



## **It's Not All Bad**

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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The pandemic that arrived in late 2019 seems to have frozen much of our world. Since it arrived there have been school closures, significant economic ramifications, government regulations to self-isolate, and restricted travel. An attitude for citizens consisting of fear and confusion due to mixed messages is also evident.

But it is not all bad. There are many things in the world, in fact, that have improved or shifted because of the pandemic:

1. **Business Innovation** – Many owners have adapted to non-contact restrictions by offering options for take out or delivery. Some even changed the products that they were producing and selling. Among the great examples include The Canadian Mint. Their leadership realized that there was a shortage of hand sanitizer. They had both the materials and the suppliers available so begin manufacturing it. “Weddingstar” recognized that there wouldn’t be as many weddings this year due to isolation requirements and converted their business plan to focus on sale of masks. Over ninety percent of psychologists in Alberta began offering therapy through secure software platforms and telephone.
2. **Economic shifts** – It is reported that paint sales have increased by approximately five hundred percent. Thousands of individuals who have been in isolation used their time and energy to do renovations. This has increased demand for trades as well as materials. The stock market which dropped significantly in winter is starting to rise again. Once Canadians choose to stimulate manufacturing rather than importing everything it is expected that both employment options and investments should continue to improve.
3. **Government support** – Loss in wages and business profits were not completely replaced by federal programs but different groups were provided with some financial relief through loans, monthly deposits and deferrals. Costs for employees have also decreased. Earning less means paying fewer taxes. Costs for travelling to and from the job site are gone for those who have been working from home.
4. **Personal choices** - Community activities have been drastically reduced and this has provided more time for individuals and families to bake, do hobbies, take online classes and rest.
5. **Relationships** – It is inspiring to see the ways that people have been connecting with each other. These include virtual concerts, drive-by birthday celebrations, socially distanced street parties and non-contact gift giving. Even the Queen who is ninety-four years of age has learned to use Zoom to stay in touch with others. Parents have learned how difficult math can be and are connecting with their children for several hours a day instead of in bits and pieces throughout the week.

6. **Environment** – For the first time in decades, the water in Venice’s canals has been clean enough to see to the bottom. China has enjoyed smog-free skies. The earth has been in a period of recovery from the man-made pollution that was choking it!
  
7. **Values** – We have had time to think about what is important and how to protect those things. Our eyes were opened to the condition’s seniors have endured in some long-term settings. We have learned the importance of and how to wash our hands properly. We have been able to recognize the treasures in our culture that we took for granted before – like sports, teachers, health and loved ones.

It has been and continues to be a difficult journey!

Ancient scripture reminds us though to be thankful for our troubles for difficulties lead to perseverance and perseverance develops character. We are really building character this year, aren’t we?