**Stop the change**

I feel like I’ve been robbed or maybe a victim of a conspiracy! Someone came into my weekend and stole and entire hour of sunshine. The weird thing for me this year is that I was in Tucson over the weekend when the clock changed. Arizona doesn’t change their clocks for day light savings, so I didn’t even get that extra hour of sleep, I lost my hour on the plane flying down there. This time of year is simply painful.

I’m ready for bed at 6 pm.  No kidding! It feels like midnight! Daylight savings time has been in practice for decades and I’m wondering why we still have it in place.

There are so many wrongs with day light savings. It’s not only about changing the clocks on the walls, it’s also a serious adjustment for our bodies, energy, safety and health.

           History: The history of daylight savings has been documented as far back as 1784 when Ben Franklin suggested the idea in an essay titled “An Economical Project for Diminishing the Cost of Light.”  It wasn’t until 1907 when an Englishman, William Willet, suggested it again after observing a home with all its shades pulled during the middle of the day.  He wrote a pamphlet called “The Waste of Daylight” and suggested that time be changed in four-time steps of twenty minutes each during the spring and summer months.

  It wasn’t’ until 1916 when the British Summer Time Act, finally enacted the one-hour time change for the summer months.  In 1918 England recognized the country could save money by practicing this time change every year.  When America went to war in 1942 they too enacted the time change as a means of conserving costs.  Between 1942 and 1966 there was no U.S. law regarding the time change, and each state could choose what it wanted to do.  However, it created a ton of confusion with the different times in different states. Then the Uniform Time Act of 1966 was enacted setting the last Sunday of April and of October to determine when Daylight Savings time changes were to occur.  We’ve been following this ever since.

            Health: Our bodies need light.  Many of our natural cycles and circadian rhythms are set by the amount of light we are exposed to every day.  Circadian rhythm is the 24-hour cycle that our bodies adapt to; awake and asleep.  Our bodies need and get used to so many hours of awake time and sleep time.  The more stable and consistent our circadian rhythm is, the better we sleep and the better we adapt to changes.  This circadian rhythm can be disrupted by many things; lack of sleep, stress, illness, environment changes, travel, changes in daylight, etc.

            Exposure to light or lack of light is a huge disruption to this circadian rhythm.  So, when the external light is changed, even by an hour, our internal clock becomes out of sync or mismatched with our current day versus night cycle or our awake versus sleep cycle.  Then our bodies begin to feel tired according to the light, instead of according to the hour of the day and we feel all thrown off.

Safety: Interesting facts about time changes supported by various research institutes state that risk of heart attacks increase by 10 percent on Monday and Tuesdays in the Spring after moving our clocks ahead an hour and then the risk decreases in the Fall when we return the time. Strokes increase for a week or two after day light savings. Also, more auto accidents happen the Monday after time changes as well, this attributed to the tiredness that is associated with the change.

           It’s not so much the time change that hurts, it’s the loss of “light” that makes these days so difficult.  Fortunately, or unfortunately, we’ll adjust to the shorter days soon enough.

            Instead ending this article with my traditional ‘hang in there the sunshine is coming back soon.’ I want to know why we are still changing our clocks. I think we need to put a stop to it, there’s no financial benefits anymore and still many health/safety concerns surrounding day light savings! Stop the change!