



# Royal and Non-Royal Similarities

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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When we think about the royal family, our minds automatically include castles, riches and pageantry. What we forget about, however, is the fact that all families have things in common and, like us, the royals are not excluded from problems.

Queen Elizabeth has been admired for several reasons. One is that she has been on the throne for sixty-six years and has committed to serving for her entire life. A second is that she does not air any of her relatives "dirty linen". In fact, she has never allowed a media interview and does not talk publicly about her personal life. Nevertheless, she and her family experience many of the same challenges that each of us encounter:

1. Aging - It doesn't matter who we are or what we do, there is no escape from growing older. Queen Elizabeth just celebrated her ninety-second birthday and is in relatively good health because she practices self-care. She continues to ride horses almost every day but apparently has had to find a shorter one so that it is easier for her to mount and dismount.
2. Health problems - A couple of years ago, the Queen missed Christmas because of a severe cold. Her husband, Prince Philip who is ninety-six years of age has had several medical set-backs and is presently recovering from hip surgery.
3. Loss - The Queen has grieved deaths of many relatives and friends. In December 2016 her granddaughter Zara suffered from a miscarriage. The Queen has had Corgis as pets and companions since childhood but a couple of years ago decided not to get more because of her age. The last of her Corgi's died this year and she is apparently very sad about this loss.
4. Reputation attacks - Media is very good at using their long-range lenses and inside sources to fill tabloids with tales about inappropriate behaviour, rumors and outright lies about the royals. Being able to be human, respected and have some privacy in their lives is a daily challenge for the Queen and her family.
5. Life issues - Three of the Queen's children as well as her sister were divorced. All members of her family of origin have died. Windsor Castle had a major fire and the mother of her son's children, Princess Diana, died in a motor vehicle accident. The Queen is not saved from things that happen in other families.
6. Adding new members - The Queen's family is growing as her children and their children marry and have children. Being a mother, grandmother and great-grandmother offers joys as well as challenges for her.
7. Finances - Some may believe that the Queen has unlimited resources, but she also has huge expenses. Three years ago, I toured Buckingham Palace and noticed the need for renovations. All of the Queen's residences are decades old and many are crumbling. She has taxes to pay as well as payroll for a huge number of staff members. Oh, don't get me wrong. I am not feeling sorry for her. I am just realistic about the costs that a Queen faces to maintain the past, live in the present and prepare for the future.
8. Change - Since her coronation, the Queen has witnessed dramatic changes in the world. She has had twelve different prime ministers work with her and saw the rise and fall of countless leaders in other countries. Technology has moved her from her first radio address into social media communication.
9. Danger - All of us want our family members to be safe. The Queen undoubtedly was worried when grandson Prince Harry served in a war zone. She knows that security is important because she has experienced threats on her own life and must also be afraid for her relatives who also have high profiles in a world of terrorism.

10. Legacy - Like many of us, the Queen has a pre-planned funeral. I'm sure that she also hopes that her life has been an inspiration for others.

This weekend, we will celebrate Victoria Day in honour of Queen Elizabeth's birthday. We will also be able to watch the marriage festivities of her grandson Prince Harry. As we do so, let us remember that they are very much like us - a family who has both gifts and burdens.