

There's a time to just let it be?

by Mark Pavilons

Go with the flow, let it be, go with the grain, not against it.

There's a lot to be said for being chill.

In today's high-stress, high-tension times, being laid-back has become scarce. But it's vitally necessary for good mental and physical health.

I'm not talking reclining in the lunch room at work and falling asleep kind of chill. No, what we need is a constant calm, a sense of peace and a way to detoxify and shed that stressful outer layer.

John Lennon was quite astute when he advised us there will be an answer, so just let it be.

That's not to say we should ignore everything and be oblivious to our surroundings. We can be cautious and think things through.

But when we're dealing with our emotions good and bad we should consider that our bodies and minds are not a battlefield. Who are we fighting? Ourselves.

That's our mistake. Sure, we're bombarded with external stresses that make us anxious, depressed, even angry. But that anger should be wrapped in tin foil and tossed aside, expelled like a deep, calming breath or relaxing sigh.

Many of us Boomers made fun of the gurus and peace-seekers during the 1970s and 80s. The hippies of the 1960s were a bit before my time, but I do remember my sister donning beads, frilled vests and headbands with her friends.

Most of us remember a more relaxed time, the low-key tranquil times of our youth. We seldom rushed or were late, mostly because many of us didn't wear watches or had any hard and fast schedule. When meeting up with friends, we provided a vague timeframe, with a lot of leeway.

We seldom had the need for a Plan B, because if Plan A didn't work, well, we just resorted to doing nothing. We could always go for a drive with the windows open, or drop by, unannounced, at a multitude of friends' homes. We never called first and we were often met with he's not home.

Not to worry. We were never deterred.

We also rarely worried about what to wear. Jeans and a t-shirt were the go-to fashion. Our closet was the pile on the bedroom floor!

For me, I did take school work seriously, and this was often done before and after dinner. Okay, I was a bit of a nerd and had most of my assignments done ahead of time. I hated leaving things until the last minute.

Today, last-minute seems to be the norm with my offspring. They will push that envelope as far as it goes. If they could bend time with their superpowers, they would.

One would think that as we get older, we would become more zen-like, less rushed. Oh, how I wish that were true.

My to-do lists have grown exponentially over the years and I'm still saddled with more than I care to address. Household chores and errands aside, the kids (okay, adults that we allow to live at home for free), keep us hopping.

They always have somewhere to go and something that needs doing. And they never seem to have enough time, so it always becomes the parents' responsibility.

Okay, I get picking up after our young, even feeding them on occasion. But driving them to a friend's house at 10 p.m. for a 3 a.m. retrieval is a bit much. Grabbing take-out because there's nothing to eat at home is another constant burden.

When I was a young man, any time I asked the rhetorical question, 'What's to eat?' I was met with 'Look in the fridge.'

The beauty of my youth was there was always a can of Beefaroni around to crack open. That and a loaf of dreamy, soft, squishy Wonderbread.

Want a quick, cheap and easy way to relive your youth? Get these and make yourself a snack! There are five of us under one roof, with five different tastes and meal requirements. Okay, my son and I will eat almost anything. The girls, on the other hand, have specific tastes. If this were medieval Europe, they'd each have handmaidens to fetch them what they desired.

But this butler-server-servant-pack mule is getting a bit long in the tooth.

And dishes? Don't get me started.

When I was young, we lived in rural Caledon and were on septic and wells. We didn't have a dishwasher and used water sparingly.

Today, mon dieu, my kids take full advantage of the generous supply of water by having daily showers and baths.

When I look at the sink every day when I come home, it looks like 10 people live in our house. Heck, in my formative years, I used the same fork for all my meals. I never used a spoon and had one glass I toted around for days.

Our upstairs hallway looks like a hotel corridor, with doors closed and many goodies left outside for the staff to remove.

I think my kids have quite a different take on the term 'let it be' than I do!

Is it any wonder I often look perplexed or mildly disgruntled?

No, I don't get it. And to help maintain order, peace and tranquility, I must not upset the youngins for fireworks are sure to ensue should I point out any of their shortcomings.

That's funny, but not in a Stooges sort of way. My dad would bark orders at me and then smack me in the back in the head for not responding fast enough. Questioning dad was out of the question and resistance was futile.

Oh, the good, old days.

But, in the early evenings, stretching our legs in front of our house as the sun set was our remedy. This is how we let it be.

In the summer, I still try to make it a point to snag some rays in our Bolton backyard. As the sun clips the rooftops, I position a lawn chair to soak up every last ray.

To me, that's the ultimate end to a perfect, or hectic, day.

Washing the stress away with some carbonated beverages, my breaths deepen and I just let all be.

How about you?