



You Can Laugh or You Can Cry

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

November 25th, 2012

So many times, I wished that God had put me on his Board of Directors. You see, I thought that I was wise and knew what would be best for me. I also believed that if God really loved and cared for me that He would honour my ideas.

Well, after some time had passed, I usually had opportunity to see how things actually turned out better than my original plans. Over the years I have therefore learned to be thankful that I have never been invited to be His Board member! And I've learned to trust that things will turn out in the end.

Some people do not believe that there is a God. They therefore take on all the responsibility for how this life will progress and forfeit any hope for eternal life. Others state that there is a God, but they do not have any assurance or confidence that they can have a personal relationship with a wise companion from today to eternity.

No matter what one believes spiritually, however, there is one thing that each of us can control and that is our reaction to the things that happen to and around us.

As a professional, I have seen over 7,000 clients. Each has helped me to learn about the uniqueness and wonder of human beings. Even though we share many commonalities, we respond in a variety of ways. For example, five different people could experience the exact same event. One reacts by getting drunk. Another might make a suicide attempt. The third may become immobilized and not able to perform routine daily tasks. A fourth might seek professional help and the fifth may not even notice that anything happened or carry on without letting it affect him or her!

Yes, we react differently. It is interesting to note, however, that our reactions often do not change the circumstances and might, in fact, make them worse.

My maternal grandmother frequently used the expression "This too shall pass" and she was right. Good or bad - with time - things pass and life goes on.

If you are a Christian, then you can trust that you will not be alone. If you think that there is a God "somewhere out there", at least believe that He is big enough to handle things that are bigger than you. And if you don't believe there is a God, then make a personal concentrated effort to choose healthy responses to life events.

Bitterness, anger or revenge can steal your quality of life. Addictions, abuse and self-harm destroy relationships and prevent peace from reigning.

There is a time for laughter - but this needs to be done in an appropriate manner. There is a time for tears - but crying too long can be debilitating.

How do you handle the challenges of life? The good news is that you have a choice. You can laugh or you can cry.

I choose laughter far more often than tears! Laughter coupled with the idea that "This too shall pass" provides me with a realistic perspective about what I can and can't control.

And that just makes life a whole lot easier!