



# Simple Things You Can Do to Improve Your Life

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## 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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So many people talk with me about the "big" things that are stressful. Often, it is the "little" things, however, that either contribute to the problems or prevent the individual from coping with them. Following are ten things that you can do to keep the stress in your life to a minimum:

1. Get enough sleep - When you are tired, you lost perspective and can make errors in judgment. Having a regular bedtime that you honor (even on weekends) should provide at least eight hours for sleep.
2. Eat three nutritious meals a day - Skipping breakfast is the same as trying to drive your car when the tank is empty. Food is the fuel that gives energy not only to move but also to think.
3. Have something positive to look forward to - Some say that anticipation is better than realization. Plan an activity or event that you can anticipate. Whether it is a trip, tickets for a show or sharing a meal with a friend, a date on the calendar can be a positive thing.
4. Spend less than you earn - If you cannot make a payment this month, it is unlikely that you will be able to make two next month. Being able to discipline yourself, despite readily available credit in society, will allow you financial freedom rather than bondage.
5. Work hard when you are at work - You are paid to produce value for your employer and owe that to the organization. When you focus on the tasks assigned to you, everyone wins - employer, customers and you!
6. Develop healthy boundaries - Know where you end, and other people begin. Make sure you have healthy interaction with others and take responsibility for what is your responsibility, allowing the other person to be responsible for their responsibilities.
7. Be careful with what you drink - Limit caffeine, alcohol and power drinks which either get you wound up or depress you. Many beverages are loaded with artificial substances, sugar or ingredients that negatively affect your health. Water is your best choice!
8. Do something every day that will make your soul sing - Listen to music, enjoy a walk, read a good book, play with your pet, phone a friend. Life is a compilation of days. Make them meaningful.
9. Give something to the world - Volunteer for a project, donate to a cause, teach someone to read, share your blessings with someone who will be pleased and grateful.
10. Monitor your thoughts - Your ideas are self-fulfilling. Someone who thinks that s/he is a failure will likely experience failure whereas those who nurture positive, healthy thoughts tend to reach their goals.

It's not always the "big" things that cause problems in our lives. Often it is a wearing down that results from not taking care of the "little" things. You can start right this minute to get back on track. Start with #10 and believe that things are going to be better because you have the ability to make them so.