

Don't unpack the sweaters just yet

by BROCK WEIR

Are you ready for sweater weather?

Autumn arrives this Friday, and, depending on your internal thermostat, you're probably either dreading the arrival of the fall equinox or looking forward to a decidedly cozier season ahead.

Personally, I've always had a love-hate relationship with the change of seasons.

As a kid, I loved the chance to decompress from life in the classroom or lecture hall over the summer, but as my thermostat generally runs a bit on the warm side, the heat and humidity was, at best, a bit of a buzzkill or, at worst, my very own climate nemesis. In short, I wilted pretty easily and the younger me looked forward to returning to elementary school in my unfortunate trademark of trackpants but, in my defence, these Zellers numbers had Gordie Howe's name slapped on them for some reason, so sporty by default!

Maybe I was a bit ahead of my time when it came to the North American embrace of the Danish principle of Hygge that is, the cultivation of coziness but it was strictly a matter of comfort at the time.

As I got older, however, I became fonder of summer and what has become an alarmingly increasing number of warmer months throughout the year. I'm not sure exactly when and how this shift took place, but maybe it was just a matter of learning how to maximize what I could get out of summer and squeeze the most out of it.

Maybe wisdom does indeed come with age no matter what that age happens to be.

I couldn't help but smile last week when my colleague, Sheralyn Roman, wrote her column for the Caledon Citizen on the subject of 'Adulting.' We've all been there when it comes to adulting, but the timing of the column made me chuckle because I entered my fortieth year on Tuesday or, as I now prefer to think of it, in honour of late, great comedian Jack Benny, hitting 39 and holding.

'Remember when you were a kid and couldn't wait to be an adult?' she posed. 'Without exception, I am 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.

'It turns out 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 all that plan, prepare and serve. Adulting is looking forward to a rainy Saturday so you can get 'caught up' (News Flash: You'll never, ever catch up) with your laundry, or cleaning, or yard work or whatever else is on your long list of to-dos. Adulting 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!'

Sher's comments were, in part, based on being a parent, but even as a 'childless cat dad,' to borrow a phrase from Taylor Swift and her bizarre coterie of unlikely political adversaries, they resonated. Yet, no matter what one's age, family situation, and how furry those in your life might be, I'm noticing an increase in people just looking to hit the fast-forward button on life.

Summer will still have one final official gasp in it by the time this paper arrives at your door on Thursday, but this might come as a surprise to all those who have been looking for just about any excuse to count it out.

The August Long Weekend saw the first round of this metaphorical nail-biting and tooth-gnashing that 'summer's almost over!' It

wasn't. By the time Labour Day came around, those same people, and probably a few more in their ranks, they were using any measure but a calendar to usher the season towards its demise ? from the end of the CNE, to the first day of school, and anything in between.

Then there are those festive types who begin the countdown to Christmas on December 27 of any given year, trying to move the needle forward to a holiday season that is, more often than not, even in this day of Climate Change, typified by cold, snow and ice.

Others still are looking to mentally fast-forward for some more concerning reasons.

A friend who just happens to be a ?childless pet dad? recently mused they were in the throes of pre-mourning one of their pets simply because they crossed an arbitrary age threshold. Another wished we could be in the middle of November with the snap of the fingers because, to hear them tell it, the lead-up to and worry about that month's U.S. Presidential Election was causing ulcers. No word at press time whether Jagmeet Singh's decision to ?rip up? its agreement with the governing Liberals is also causing peptic upset. I suspect it might be, but pressing that particular fast-forward button to see how that turns out could take us into next week or next fall.

Whiling away doesn't seem like the best use of anyone's time.

Rather than mourning a death that hasn't happened, this particular time could be used to make years of wonderful memories. Rather than worrying about a political outcome beyond our borders, although deeply concerning, the same could be used to try to affect meaningful change in ways large and small. Worry can be a valuable motivator, but it's just as important not to drown in it.

With international wars ongoing with little signs of a resolution, with economic and affordability challenges continuing in a rampant way, with political turmoil impacting just about every aspect of our lives, including those factors of conflict and cash, it's understandable why some might wish away weeks and months in hopes of a smoother road ahead or ripping the proverbial Band-Aid off something that could very well be unpleasant.

But, at the same time, it's more important than ever to live in the here and now, whether you're looking to make the most of a season, advance a cause, or do something that is otherwise important to you.

But maybe that's just being 364 days away from 40 talking!