



# Loving During a Pandemic

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)

## Published

February 12th, 2021

It is almost impossible to stage a traditional Valentine's Day outing when everyone is locked up or wearing masks and distancing at least six feet apart. The days of fancy dinners in exotic locations are out of reach. But that doesn't mean that you can't enjoy and show love if you are willing to be creative and wise.

Let's examine the three psychological aspects of love:

**Thoughts** – So many times I have been touched by individuals who tell me that they have been thinking about me. What a compliment! Someone who invests time and energy into reviewing memories or wondering about my well-being is a lovely thing. Those who think about how they can honour another person goes even a step further. Planning a surprise or interaction takes commitment and even if you can't meet in person, you can think of ways to make another person's day better. At Christmas, for example, my daughter's family had a full meal delivered to my door for me. Great thoughts turned into thoughtful action. Who are you thinking about this week?

**Feelings** – The first blush of love can bring passionate feelings that are delightful but with time, the feelings often mature into constant assurance, deep loyalty and the confidence of being cared for. When times are difficult, the feelings can fade or even change into ones that are not as pleasant. It is therefore important to know that no matter what happens issues can be resolved, and the relationship can last. In fact, shared trouble often builds stronger ties! One warning though – don't always lead with your feelings for they can be like chaff in the wind and change quickly!

**Behaviours** – Proclaiming your love and then treating another person poorly isn't good enough. Your behaviours must match your words. Giving gifts won't make up for disrespect or abuse. Promises are not enough. You can show a person that you love them with simple gestures that will be treasured for years to come. Phone an aged friend and find out that the call made their day! Send a thank you card to someone who didn't expect it. Take out the garbage (before being asked!). Like the popular song from "My Fair Lady" states "Don't talk of love.... SHOW ME!"

So, this Valentine's Day will be different – but it might be the best one yet.

Don't just focus on the romantic part. Instead, make a list of people who you love and then start thinking about how you can behave in an appropriate way to express your feelings. Think about things that they have talked about as wishes in the past and what has pleased them previously. Do research that will offer you new ideas. Try making a card or gift rather than buying one.

And remember to use your words. There is nothing as powerful and treasured as kind words that are expressed sincerely.

Love to all of you who show that you care by reading my columns!

And happy pandemic Valentine's Day!