympic Games into our heads and we think that we need to be “Higher, faster, stronger”.

Higher – Many people enter or stay in career that they don’t like just because they think that it is important to have a large income. Some have purchased so much and accumulated debt so that they are trapped into working in a job that they don’t like. Unfortunately, reviewing your paystub and doing the math allows you to realize that gross income isn’t nearly as important as net income. You might think that you are “valuable” because your gross is high but after deductions, you might find that you only take home a little more than half of that. Working in a stressful career can ruin your health and steal your joy. I know many people who have left what they term “the rat race” and found out that they love getting up in the morning to go to their new adventure and that with a little creativity, their income is adequate.

Faster – Speed dial, microwaves, computer applications and chips in vehicles can make things seem to go faster. Most people, however, don’t use the time they have saved to do things that they enjoy but instead just fill up their calendars with more and more commitments. One of the best things about the pandemic restrictions is that people are spending more time in domestic and family activities – cooking together, playing board games, visiting. Seldom do I ask someone how they are doing and receive usual reply “Busy”. Slowing your world down allows you to be more creative and to prevent yourself from impulsively doing or saying things that you might otherwise regret.

Stronger – There is a common misconception that fit equals healthy. It doesn’t. Going regularly to the gym for a workout doesn’t make sense if you are starving yourself. Neither does sticking to a strict diet only to binge on sweets, alcohol, drugs and caffeine. If you want your mind and body to be strong, remember to follow good self-care practices like eating nutritionally, getting enough sleep and exercise, and reducing your stress.

Higher, faster and stronger might be a good slogan for Olympic Games but I believe that a better one for your personal life is “Choose Health”.

Something to think about.