After-the-Treatment Mindfulness and Van Morrison's "Caravan"

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When I was finally home after all those months of surgery and treatment in Toronto, I felt strange. I had a floating, depersonalized, relaxed feeling. Was it the medications I was on? Was it the CBD oil? Or was it the euphoric feeling of freedom that comes with a sudden cessation of prolonged effort? It felt like coasting downhill on a smooth path after a hard climb. The newness of it allowed me to push the re-set button on everything – my relationships, my future plans, my enjoyments.

We launched our big trip. We are camping through Canada's National and Provincial Parks with our 18-foot trailer. Throughout, I remained in that state of fuzzy-headed mindfulness. I really tasted food, I really listened to birds, I really grooved to some '70s music. The beauty and diversity of Canada's coasts and lake and mountains dazzles my senses. I continue to have numbness and pain in my leg due to that post-surgical femoral nerve damage, and it limits my function, but in my tranquil state I let that go. My joy in being fully repaired from my defect fills me anew each day.

Perhaps my "in-the-present" mental state is also the result of being in remission from my inevitably fatal cancer. This remission will not last. Who knows how long I have before I go downhill again? I know one thing — I will enjoy this break as much as I can, floating on the knowledge of my hard-won temporary safety. I have swum to this island, and I will lie down upon it and bask in the sun.

The song I have selected for this time is a famous one. Van Morrison sang "Caravan" in 1970, on his celebrated album Moondance. It was a longstanding concert hit of his. I choose it for its expression of delight in the pleasing joys of a camping life, and for its unabashed revelling in life's simple pleasures.

And the caravan has all my friends
It will stay with me until the end
Gypsy Robin and sweet Emma Rose
Tell me everything I need to know

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