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**Simple, Easy-to-follow Lessons for Life**  
**Allan Wilson's Book Gives You Plenty to Think About**  
*Standards of Excellence: for students of life*  
**by Allan Wilson**  
**Blue Grama Publications, 120 pages, \$18.70**

Review by MATTHEW B. CONLEY

*Standards of Excellence* is a heart-felt book. It will shock you; make you feel more aware, give you advice and hope for your future. The book is written by Mr. Allan Wilson, a local man with many stories and experiences to tell, not all of them happy. Mr. Wilson is a teacher and writer but has worked as a truck driver, forklift operator, armored car driver, customs officer, salesperson and a president of a Toronto business. He currently teaches English Language Arts and Photography at the Lethbridge Collegiate Institute. The saddest part of Mr. Wilson's story is the fact that he lost his 16-year-old son to cancer, an event, which (obviously) changed his life forever. The book is neither a work of fiction nor a novel, but simply an advice book. Unlike most advice books, it contains no fancy jargon, just straight facts from Mr. Wilson. The book offers simple, easy-to-follow advice that could apply to anyone. The author talks about eight lessons to live by. My four favourites were "Be Careful in Relationships", "Consider the Stupidity Factor", "Count Your Money" and "Face the Hard Things".

What I particularly enjoyed about the book was when the author incorporated a short story or example to go with his lessons. I would have liked the book more if Mr. Wilson had included more stories. He has sold his abilities short. He could have informed and entertained a little longer. What was enjoyable with the author's style of writing is that he had good tempo and kept moving. I could not find one place in the book where he dragged on too much about the subject. An important thing that makes the book unique is that Mr. Wilson sticks

to the facts, no exaggeration for literary purposes. He's blunt and quick to the point, definitely writing his thoughts with a purpose. I did enjoy Mr. Wilson's use of historical events and figures to demonstrate his points. Who would have thought *Meditations* by Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius would apply to today's world? In all, I feel many people can relate to this book. It is only one hundred pages, of reading time well spent. I finished the book the night I purchased it. As a community, I feel we have an opportunity to support our local authors and encourage them. Doing this book review was extra special for me. Unlike all the other reviews I have done in the past, I had a chance to meet and speak with the author.

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I guarantee *Standards of Excellence* is one book that will give you plenty to think about.

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*Matthew B. Conley is a Lethbridge freelance writer.*