

# THIS TIME OF YEAR, 'OUT OF SIGHT, OUT OF MIND' WORKS FOR ME

**HOT SPOT MAKES US FORGET ABOUT THE COLD, WRITES TED BROWN**



**TED BROWN**  
Column

As we arrive in April, I find myself becoming impatient - I might even say that I'm a bit cranky.

It's that time of the year when Mother Nature is constantly teasing us, dangling that 'carrot' called 'spring' in front of us as we look out the window and see blue skies and sunshine, making us smile in anticipation of basking in the warmth of spring.

Then she slaps us with reality the moment we step outside.

I think as I age, I become more aware of the cold and how it affects our bodies.

At the end of February, The Sidekick and I took a weeklong cruise in the Caribbean and enjoyed 30 C-plus temperatures; it was wonderful, an experience I've never enjoyed before.

For seven short days, my joints were warm and nothing in my body ached.

But it was short-lived: after three or four days back to our Canadian winter, the chills and aches returned.

It was the first time that I had ever been away to 'someplace warm' in the

middle of winter. And I'm pretty sure I've now been spoiled.

So, as we get closer to mid-April, when we can expect things to warm up, the more impatient I become.

Some people call that impatience seasonal affective disorder, or SAD - a condition that makes us become cranky or sad due to the lack of sunshine. I might agree to a point, but I can get lots of 'sunshine' if I want to go outside and freeze.

For me, it's not a lack of sunshine, it's simply a lack of warm weather.

I look around the property here and want to do things - clean up the yard, convert the tractors for summer jobs, you name it - but everything around me is still mud or ice.

But I recently stumbled across a stopgap measure to counter that absence of warmth.

When The Sidekick and I take Hamish the dog outside to do his business, we walk him around the back of the house, and he wanders down the hill to select the perfect spot to do it.

Now, as many dog owners out there know, a dog cannot simply walk over to a spot and just 'do it.' There is a great deal of research and sniffing to locate that 'perfect place.'

After a while, I could use a seat to watch the dog do his thing.

So, in the interest of making myself more comfortable, I took two of those cheap plastic lawn chairs

out back for The Sidekick and I to sit on while Hamish searches for his spot.

And once I set up the chairs and sat down, I suddenly discovered something - it was warm there.

Believe it or not, the light-coloured siding on our house was acting like a simple parabolic mirror of sorts, collecting the warmth of the sun, and concentrating the heat into one area. The Sidekick and I could sit there and actually bask in the warmth of the shelter of the house.

We were still wearing our winter coats, but we found it surprisingly cosy; we even opened our coats and enjoyed the warm sunshine on our faces.

We were in a private little sanctuary, tucked away from the rest of the world.

And most importantly, it doesn't seem cold or raw, especially since there's no mud or ice in sight (out of sight, out of mind works for me).

The last few days, when the sun is shining, I pull up a chair to watch the dog defecate down the back hill.

At times I've even taken a coffee along, to make it a truly relaxing event.

I'm certainly less impatient now.

And hopefully I'll be able to hold out until the ground dries up - unless the dog changes his spot ...

*Ted Brown is a freelance journalist for the IFP. He can be contacted at tedbit@hotmail.com.*

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Young Georgetown figure skaters prepare for the annual carnival in March 1968. This photo is provided by the Esquesing Historical Society.

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