



Mistakes People Make

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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We all have problems. Some are worse than others. Unfortunately, there are times when a problem is made worse because we do things (or don't do things) that would resolve it quickly and effectively.

Consider how you might be hampering progress by using one or more of the following:

1. Minimizing - When you try to convince yourself or others that the problem is smaller than it actually is, you are not being realistic and because of this will likely not choose an appropriate solution for dealing with it. Get honest with yourself. Gather information and then sit down with a pen and paper. Clearly define the problem in one written sentence.
2. Gaslighting - Blaming others, as well as omitting or twisting the facts can be a form of mental abuse. Instead, take responsibility for the part you played in creating the problem and in finding a solution for the problem.
3. Procrastinating - Most problems require action and will not go away on their own. In fact, ignoring them can make things worse. Remember the old adage "A stitch in time saves nine"?
4. Telling Lies - If you are lying to avoid getting into trouble or disappointing someone else then think again. You will get caught and then you will lose trust and respect.
5. Pretending - Pleasers never get their needs met. They pretend that they are happy or have not been offended but over time build up resentment. If you think that you have to "be nice" without being honest, you will pay a price for this.
6. Making excuses - Your motivation for making a bad choice doesn't justify the choice. "I had an affair because you didn't give me enough sex". "I hit him because he insulted me". "I used drugs because all my co-workers use them". Excuses merely expose immaturity.
7. Worrying - If you find yourself awake at night, staring at the ceiling and thinking "What if... What if... What if... " you are in trouble. Instead of being fearful of imagined outcomes, focus on planning and taking action that will resolve the issue.
8. Keeping secrets - It's only a matter of time until the things you have tried to keep hidden will be exposed. Addictions, affairs, financial mismanagement and crime will, with time, reveal themselves.
9. Trying to escape - Using drugs, getting drunk, or moving away will not resolve problems. In fact, they can actually create more problems for you.
10. Refusing to get help - Perhaps you are afraid or proud. Maybe you initially thought you could handle things on your own but found out you can't. You might not know anyone who you can trust to help you through this. Psychologists are professionals who are trained to help you deal with problems in a healthy manner. They ask you to explain your situation once and then consider your options in a safe and confidential setting. You won't be judged and the final decision is in your hands.

Problems are a part of life but not everyone knows how to deal with them. The good news is that you can learn how and the more you practice, the better you get at it.