



Seeds of Greatness

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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Everywhere we turn these days, we are facing bedding plants and thoughts of spring planting.

When I grew up in Saskatchewan, the farmers would say that they had to get the crop in the ground by May 10th. Well, that date has changed a bit with the introduction of specialty crops and scientific advancements but the idea that May is the month for planting remains the same. In fact, the Victoria Day weekend seems to be the specific days for western Canadians to be out in their yards with flats of bedding plants and packages of seeds.

Tonight, I took a large bag of planter mix and started working on the containers for my condo balcony. I also watched the new movie "Invictus" which tells the tale of Nelson's Mandela's influence on South Africa's rugby team as they moved from a ridiculed group to the 1995 World Cup Winners. In the movie I heard an actor use the term "seeds of greatness" and started to think about how my two activities of the day were interconnected.

You see, we plant garden and crop seeds in spring with the hope of a fall harvest. We know that this will not be realized, however, if the soil isn't fertile, our timing is off, pests interfere, or sun and rain are not received in the appropriate amounts.

It's the same with our relationships. We cannot expect to plant the idea that we want a good friendship unless we are prepared to nurture the seed. Good parenting is more than giving birth. It requires years of care and sacrifice. Reaping the rewards of a satisfactory career demands decades of commitment.

A Chinese Bamboo sprout lies dormant in the ground for four years despite watering and fertilizing. Then, in the fifth year, it grows a staggering ninety feet in six weeks! In fact, in a twenty-four-hour period, it can grow three feet in height! Each of us wants to be part of the six-week experience but not everyone has the loyalty and patience to invest the first four years of effort without seeing any results.

Some people want to stand on the Olympic podium to receive the gold medal but really don't like to exercise. Others wish for riches but spend everything they earn. Many complain of loneliness but refuse to reach out to others.

The story of the Chinese bamboo tree is a reminder that greatness requires not only that we plant but also that we provide regular care while demonstrating patience even when nothing is happening. Nelson Mandela's life tells a similar tale. He is a man who was in jail for twenty-seven years before becoming the powerful President and leader of the country he loves.

Seeds of greatness hold potential but reaping a harvest usually requires commitment over a long period of time. What type of crop are you hoping to enjoy in the future? Are you a good gardener? Well, it's May, and you know what that means...it's time to do your planting! Choose your seeds carefully and promise yourself that you will be loyal until the crop is in the bin!