



# Priorities - How to Determine Them

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)

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A few years ago I heard professional speaker David Irvine talk about a concept that has significantly changed my life. David explained that in life you are given opportunities that he compared to rubber balls and glass balls.

Rubber ball situations are those that you can throw away knowing that they will come back to you. You don't have to deal with them right away because you will have another chance when they bounce back.

Glass ball situations, however, are one-time only. If you drop the glass ball it will break and you never get a second chance to experience it again.

David told a heart-wrenching story about how his wife was expecting a child and he promised her that he would be there for the birth. He was contracted to do a workshop in another province before she was due and, despite her requests to stay with her, took a pager and left. He assured her that she could page him and he would be able to return quickly should her labour start.

After his training session, David was invited to go out for dinner with some of the participants. When he arrived at his hotel room there was a message for him to call his wife. He was horrified to learn that she was in such advanced labour that he wouldn't be able to get to her before the birth.

He hadn't realized that the batteries in his pager had died. The glass ball had broken and he would never be able to recapture that life experience.

David encouraged us to make a list of three or more things that we value as glass balls in our own lives.

Over the years there have been times when I have been extremely busy. Sometimes I was presented with glass balls that I didn't at first recognize. It would have been easier to tell my sister that I couldn't leave the office to be with her when she was ill. She said that she wanted me to know that she wasn't expecting me to go to her. I would have saved eighteen hours of driving, a good deal of expense but dropped a very precious ball if I hadn't paid attention and travelled to see her.

Sometimes we are asked to join people for celebrations that they are planning but just don't take the time to with them. Glass balls dropped!

I am excited because at the end of June I will be in Saskatoon for a grandson's high school graduation. And then, in the middle of July, my Hancock cousins will get together in Regina for a family wedding. All glass balls!

What are the glass balls in your life? Are there things that you need to do or recognize despite your busy life? Remember, when you drop the glass ones, they are gone forever.