



Happiness Is Living Well

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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Life is good! Today is my sixty-third birthday and I am content.

Oh, it's not like I haven't had problems. I am human and live in the real world. It's just that I have figured out where to focus my attention and what to let go of.

When people are unhappy or going through a tough time, they usually don't want to be reminded to count their blessings. But what is the alternative? Lying awake at night, staring at the ceiling while counting your troubles?

I am so thankful. I can walk, go to the bathroom, and breathe without assistance. Professionals make sure that my medical, vision and dental needs are met. My business is good, and I have enough money to pay my bills (but not enough to become arrogant or careless). Each day I can enjoy a warm shower, consider clothing options, and drive myself anywhere I wish to go.

My condo keeps me warm in the winter and cool in the summer. I have interesting books to read, music to listen to and hobbies to enjoy. I can eat what and when I choose. Friends and family inspire me. My mind holds good memories from the past and hope for the future.

I am also thankful for the things that I don't have in my life. For example, I don't have to experience war, starvation or tsunamis. Living in Canada means that a dictator will not try to limit or control my choices. I won't have to work until I die or beg in the streets which might be my lot if I had been born in a different country.

My head knows that happiness is a choice, and my heart knows that there are people who care about me. Technology allows me to learn new things whenever I wish and to keep in touch with others who are located throughout the world.

When problems arise, I think about my Norwegian grandmother who would say "This too shall pass". I believe that there is a reason for everything and that I don't have to figure it all out because there is someone or something bigger than all of us who knows.

And when I get to the end of the day, I know that I can lie down on clean sheets and drop off to sleep without having to worry about what has happened or what will happen next.

Life is good and I am content.

What is the formula? Focus on the ways in which you have been blessed. Consider the things that do not plague you. And embrace each day with a determination to be happy and a willingness to let go of the things you cannot change.

It's all up to you!