

Adulthood

by SHERALYN ROMAN

Adulthood is hard. Remember when you were a kid and you couldn't wait to be an adult? Without exception I'm sure at least once as a child you thought to yourself, "I can't wait 'til I'm grown up and can do whatever I want!?" Implication being that as an adult, life would be so much fun. Well, you know what I did this past weekend? I cleaned out and reorganized a closet, and not just any old closet but one that serves as a linen, front hall and storage pantry all in one. Oh yeah, and wait for it, I ironed (ironed!) Adulthood, as it turns out, is not fun. Often it's hard work and even more often, it's boring. So much for doing whatever I want!

It turns out that being an adult is all the internet memes happening to you all at once, all the time. It's cleaning up the dirty dishes and pots and pans, after every single meal, three times a day, every damn day. Meals that first you have to dream up, then grocery shop for, and after that "plan, prepare and serve. Only to hear your five-year-old complain they don't like (insert exact meal you've just prepared even though they loved it yesterday) while your teenager proclaims, "but Mom, you know I'm vegetarian now.?" Yeah, fun times indeed.

Adulthood is looking forward to a rainy Saturday (it's sad but true) so you can get "caught up" (newsflash, you'll never, ever, catch up) with your laundry, or cleaning, or yard work or?...whatever else is on your long list of "to do's." Adulthood is coming home from the grocery store with just one bag of groceries that cost the equivalent of the mortgage payment on your first home. Worse, as you unpack it, you realize you've forgotten the one thing you actually went for in the first place! For parents in September, adulthood means signing multiple school forms, in triplicate, to the point where you'd consider having a personalized signature stamp made at your local Staples "if only you didn't have to wait behind all the people in line for Service Ontario. Also, adulthood is making school lunches every day until you die.

It's hard to be an adult right now and perhaps watch your now-adult kids start to face some of the same dilemmas, especially in a world that seems to be increasingly difficult to live in. We're passing down a legacy of dramatic climate change resulting in towns and cities around the world demolished by flames, all while some of our so-called leaders deny climate change is real.

We urge, encourage and where possible facilitate, our children to train, apprentice, go to school and to find a job they are passionate about. We hope they find someone to love and we want them to go and explore the world while they're young. Unfortunately, accessing secure employment that's not gig- or contract-based is a thing of the past, making stability and dreams of home ownership or "settling down" seem unattainable. As for travelling, how, when you're already on a tight budget? Virtually impossible, and no, it's not because they're all eating avocado toast.

With what I admit to an unhealthy obsession with what happens south of the border on November 5, I suggest adulthood is also hard because, frankly, it's pretty damn scary to think someone like Donald Trump might yet be President. I worry because what happens in the US will have an impact on us here at home. Some might argue that point but with past events like the "Freedom Convoys" and even last year's local "1 Million March 4 Children" we have already felt the detrimental effects of US politics and that's before the orange buffoon's third attempt to secure the Presidency.

I have reached a point of incredulity that heretofore I did not know existed. How any person can possibly vote for a man who actually believes sending "childs" (his word) to school might result in them coming back home having received gender-affirming surgery as decided upon by their teachers? How can one support a man who continues to speak about "Hannibal Lecter" as if he is a real person and further, that he is "representative" of the types of people seeking asylum in the US? This must surely be fake news? Sadly, it is not. That he denies countless sexual assaults by saying "they were not the chosen one," is gross, vile and contemptible. His selection of running mate is a man who calls school shootings "a fact of life," and both say teaching the facts of life at school should be prohibited, yet if not knowing the facts of life results in an unplanned pregnancy, they'll ensure safe access to abortion is not available.

Together these two are reprehensible. Politics is a dangerous discussion and Canada is not immune to some very real concerns about our own potential future leaders, but right now it's especially hard to be an adult, trying to explain to your child why the US might elect a dangerous, possibly senile, temper-tantrum throwing infant to its highest political office ? especially when there is a competent, decent, hard-working, sensible and principled adult alternative.

If all this makes you want to bury your head in the sand; avoid watching the news and maybe, just maybe, also avoid house-cleaning, never ending taxi duties, or that trip to your local hardware store for a new plunger ?cause the toilet's blocked yet again, you might be tired of adulting.

It's hard work and nothing like what I thought it would be when I could hardly wait to grow up and do ?whatever I want.? Silly me, I thought adulting would be fun.