

2nd October 2025

Schedules

**"The key is not to prioritise what's on your schedule,
but to schedule your priorities."**

Stephen Covey, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*

A week or so ago, a cyber-attack which affected European airports caused untold disruption. With on-line check-in facilities out of commission, baggage-checking in confusion, lengthy queues in airport terminals, and many flights cancelled, many people had their schedules upset – connecting flights missed, business meetings cancelled, holidays delayed, homecomings postponed. I'm so glad I wasn't caught up in the melee.

No one likes their schedules to be disrupted: from roadworks, to a bus-service that's cancelled; from a cyber-attack at airports, to someone who's late for a date; from a meeting that runs over, to a restaurant booking that's gone wrong; from an event that's postponed to the plumber who doesn't turn up; from the barbeque ruined by the rain to a favourite Soap that's off-air. We make schedules – for very good reasons – and so we take it ill-out when they are thrown into confusion.

Some people cope with changes to their schedule with a sanguine attitude, a phlegmatic shrug of the shoulders, and a resigned, "Well, nobody died", kind of approach. Others – and here's one of those writing this "Thought for the Day" – are *much* less patient.

The problem for me is two-fold. Firstly, if I put myself at the centre of the universe, any change of schedule, big or small, seems to me to be designed to disrupt *my* world. It's as if something's gone wrong *on purpose*, solely to affect my equilibrium. How arrogant is that? And secondly, I'm guilty of taking a position that Steven Covey – quoted above – warns against. If what's on my schedule is everything, if the fulfilling of my schedule becomes my priority, then of course, if it is disrupted, my "everything" is destabilised. But if I was to schedule my priorities, then I might be better able to see which disruptions matter, and which don't.

Some more pondering on that one will be necessary for me, I reckon, because I'm not *quite* convinced. Perhaps I should prioritise some thinking about how I cope with disruptions in my schedules.

A prayer for today

*Me, the centre of the universe? Oh, come on!
Isn't that God shaking a head at my arrogance?*