



Love Is Not

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

Published

May 31st, 2019

Valentine's week is focused on multiple ways of showing others that one cares for or is in love with them. Hearts, flowers, candy and trinkets are given as symbols of devotion but not all are done with the right motives or with healthy commitment.

We all think that we know what love is but then act in ways that do not match our words. Here are some of things to consider:

Love is not:

1. Giving someone everything that they want because by doing so you believe they will change for good. Frequently clients have told me that they felt giving money to wayward teens would encourage them to come home. Not! People usually do what they want and cannot be bribed or coerced into doing what others want.
2. Ignoring issues and crossing fingers that they will resolve themselves. Not talking means not dealing with things and past behaviors are usually a predictor of future behaviours. Wishing and hoping isn't the same as resolving.
3. Accepting abusive behaviors. We teach people how to treat us. If you have been abused and you accept a hurried insincere apology you will likely become caught in a cycle of abuse followed by apology followed by abuse.
4. Time served. Just because you have been in relationship with someone for a period of time doesn't mean that you are healthy, safe or secure.
5. Keeping secrets. The underlying foundation of trouble is built with dishonesty and hidden actions. If you need to keep something secret that means that deep down you already know that you are up to "no good".
6. Blaming others rather than facing your own failings. Most people do not want to look in a mirror that shows their own flaws. Instead they point the finger and distract the conversation by focusing on another person.
7. Demanding information about private matters. When adult children want to know details about the will of their aging parents, they can present as entitled and inappropriate. An attitude of "what's mine is mine and what's yours is mine too" can destroy relationships!
8. Vengeance for past hurts or failures. Hurting others is not a good response for those who have been hurt. Focus on healing instead of on trying to get even.
9. Enabling. There is a show on television that shows individuals who weigh over 600 pounds. Those who purchase the food for the one who becomes immobile or bed-ridden end up having to care for the obese person. When you enable someone, both of you pay a price for this.
10. Playing games with emotions. Sweet talk, false promises and cheating can be very hurtful. Stop it!

When it comes to being a Valentine it is important not just to think about the other person. Instead examine when and how you show your love. Are your words and actions healthy or are you in an acting role that considers only your own selfish needs and wants?