



## **With Eyes From Both Sides**

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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Thelma Wright grew up in a good Catholic family in Philadelphia in the 1960s. She was naive about the way that her neighbour had become a place for gangs and drug dealers. In fact, as a young woman, she fell into what she calls "crazy love" with one of the individuals who made his living by selling drugs. With that, of course, came violence and crime. She didn't know all the details of what he was doing and didn't ask for all of them.

When her husband was murdered, she became one of the key players, however, and built a very strong and profitable business selling drugs from Los Angeles to Philadelphia. She was brave and independent but also became very aware of the dangers that she and her son were at risk of experiencing because of the players and financial stakes.

Thelma was in and out of relationships with men but never lost her own sense of independence. And she never lost her loyalty and need to protect her son.

"With Eyes From Both Sides" (Living My Life In and Out of the Game), is the detailed story of Thelma's life as told to and written by C. Alease. It documents the fact that by the 1990s, Thelma was living a "double life". She was enjoying the fact that she was financially well off and this provided privileges for herself and her friends, but, at the same time, her happiness was always tempered with fear. Not only were her friends being hurt and killed but she also was shot.

When the woman who was supplying Thelma with drugs was missing for several days and then found murdered execution style with two other people, Thelma had to rethink her life. Many who hadn't been killed were being prosecuted for their involvement in the drug and gang lifestyle. All of the events led to a situation where Thelma could actually think about herself and her life objectively. And she didn't like what she saw. She wanted to get out of "the game" never to return.

Thelma is now employed as a property manager in a non-profit organization that runs a Philadelphia building housing twenty-two women and their families. Many who turn to the organization have alcohol, drug abuse and mental health issues. Thelma believes that her work is a type of mentoring and a way for her to feel like she is giving back to the community.

Thelma states that she has reached an "almost peace of mind" and still remembers her past. In fact, she uses it to help her to deal with others who might be in difficult situations that lead them to play a game that might risk her situation or even her life.

She is thankful that her son has done well academically and now is partnering in a sports business.

"With Eyes From Both Sides" is 201 pages and an interesting read. It shows that even when a person is involved in one lifestyle it is possible to change into a lifestyle that is completely different.