



Spiderman

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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Most people like superheroes and one of the most popular is Spiderman. This month I have been thinking about the tagline for this cartoon character spiderman that states “With great power comes great responsibility”. What an idea to ponder!

Now that we are in even more restrictions due to the pandemic threat than in the past few weeks, all of us in society have more responsibilities to fulfill. Political and health officials are responsible to decide when and how to limit interaction between individuals while, at the same time, weighting how the economy and mental health of their citizens will suffer. because of their decisions.

Leaders in business have the responsibility of figuring out how they can creatively provide goods and services, pay their expenses and keep staff employed. Essential service organizations have the extra burden of keeping their environments sanitized and restricting the number of customers to the imposed quotas.

Parents are faced with having school-aged children at home while they try to adapt to distance learning and attempt maintaining healthy routines. There are even more challenges for people like my cousin who has a mentally challenged adult son. His day programs are closed. He cannot go to the swimming pool or hockey games and doesn't understand why he can't. It is a very sad situation and my cousin states that they don't really know how to help him through this as he is so frustrated. They spend hours and hours in the vehicle just driving around trying to keep him calm! Huge responsibility (and cost).

And what about the responsibilities of individuals? We are responsible to wash out hands, follow protocol regarding masks, research and make decisions about various injections while balancing both finances and mental health challenges. Also, we are responsible to practice good self-care by eating nutritionally, getting enough rest and trying to stay connected with those who we care about without the resources that we would otherwise utilize.

Many people argue that those in power have miscalculated risk and stolen personal freedoms. Some are in direct opposition to the politicians, media and pharmaceutical companies and express their displeasure by speaking out and/or participating in peaceful demonstrations. They point out inconsistencies in different regions and policies that don't seem to make common sense and argue that they are losing their rights.

As time passes without relief, the populations seem to be dividing into two opposing factions. One group fights for “following the rules” hoping that their actions will top the spread while the other group fights for the right to make personal choices backed by their belief that the threat is not as severe as advertised. There are people from all walks of life and health officials on both sides of the debate.

Now let's get back to Spiderman. He is the fictional superhero who has superhuman strength and agility, can detect danger with his “spider-sense” and is able to cling to surfaces. After being bitten by a radioactive spider he not only realized these unique abilities but also the fact that he could shoot artificial spider-webbing of his own design from his wrists.

Well, we certainly can't and won't be in the same situations as Spiderman or have the same strengths and abilities to deal with them. Like Spiderman, however, we will attempt to do right, agonize over choices and try to inspire others through our actions in troubled times.

The good news is that we don't have to climb vertical walls, shoot webs from our wrists or try to be a superhuman.

Never forget that each of us does have some power and "With power comes great responsibility".

Use it well.