

All the snow is gone now, here on the Cape. But some of the vestiges of winter yet remain. There is still some yard clean-up to do. And some of the trees and shrubs will show scars for some time to come, as a result of the heavy loads they carried this past snow season.

As spring arrives in our lives, some of us too are carrying heavy loads. And we are busy trying to fit it all in.

Whether we have the scars to prove it is a moot question. We can carry our loads cheerfully or otherwise. And there is no judgment about that; we're doing the best we can, under the circumstances. Sometimes the loads are just too much.

These loads are the usual suspects: work, family and community responsibilities. Perhaps it is a question of health: physical, mental or even financial. Then there is just the fullness of life that is sometimes overwhelming or depressing, or the source of frustration or anxiety. There are the things that have already happened and the stuff we worry might happen next. It has been called "the full catastrophe."

Here is a tip for the day-to-day life we all wake up to each morning: Stop.... Take a breather....just for a moment....several times a day.

Can we give ourselves 60 seconds each hour to take a breather? That's not asking too much. Once an hour, we can purposefully stop what it is we are doing, and find a place to sit or stand, and rest. With the eyes closed if that is comfortable, breathing deeply with no other agenda than to take a short break from the day. (This also means no distractions like talking, reading, radio, TV or food.)

During this 60 second stop-over between the flights of our daily life, we need not make anything happen. The goal here is simply to breathe and notice how we feel: physically, emotionally and mentally. We simply accept that this is the way we feel right now; and then, when the 60 second stop-over is up, we move on to the next task in our day.

This is a moment for us to give ourselves the attention we deserve, even if it is just for 60 seconds. If we see something we want to change, so be it. But that is for another time, a time when we will make that a specific task to perform. This is a time to simply "be" with ourselves and for ourselves.

And no it doesn't change the loads we carry, at least not directly. It is just a first step toward getting back in touch with ourselves, after a long hard winter.

