



Making A Difference In the World

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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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Every major religion in the world has some form of the Golden Rule or implies that we are responsible for each other. No one seems to demonstrate that better than the new Roman Catholic Pope Francis. Since he was elected to this position, he has broken many of the rules that were observed by his predecessors. For example, he does not live in the papal residence but instead stays in a guest house and eats his meals with staff and guests, visiting freely with them. He rides in elevators with others and rather than using the luxury transportation that is available for him, he chooses to ride in mini-buses or walks while even carrying his own luggage at times.

Pope Francis does not wear the clothing that would be expected for his position and rumor has it that he often dresses as an ordinary priest so that he can leave the Vatican under the cover of darkness to minister to the homeless. It must be somewhat of a security nightmare to try to protect him when all he wants to do is be close to the people in order to help meet their needs without observing the protocol that is set out for him.

Recently former South African President Nelson Mandela died at the age of nine-five years. He had been imprisoned for twenty-seven years but despite this was able to lead the Civil Rights movement in his home country. Some believe that if he had not sacrificed his own freedom, other individuals throughout the world such as President Obama would not have been able to assume the positions that they now hold.

There is an old Greek proverb that states: "A society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in".

Pope Francis and Mandela each have put the greater good of society above their own personal situations so that others could prosper. Their strong sense of community and desire to improve society by making it more cohesive fueled the significant choices that they have made.

But it takes more than one person in a society to make all the changes that are needed. Curing diseases, putting a man on the moon, setting up education systems and dealing with the world economy is not individual work. These require the collaborative effort of many people.

This Christmas we celebrate the birthday of the baby Jesus, another individual who is recognized as having significantly changed the world for good. He is remembered for the humble and personal touch that he offered those around him and the example that he set for us.

There are so many people around us who have dreams and goals but just don't know how to accomplish them. They wait and hope for someone like Pope Francis, Mandela or Jesus to come along and help them. Sometimes they need a strong leader who can lead their environment through issues such as Civil Rights. Sometimes they need an expert with specific skills who can train them in a specific area. And sometimes they just need someone who will be a good listener and an encourager.

During this holiday season, remember those like Pope Francis, Mandela and Jesus who have had a huge positive impact on our world. And think of those are around you who are waiting for someone just like you to reach out and make a difference in their personal world.

Merry Christmas, everyone!