This is a pre-travel post and hardly references Hepatitis C at all (just so you know)

December 19, 2015 By Grace Campbell

As treatment drifts further and further into the background of my life, living is swimming to the surface.

I've finished work for the year (although as a school principal you never really finish, you just hide from the backlog for a few weeks). I did the entire fourth term working full time, although I admit I spent much more time working on administrative tasks than in front of the chalkboard. I've achieved SVR12. My scans are clear. Sure, there's still some work to be done with my platelets and INR, but the other markers were hunky-dory last time I checked.

So what is there left to do in 2015? Travel, of course!

I'm busy packing for close to 6 weeks in Canada, Cuba and a brief stay in the US. I'll leave my partner and the animals at home - someone has to keep the home fires burning! But I'll be off to colder climes.

Actually, packing is something of a misnomer. I'm not packing. I am trying to decide how small a bag I can get away with since my last big ol' duffle bag went to God earlier this year. Clearly hundreds of thousands of miles in cargo holds and on many airline conveyer belts, combined with being opened a lot by TSA people is not good for bag lifespan. I'm trying to work out how little clothing I can get away with, without dying of frostbite in Ottawa. I don't want to look like I'm carrying my entire wardrobe in my bag, like some people I see lumbering from one terminal to the other.

I'm not packing. I'm pretending to pack.

My daughter lives in Vancouver and I haven't seen her since last Christmas, so I will be catching up with her and her partner and I'll see some other friends in the US. My daughter and I will travel to Cuba for two weeks and hopefully catch the country before it's turned into some Disney parody of itself following the lifting of embargoes and travel restrictions. The country has been slowly changing and I really want to go there now before that change turns into an avalanche. I'm sure the lifting of restrictions will in many ways be wonderful for the Cuban people, but I fear it will also bring some changes that are not as welcome. Anyway I'm no expert on Cuba, I just want to go there!

None of this desire to travel is new. I love travelling. Only last year I travelled extensively over December and January, again to see my daughter and travel around the amazingly beautiful country that is Canada. But I admit I was often tired. Although I kept up a pretty punishing schedule (Vancouver/Toronto/Buffalo/NYC/DC/Montreal/Quebec/Newfoundland/Jasper) I found myself hitting the wall, especially one night in a hotel room in Jasper when I was so tired I could barely move.

I'm hoping this trip will be a bit easier, but looking at where I'm going and what I have planned, I doubt it!

This is one of the great joys of clearing the virus though. I can plan this holiday, knowing that I don't have hepatitis C as an additional carry-on. It's not part of my baggage any more.

I love to share my trips with my friends and family, so I Instagram the heck out of them. I love to find the quirky, the eccentric or the beautiful things a place has on show. I celebrate the things places have that make them different, and the things they have that make them similar.

Feel free to follow me on my trip. Come see the places I go to through the eyes of a weird foreigner! I'm easy to find - @janiekibble will do it

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