This page was exported from - Caledon Citizen
Export date: Sat Sep 12 13:42:37 2026 / +0000 GMT

Are we comfortably ?slotted into? our lives?

by Mark Pavilons

As I went about my daily business recently, I?took a step back, and realized just how orderly things are.

I'm in my own lane, one that's been set for me, and all I do is go from Point A to Point B, and occasionally veer off to Point C, sometimes swinging around Point D.

Is that what our lives have come down to?

I?pictured a Hot Wheels race track or one of those fancy slot car tracks we used to play with as kids. The track and the slot kept our cars on the straight and narrow, and only when we went too fast, or took a turn too quickly, did we venture off the rails.

Are we conditioned to be like ducks in a row, following a certain path?

Perhaps once our indoctrination took hold as we grew into young adults, we were already conditioned to be consumers, cogs in some enormous societal wheel. George Orwell would be proud.

But really folks, those of us Baby Boomers followed a rather specified path. We went to school where we were taught what to think, not how to think. We chose a post-secondary field of study, or we opted to go straight to work, or trade school.

We spin the wheel in the Game of Life, and meander around the board. We choose career or school and keep plugging away until we gain friends or family.

If we want to slide back into the race track scenario, we got our driver's licence, landed work, kept inching forward, around the track. Maybe we had a slight fender-bender and met our soul-mate or future spouse.

And so it goes. Like most board games, the object was to amass as much money and property as possible, to be successful.

What?

I was never specifically taught to be greedy, and obtain personal wealth at all costs. I wasn't directed to put things first and cherish objects. I wasn't encouraged to practice idolatry.

I always believed I?was to stay away from those deadly sins, at all cost.

Have we simple humans put a major monkey wrench in things by exercising free will and free choice, driven by our frail emotions?

I?laugh in the face of our celestial chess players, those giants hovering above on Mount Olympus. Humans may very well be playthings in the fabric of the universe.

But if you think about it, a lot of what we do is rote. We get up, brush our teeth, grab a coffee, jump in our car and head to work. After eight hours or so, we head back, maybe stopping to pick something up on the way home. We have dinner, hopefully at the table with everyone present.

We watch some TV and catch our favourite sports team in action.

Sleep, wake, work, repeat.

There have been many times I?examined my almost mechanical actions. Okay, some of them are filled with emotions, while others are simply mindless movements. I fill the dishwasher, take out the trash, replace the paper towel roll.

I'm not saying everything we do has to have meaning, but it would be nice to inject a little umph into our daily lives. Our steps should be light and almost dance-like, not clunky, thud-like movements. Our heads should be held high, and our eyes wide as we take in everything around us.

And yet, we waste more than we cherish.

I?have found my new ?cancer routine??to be matter of fact, cold, and calculated.

I?approach every appointment, blood test, scan and treatment with a rational, straight-forward mind set. I?set my alarm, hit the road, attend my appointments, discuss my condition with my doctor, and return to work. Then I do it all over again, every couple of weeks.

Sure, I sometimes get anxious about what awaits, but then I just focus, steer my personal ?race car??along the track that's before me. It's a course that's designed specifically for me and one that I have to navigate, often alone, sometimes in the wee hours.

This is my journey, from here on in. Sure, it may be smooth sailing some days while others require more than one pit stop. The checkered flag, in my case, remains elusive, hidden.

There are no crowds cheering me on, but there may be a few ?fans??here and there, sending positive thoughts and vibes my way.

I?have to rely on the skills, kindness and compassion of nurses, radiation techs, oncologists, administrators and special pharmacists.

My phone is filled more with appointment schedules than jovial vacation photos. I concentrate on more frequent visits to the gas station and I try to make sure my hospital parking pass is up to date.

These are things I?never thought I would ever have to worry about. Alas, such is my fate.I'd much rather have no need for countless texts for appointments, new information on various portals, and reminder upon reminder.

I'd much rather scoot around the circuit, top down, watching the speedometer lean heavily to the right. I'd be much happier steering around hairpin curves, enjoying the thrill of it all.

Through it all, I?have to make sure my car is road worthy, and well maintained, lest I be derailed.

It's kinda funny that we humans can reduce a life-altering ?race??to a series of movements ??ates, times, destinations.

I'm still a productive member of our family, and run errands, drive kids around, pick up pizza and attend functions. In our busy lives, there's little time to pause and wonder just how I'm feeling. Fortunately (?), I've felt rather well physically. Emotionally, that's another story.

But we resilient drivers firmly grasp the wheel at 10 to 2, and look in all directions.

Wouldn't it be nice to just leap out of our race cars and just walk around, enjoying the scenery?

Do we need to go that fast?

For the most part, we are led by common sense, rationality and a sense of purpose. If that purpose is earning a living to support our

family, so be it. If that objective is to make it to Point V (for Victory), great.

I?wish everyone a safe driving experience, and hope you all make it safely to your destination.