

# The UK is not just suffering shit-life syndrome. We're ...

Published: January 13, 2026, 11:45 am

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Will Hutton has an article in the Guardian [in which he argues](#) that the recent decline in the growth of life expectancy in the UK (and its decline in some parts) is down to what he describes as 'shit-life syndrome'. This is the state where life is reduced to an exercise in mere survival as a result of the economic and social oppression lined up against those suffering the condition. And, as he points out, those suffering are not just those on the economic and social margins of society. In the UK, as in the US, the syndrome is spreading.

The reasons for this can be debated. I engaged in such argument in my book [The Courageous State](#). In that book I argued that we live in a world where those with power do now, when they identify a problem, run as far as they might from it and say the market will find a solution. The market won't do that. It is designed not to do so. Those suffering shit-life syndrome have, by default, little impact on the market. That's one of the reasons why they are suffering the syndrome in the first place. That is why so much of current politics has turned a blind eye to this issue.

And they get away with it. That's because the world of make belief advertising which drives the myths that underpin the media, and in turn out politics, simply pretends such a syndrome does not exist whilst at the same time perpetually reinforcing the sense of dissatisfaction that is at its core.

What cures shit-life syndrome? Let's not beat about the peripheries on this. The time for that has gone.

Decent homes would help beat shit-life syndrome.

The security of knowing you can eat would help as well.

As would knowing that there's a chance that income will cover outgoings.

The availability of affordable credit at a time of crisis would be of value.

Meaningful work would be transformational.

Access to society - which can simply mean transport and the means to partake - is also key.

Knowing the planet might survive would be of value.

Believing in a future is key.

These things are not unreasonable expectations. But we are failing to organise our society to deliver them.

That is a choice.

It's the wrong choice.

We need to transform our choices. These needs have to be met. Not to extend life. But to make life worth living. It's unacceptable that it is not. And the evidence that it is not for too many is now all too clear.

And whilst this goes on our politicians argue about Brexit which they know will make things worse.

We don't just suffer shit life syndrome. We're also suffering shit politician syndrome. And both are crippling.