

# Life Is Good...Mostly!

by Dr. Bill Everhart

Recently I received a “Life Is Good” wheel cover as a gift. And while it looks great on my car, it wasn't long before I realized the responsibility that comes with driving around town making such a public declaration. I mean, really, if you're driving around telling the world life is good, then you better darn well act like you believe it!



The truth is, like a lot of folks I'm not always in the best of moods while I'm out driving around. I might be running late for work, which I find annoying and frustrating. I may not be feeling well physically, which also has a tendency to dampen my mood. Or (and this is the one that can really get the best of me) maybe some other driver is acting like a total jerk – cutting me off or tailgating me – causing me to shift immediately into road rage mode.

During those times I'm not exactly a poster child for the “Life Is Good” society, no doubt displaying a blatant incongruity between my negative mood and the pithy slogan emblazoned across the rear of my car. (Sort of like Christians who drive around with the Ichthys fish stuck to their bumpers, all the while driving like idiots and displaying what some might consider less-than-Christian behavior.) The bottom line is that the wheel cover makes me feel like I need to be happy and positive all the time – at least while I'm driving – and anything less is a failure on my part.

But, as I often remind my clients, having a positive view of life in general doesn't mean one is always in a good mood or that nothing ever bothers us. Feelings are feelings, and there are often valid and understandable reasons why we feel the way we do. And, the fact of the matter is that it's okay to get annoyed and frustrated from time to time. It's okay to feel down from time to time. It's even okay to lose patience with other drivers from time to time. It's how we respond to, and cope with, those feelings when they occur that's important.

I'll keep the “Life Is Good” wheel cover on my car for now *and* accept the responsibility that comes with it. And, if you cut me off in traffic, rest assured that the hand gesture I make in return is nothing more than a friendly wave, wishing you a happy and pleasant day.