

An update

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I have now spent a fortnight pretty much under the weather with long Covid. This is a part of a five-month episode since early July (when I had Covid) during which these episodes have recurred because of my body's apparent inability to fight off a sinusitis infection which has, in itself, been fairly unpleasant. The result, I now appreciate, has been fourfold.

First, I feel as I have achieved almost nothing during the second half of this year. I am sure that this is not true, but it feels like it.

Second, the book I hoped to have out this year has not happened.

Third, all my plans for videos or podcasts have been put on hold, for now.

Fourth, much the same frustration has happened in my non-social media and public-facing academic work.

I could apologise for all this, of course. However, I am not sure I could have done a lot about any of this, so I am not convinced that would really be appropriate.

But, as recovery begins again (after two weeks of antibiotics this time, with the second round underway) and with the chance of a few weeks of feeling OK looming (if I am lucky) thoughts have turned to 2023, given that 2022 can now (in my mind) be considered a write-off, and assuming I do eventually reacquire the ability to clear infections. What to do?

I have a wish list of three things. One is to write another book. What I can say right now is that the narrative theme that I found hard to develop earlier this year when attempting this task is now evolving. I think it essential that a book on economics has a story to tell, and not just be cold imparting of facts. If this theme works then writing a book will be much easier.

Second, podcasting rather than videos seems more likely. Two ideas are developing. One is for short explanatory podcast. These would essentially update the old video

series. The maximum length would be 10 minutes. The second will be more conventional podcasts: discussion of up to 30 minutes. Both are easier to do than videos, I think.

Third, my academic focus may return to tax. The role of tax in the macroeconomy is a massively under-explored and so misunderstood issue, which is one reason why economies are so badly managed. Ideas for journal papers and maybe a book are developing here, probably with my regular writing partner on such themes, Prof Andrew Baker.

Of course, the usual stuff will continue, although it has to be said that Twitter feels like a dull, muted and malfunctioning space at present and so some new thinking on thread writing might be required.

But, after a fortnight when thinking about much has been remarkably hard, I have some enthusiasm again. I thought I would share that fact. But I am talking 2023 for things to really restart now.