



# Let's Take The Long Way Home

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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"Let's Take the Long Way Home" is a memoir of the friendship that was valued between the author, Gail Caldwell and another writer, Caroline Knapp. The two women met when they were adults but there were many similarities that they shared not only at the time that they began establishing their adult relationship but also from their childhood experiences.

Gail and Caroline had both struggled with problems resulting from drinking too much. They had each turned to alcohol and used it as an emotional crutch until it began negatively interfering with their lives. Each found it very difficult to give the alcohol up but did eventually succeed.

Both women had relationships that were disappointing in both their careers and their personal lives.

But despite the negative things that provided commonality of experience, they also shared positive things that helped them to build and enjoy the friendship that they shared with each other. Both of them, for example, loved books and writing. In fact, each of them earned their living as writers. Both of them also loved raising and training dogs. And they both were excited by being involved in competitive sporting activities.

Gail and Caroline would spend hours walking through the woods of New England with their dogs. They found comfort in the conversations they had as well as the silence that often bound them together. They also spent hours and hours rowing on the Charles River together.

When they first met, neither would have predicted that their devotion to each other would end up becoming so strong, but over the years, they recognized that their emotional similarities and ability to understand each other would become so precious. They were able to comfort and encourage each other because they understood how the other was feeling and thinking.

After several years of close friendship, Caroline was diagnosed with terminal lung cancer. This situation was devastating for both of the women and the book takes the reader through both the pain and the planning that was done by both from that point onward. Caroline married the man who she had previously been involved with romantically and Gail was one of the wedding guests who celebrated with them.

Gail describes the deep feelings that she experienced as she waited for death to come for Caroline and, at the same time, dreaded it. The description of visits to the hospital and the struggle that she had to deal with her own emotions during this time draws the reader into the situation in what feels like a very personal encounter.

"Let's Take the Long Way Home" is a honest and lovely read. It tells the tale of the everyday life of two people who deeply care about each other and how they dealt with both life and death.

This winner of the Pulitzer Prize is what I would term a good read - one that makes us all think about our own relationships and how they impact us.

The author, Gail Caldwell, has also written "A Strong West Wind".

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