



Stand On Guard

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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When I was a child, we were taught about patriotism. Every morning at school we would stand erect facing the flag at the front of the room while singing O Canada and God Save the Queen, followed by recitation of the Lord's Prayer. Arms were to be at our sides and posture correct as the lyrics included the line "We stand on guard for Thee".

Whenever there was a community event, we would all proudly sing O Canada together.

Over the years I have noticed that our national anthem is not used as often as in the past. Frequently, a soloist sings the lyrics while those in the crowd either just move their lips or stand silently. Sometimes the anthem is instrumental only.

When it comes to sporting events, O Canada is usually accompanied by athletes who are chewing gum, looking around or acting as though they just want to start the game. Many in the crowd are not acting respectfully and may be talking or kibitzing during the song. Frequently, there is cheering and yelling during the last line - not because of the anthem but because the game is about to start.

I think it is sad that we do not seem to recognize the wonderful place we call home and cannot stand on guard for even a couple of minutes as a tribute.

Recently, Canadians across the country showed up in arenas and on the street to watch basketball playoffs in which the Toronto Raptors competed for an NBA title. It was interesting to hear television announcers explain that there wouldn't be one soloist for the national anthem. Instead, everyone who was prepared to watch the game would stand in the rain and sing it together.

People in raincoats from all the provinces lustily belted out the Canadian anthem. They all knew the words and even though they weren't standing at attention, it was obvious that they were enthusiastic!

We are so fortunate that we live in Canada where we can wake up to peace and relative safety every single day. We have so many freedoms including the right to vote, the opportunity to own property and choose our career path. Our children can learn in schools and we can receive medical treatment. We are blessed!

One July 1 will you stand on guard and heartily sing the words to our national anthem?

I hope so because there is a lot for which we can be thankful as Canadians.