



Love Your Neighbour

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

December 3rd, 2008

Over the years I have heard horror stories about neighbours who have had broken relationships that resulted in various forms of battle. Fences are erected, family pets abused and people are "bad mouthed" for "sins" that might have been committed decades before.

I have also witnessed the way that some neighbours look out for each other. They take food to the sick, offer to care for gardens and yards when people are on holiday and shovel snow for the elderly. Relationships between neighbours can evoke either negative or positive feelings!

As our world "shrinks" in size due to transportation and technological advances, we find ourselves to be more aware of other countries and cognizant of the idea that we are all neighbours to each other.

We usually define "good neighbor" as someone who has our best interests at heart and strives to ensure that there is peace and privacy in the area. Recently, Barack Obama was elected as President of the United States of America. He is now our neighbour and his choices, as a leader, will definitely impact all of us. People have been dancing in the streets in numerous countries around the world with the hope that he will be a good neighbour.

At the same time, however, there seem to be many groups who are not supportive of his election. In fact, this is the first time in history that a person who hadn't even won the primary was assigned security. This occurred after Mr. Obama received death threats approximately two years ago. Since then, individuals have been arrested and their assassination attempts halted.

Years ago, Archie Bunker, from the popular television program "All in the Family" was upset that the Jefferson's were living in his neighbourhood because they were black. His bigotry was obvious and blinded him to the point that he could not recognize the skills, strengths or unique personalities of the family members. This television show was filmed in the 1970s but, it seems as though similar attitudes are still prevalent in the United States.

Media personnel have identified groups that do not want to have a President who is not Caucasian. Others individuals and groups are upset because they apparently believe that Mr. Obama's policies are too liberal.

As Canadians, we have a choice. We can focus on his mixed race (his mother was a Caucasian from Kansas and his father a native of Kenya) or on his policies or we can wait to see how he will use his strengths and abilities to his position before passing judgment.

Life is choices. When someone new moves into the neighbourhood you can either build a fence or deliver a casserole as a form of welcome. What will you choose to do?