



## **Roses Are Red**

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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As February 14th approaches, we notice that the malls and stores are decorated with red hearts and chubby cherubs. Consumers are encouraged to purchase boxes of candy or bouquets of roses for their lovers. School children prepare cards to send to their friends. Some organizations arrange fancy teas or bake sales to celebrate the occasion. It seems that love is in the air!

Not everyone, however, has the same reaction to Valentine's Day. In fact, there are several different ways that you can spend the day:

1. With thankfulness - Do you have someone special in your life with whom you will exchange cards and gifts or even share an evening that includes a romantic dinner? Perhaps all of your expectations will be met and you will feel very valued. Enjoy!
2. With bitterness - Have you been hurt in the past or are harboring resentments because of a failed relationship? Perhaps you have lost faith in the idea of true love or think that it won't last. Everything is for a season and you will likely feel differently in time. Don't despair!
3. With disappointment - Maybe you will invest time and money into planning a wonderful celebration only to find that your partner did not reciprocate. Will you be understanding about the fact that your priorities didn't match? People have different ways of caring and just because you didn't get what you want doesn't mean that you aren't loved. Cheer up!
4. With surprise - Maybe Valentine's Day will give someone the courage to share feelings that you didn't know existed - until now. Brace yourself!
5. With apathy - You might not even notice that it is Valentine's Day! If that's the case, then you will just carry on doing what you already had on your calendar. Move forward!
6. With creativity - Maybe you will plan a unique way to celebrate. You might call a grandchild, take a friend out for lunch or even buy yourself a little treat. You might show your love for life and others by doing some volunteer work or setting up acts of kindness for others. Use your imagination!

Valentine's Day, like all other holidays, can be filled with joy or with misery. A lot depends on your expectations and your attitude. If you don't expect anything then you won't be disappointed. Then, if you do happen to receive a gift or card this will be a nice bonus.

Remember, this is only one day of the year and it's certainly not worth basing your whole self-image on events of the day.

No matter what happens, foster an attitude that states it is better to give than receive and look for opportunities to practice this. Look for ways to brighten the life of others.

Happy Valentine's Day, everyone!