



Things Happen

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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Boxer Mike Tyson once said: "Everyone has a plan until they get punched in the mouth".

It is interesting that most of us think life should be peaceful and predictable without any problems or crises. But that isn't realistic. There are a number of things that can happen which throw us into a "tizzy":

1. Death - We cannot predict exactly when someone we love will be gone but everything stops as soon as we hear the news. But grief doesn't just last for an hour or a day. It can affect us for a lifetime, especially if we get "stuck" in a situation of unresolved bereavement.
2. Illness - We have come a long way in the area of medical research and technology but there are still diseases that we cannot figure out or cure. Life expectancy has increased by over twenty years in the past century. That means that while we have learned how to live longer, there is also more time when a person can be ill. When the life expectancy was 50 years there was very little focus on osteoporosis as this is a disease suffered by older people. Now, osteoporosis is recognized as a medical problem that may experience.
3. Crises - Terrorism has put the whole world on alert. Communication networks and technology daily make us aware of global crises in real time. We have to be careful not to get caught up in the trauma.
4. Weather systems - We cannot control the outdoor environment and often have to change our plans for the day because of changes. Storms, smoke from forest fires, floods, or earthquakes can sometimes leave us feeling "trapped" or helpless.
5. Financial setbacks - Have you ever expected a cheque that didn't arrive? Has the stock market disappointed you? Did you lend money to someone who didn't pay it back? Did your employer declare bankruptcy or close the business, leaving you without income?
6. Broken promises - Unfortunately, some people make promises that they will never be able to fulfil. Others tell you what you want to hear to get their immediate needs met. Others just lie.
7. Abuse or violence - Individuals can be deliberately or accidentally harmed. Abuse can come in the form of mental, emotional, physical or financial attacks.
8. Laws and policies - The government and economic world often introduce changes that might not be a benefit for you. Just because something worked for you in the past doesn't mean that it will continue and you may find that there is nothing you can do about it.
9. Accusations - You can be completely innocent but still be the target for someone who tries to damage your reputation. In Canada we are told that we are innocent until proven guilty but sometimes it doesn't feel like that - especially if it takes months to complete the investigation or trial.
10. Rejection - People are not mean to other people unless they are unhappy in their own lives. Sometimes an individual will reject you because you don't give them what they want or if you speak the truth to them about their bad choices. Poor communication can also cause misunderstandings.

If you are going through a difficult time right now and feel like someone has just punched you in the mouth, you do not have to feel like you are alone. Psychologists are trained to help problem-solve and deal with difficulties. You are just one phone call away from getting the support that you need.