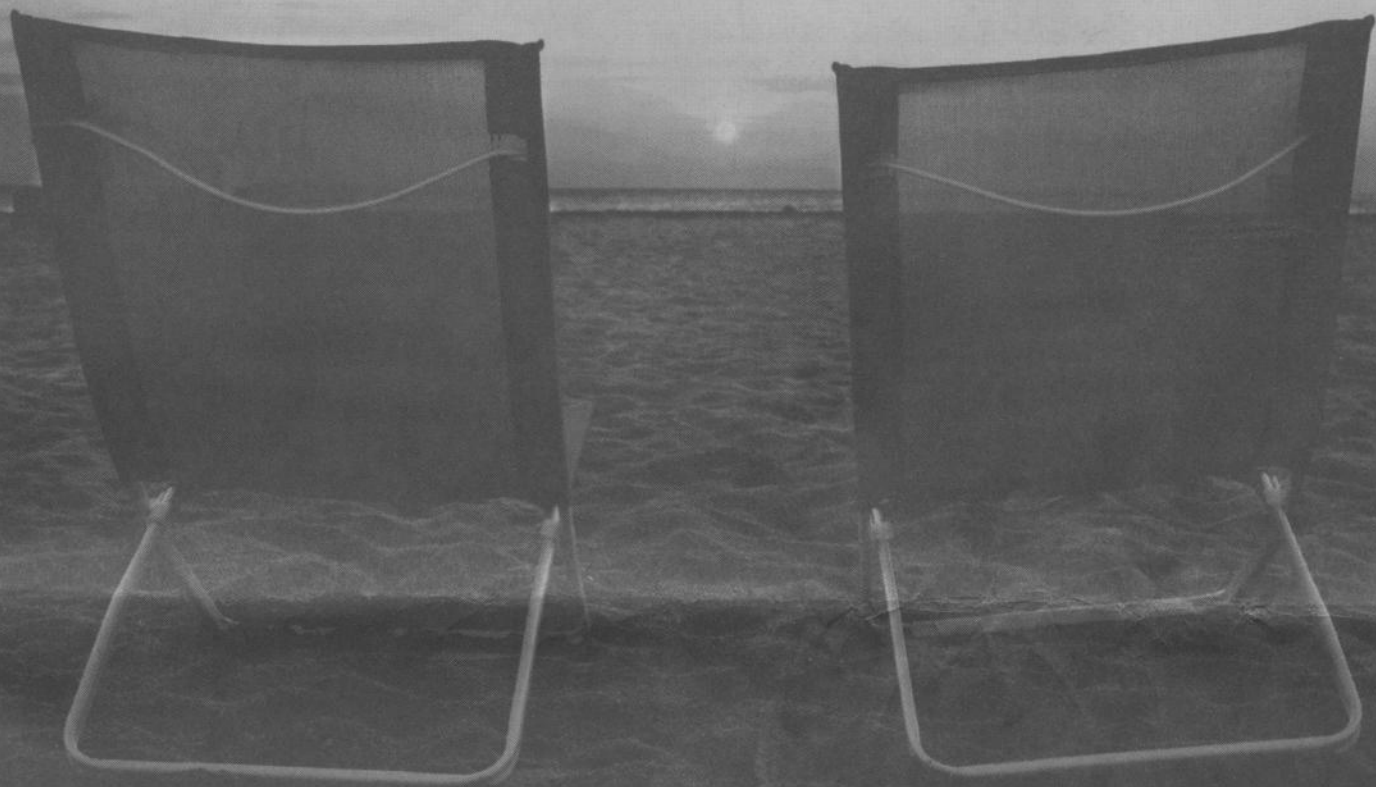


A CURE FOR THOSE
END-OF-SUMMER

BLUES



Experts say a shift in perception goes a long way to coping with winter

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DANA MARNANE,
Mamaroneck
resident

By Linda Lombroso

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There's a bittersweet beauty to this last week of August.

