



# What's Holding You Back?

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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So often I hear people talk about what they wished they had done in the past or what they might do in the future. They might state that they want to travel "someday" or focus all their energy on the day when they will retire. They might state that they want to visit a favourite relative, or get training in order to change careers - "someday".

As soon as I hear these things I ask "What's holding you back?" You see, there are thousands of airplanes that fly every day to beautiful vacation destinations. Retirement is years away and is not much more than a reduction in demands. Your relative might be dead by the time that you get to that visit and completing your grade twelve or getting a degree is far easier before you lose your job than afterwards. (Also, you have more options to earn more once you have the educational credentials).

If you have been putting off doing something perhaps you need to have a serious talk with yourself!

There are several steps that can convert your dreams into goals:

1. **DECIDE** that you are going to pursue the dream that you have been harbouring. There is an old expression that states "Deciding is half done".
2. **RESEARCH** the possibilities. Talk to everyone about your options. You never know when someone will give you a brilliant idea that you might never have considered.
3. **BE HONEST** about the obstacles you will face in order to achieve the goal. Make a budget, assess the energy requirements, and consider the time that will be invested. Write down what you will lose by chasing the dream.
4. **ENLIST SUPPORT**. Find individuals who are willing to encourage and help you during the process.
5. **MAKE A COMMITMENT WITH A DEADLINE**. Do something that states to the world that you are beginning this adventure (register for a course, buy tickets for the trip, announce the date you will visit your relative).
6. **SET UP BOUNDARIES**. Protect yourself and your dream from being sabotaged by you, someone or something else.
7. **BEGIN** and do not stop moving forward until you are finished.
8. **CELEBRATE** when your goal has been reached.

Often, I have found in my own life that planning can be more work than doing something. In fact, I am often shocked at how little time and effort the task actually took to complete.

Now, what have you been procrastinating about? How about taking out a pen a paper and begin writing: "I have decided to...."

Oh, and don't forget to let me knowing how you are doing!