



Life Is Short! Act Now

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 week my twelve-year-old granddaughter received horrible news. For the second time in a matter of weeks a grandfather has died.

Her paternal grandfather had heart surgery about a year ago but seemed to have recovered fairly well. So, everyone was surprised when he passed a few weeks ago. Mikaeli had several opportunities to be with him in her life and got to know him quite well. Because she is so interested in genealogy she was pleased when a number of old photographs were found in his belongings and we have plans to upload these onto the family tree together.

This month Mikaeli went to Saskatoon to spend a week with her maternal grandparents as part of her summer holidays. She has only been home for a few days from that adventure. Today we received news that her grandfather drowned during a fishing trip.

Two grandfathers gone within weeks of each other!

The whole thing has reminded me of the importance of grandparents in a child's life. All four of my grandparents had a powerful influence on me. My two grandmothers taught me how to knit and shared skills that I still use in my kitchen. My paternal grandfather was a wonderful example of strength as he had immigrated to Canada alone at the age of eleven and built his life on hope and faith. My paternal grandfather was "jolly" and a musician. He would travel with other band members to nearby towns by train to play at dances. Their values and examples have helped shape my life!

Every grandparent has strengths and experiences to share with their descendants, but it isn't always easy to have personal contact because of distance. My grandparents lived close to us, but five of my seven grandchildren are far from me. I have had to learn how to communicate through text messages rather than in person or by telephone. Most of the travelling for face-to-face encounters are left for me to do because everyone is always so busy.

But every opportunity to interact with my grandchildren is a wonderful gift! It might mean sharing a conversation as a ride-along when they are on their way to pick something up. At times, it means sending a link for something that they have told me interests them. Perhaps buying an airline ticket or filling the tank and driving to their home is the best choice. Bowling (after not having done so since 1969) is a way to connect - and laugh together! Or uploading old photos onto the family tree!

Today my eighteen-year-old grandson was texting me about his new cement job in Kindersley that has taken him away from home for a shift of fifteen days straight. I learned what a hellcat is (Dodge Challenger car) and the fact that this is his goal!

Another grandson just sent a message "Who is this?" I guess I sent the wrong message to him. Oh, well, grandparents make mistakes too!

It is easy to say, "I'll have to do that". Maybe you won't be able to. Remember - life is short!

Time to contact someone you care about today!