The traffic is lighter, the weather's still warm — but one of the most perfect summers on record is slowly fading away, and another miserable winter is sitting out there, ready and waiting.

For some, it's enough to set off a case of the end-of-summer blues.

“When it starts getting dark early, it does get a little depressing,” said Dana Marnane of Mamaroneck, who spent summer weekends sailing on the Long Island Sound. “We've had amazing days, and I think we've been so lucky.”

David Fabi doesn't even want to think of another winter of bitter-cold temperatures and constant snowstorms. “If you're a summer person, you have to brace for it, you have to get ready so you don't go into a pseudo-depression,” said Fabi, a hair colorist who lives in Yonkers and works in Byram, Connecticut.

But there are simple ways to stay positive as the warmth of summer slips away, said psychologist Christine Ziegler, director of the

**In Lohud
Weekend:
Fireworks,
fairs and fun
events for
Labor Day.**

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COLD: Try perspective shift

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Hudson Valley Center for Cognitive Therapy in Upper Nyack. And there's no need to decide you "hate" the winter just because it's got some unpleasant moments.

"Try not to view winter in 'black or white' terms," she said.

Fabi, for instance, didn't like shoveling out two cars every time it snowed last winter, and grumbled through the sweater-jacket-overcoat ritual that made him warm enough to go outside. "It's like the layer over the layer over the layer," he said.

Ziegler would have him view it another way.

"Challenge yourself to make a shift in this perspective by thinking of the times you've done pleasant and enjoyable activities," she said. "Finally, think about what was particularly difficult last winter, and plan how you can handle things differently this year."

Fabi already has a trip to St. Martin on the calendar for October. And he's going to hair shows in California in January and February, which will break up the cold winter months.

For musician Hank DeCora of Yorktown Heights, memories of the "long and arduous" winter stand in sharp contrast to a bright and sun-filled summer. He has three children, and Labor Day weekend sig-

nals the return to a hectic pace, and less time spent with family.

But families can still have fun together in colder weather, said Ziegler. If you have trouble remembering that other seasons have their high points, take a look at family photos of apple-picking, snowman-building, sitting in front of a fire or playing a winter sport.

"Remind yourself that because summer activities are enjoyed for a portion of the year, it make us appreciate and enjoy them all the more when it comes time to do them again," she said.

Heidi Garner, who lives in Blauvelt — and who spent time with her three kids on the beach at City Island this summer — said she's somewhat sad the season is coming to an end. But she's not dreading winter, even if it brings another crop of snowstorms and school closings.

"You make the best of it," she said. "My kids happen to like to go outside and play in that madness, and as long as they bundle up, I'm fine with that."

Despite forecasts that point to another difficult winter, not everyone looks at Labor Day weekend as the beginning of a seasonal slump.

In fact, said WNYW Fox 5 chief meteorologist Nick Gregory, who lives in New Rochelle, September is often one of the most pleasant months of the year in the New York area.

Andrea Kish grows all sorts of vegetables, including 70 varieties of tomatoes, in a community garden in her Irvington neighborhood. She's a big fan of September. "It gets cool at night and warm during the day, as opposed to the dog days of August, which we usually have, where everything is ripening too fast and burning up," she said.

Larchmont author Todd Strasser, an avid surfer, spent much of the summer on the east end of Long Island. "From a surfing perspective I'd like very much to push June — a damp, misty month in Montauk when the water's still relatively cold — back into spring and add September to summer," he said. "The water is still warm then, and the air is dry, and though I've never had a chance to experience it myself, I'm told by locals that it's the best month of the year out here."

Still, Gregory said he'll miss the long stretch of glorious weather.

"I think the blues are going to hit hard when reality checks in come September into October," he said.

But with the right mindset, said Ziegler, it's possible to stay cheerful, no matter what the coming seasons bring.

"Reframe the way you're perceiving winter," she said. "Acknowledge that there are parts of winter you may not enjoy or look forward to, and accept that for what it is."

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