



What Things Are 100% Preventable in This World?

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

Published

December 3rd, 2008

So often we hear comments like "It couldn't be helped" or "It wasn't my fault. Blaming others and dodging responsibility are stances that are rampant in today's society.

The other day I was thinking about things that are totally preventable and quickly came up with seven specific topics. There are likely many, many more, but let's just focus on a few of the possibilities:

Pregnancy - This one is easy. No sex - no pregnancy. But abstinence seems to be rather rare. A second choice, therefore is birth control but I know many individuals who have used this and still become pregnant. Sex education involves knowing the risks and making good choices based on this knowledge. Abstinence, however, is foolproof.

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) - The ONLY time that a child can be diagnosed with this is if the mother drank alcohol during the pregnancy. There is no exact formula or strategy that can be adopted to protect the unborn child. If you drink at any time during the pregnancy, you risk harming the child for life.

Obesity - Taking in more calories than you expend results in weight gain. Good health practises include watching the amount and types of food that are eaten while ensuring that appropriate types and amounts of exercise are incorporated into one's daily living.

Malnutrition - There is absolutely no good reason for anyone to suffer from malnutrition in the world. We have enough food supplies. The problem is more a distribution problem than a shortage problem. In North America, we not only have plenty but also have resources such as Food Banks to help those who do not have ability to purchase food.

Financial recklessness - Everywhere we turn there are services to help us learn about how to manage our money. I'm not talking about poverty because that is a totally different category. However, I do suggest that spending money without a wise plan or while motivated by greed can leave an individual or family in financial trouble. There are both public and private agencies who provide courses, materials and personal counselling to help individuals who fall into this category - most of which are without cost.

Ignorance - No matter what the topic, information is available to help us learn and counteract ignorance. Schools, libraries and the internet provide not only facts but also allow us to study critiques from experts. Even sharing a conversation with friends will help to expand our perspectives.

Loneliness - I am usually surprised when I hear someone tell me that they are lonely. Our world offers so many opportunities for us to interact with others. Joining a group, taking a class or becoming a volunteer for a charitable organization are all activities that can fill what might be otherwise lonely hours and help individuals to develop healthy relationships.

There are some common themes throughout the above topics. They involve personal responsibility, making a decision to change things and then following through with an action plan.

If you need help or support in making specific changes in your life, consider accessing the services of a psychologist. Things always seem to be easier when people work together!