



## **The Day Book**

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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My mother taught school for thirty-five years. Twenty-seven of them were in grade two!

Every night, before she left the classroom, she would do two things. First of all, she would straighten up the room - brushing the blackboards, picking up paper on the floor and organizing the top of her desk. Then she would bring out what she called her "Day Book" and write down all the things that she would do with the students the next day.

Now this wasn't a very complex task. She might write "Focus on the letter M" or "Learn about measurement" or "Complete the Valentine craft".

Once I asked her why it was so important for her to do this and learned a lesson that I value to this day. She explained that when she took a few minutes after the students left to prepare her daybook, she could create a clear and simple plan that would help everyone get a good start the following day. Also, she said that if she was ill then the substitute teacher would know exactly what to teach the children in her absence. I think she only missed about six days in her whole career because of illness but always had the plan in place in case it was needed.

The end of mom's day in the classroom always set the tone for the beginning of the next day. In only a few minutes she would prepare a thoughtful written plan that she could depend on when the eager little students arrived with all of their noise and interruptions in the morning.

I follow mom's example. Each night, before I leave the office, I ensure that I have cleaned off my desk and completed any little projects that are left undone. Then I review all the client files for the next day and make sure that I have any forms or handouts ready for each session.

When I arrive at the office the next morning, I feel so organized and ready to go! If there happens to be a traffic hold-up, I am not scrambling as I go through the door and I'm not trying to run off documents or put things together while the client waits. It's amazing but it only takes about ten or fifteen minutes at night to set up a smooth and stress-free morning.

What things could you do at night that would set you up for success the following day? What about making your lunch or laying out what you will wear? Perhaps making sure that dishes are done and put away or the washing machine is working on a load of dirties that you can quickly switch to the dryer in the morning. Even just emptying the garbage cans and putting a tied bag by the door to take out when you head to the car will save time the next day and allow you to leave the house with a feeling of accomplishment.

You don't necessarily have to start a daybook like mom did but making a clear and simple plan at the end of each day will help you to have a good start the following day!