

A month into retirement

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Given that I had noted for some time before it happened that I was going to retire from employment on 28th February this year, it was inevitable that March was going to be a slightly unusual month for me, but as it turned out, my new focus on blogging and YouTube created immediate results.

March was easily the most successful month in this blog's history, with almost 900,000 views during the course of the month, an increase of more than 130,000 over the previous record, set in January.

The story was much the same on YouTube, with record traffic, with a couple of videos at the start and end of the month making significant contributions, but with those in between offering pleasingly steady traffic at a levels not previously enjoyed. Something seems to be going right.

That said, it is only a month since I left university employment, but [as I note in another post today](#), attending an event for left-of-centre NGO's only proved to me just how unlikely it is that many of these are going to have any real impact on the problems that the world now faces, and in particular issues surrounding inequality.

I have long suffered disquiet with regards to the work of many such NGOs, a lot of whose work I have had the chance to see at close quarters, as must have been apparent when John Christensen and I as co-founders of the tax justice movement broke our relationships with many of the organisations we helped found nearly five years ago now. To realise that the problem we encountered is, however, more pervasive was not, even so, encouraging, and I felt pretty down about it for well over a week.

I am pleased to say that my mood has now lifted, and maybe that's because I am coming to terms with what this new way of working means. In particular, I am focusing quite strongly on how to better organise my thinking and workflow to suit my new approaches right now.

The use of some new mind-mapping software called Mindomo is helping this process. It

provides much better coordination between my various machines, meaning that I can update my thinking virtually wherever, and whenever I want, which I find incredibly helpful.

The result is already being seen in better planning for our YouTube videos. During the course of the autumn making these had to fit in wherever possible, and I frequently found myself scribbling three or four titles in the moments between breakfast and Thomas arriving to film, with no more preparation time being possible. The consequence was that not everything worked as well as I wished. Now I already have more than thirty potential videos sketched out before even beginning to plan the potential new education series that I am keen to work on.

I am also aware that I have more time to edit and perfect videos as a consequence, and I am enjoying that. I suspect that this has helped lift the level of traffic during the course of the last month.

Something deeper is, however, going on, and I now realise that it is that I have begun to relax. The period of time since I had long Covid in 2022/23 was exceptionally demanding in work terms, albeit that I accepted much of this work because I wanted to do so. It has taken a few weeks to begin to appreciate the benefit of not having to spend every moment rushing from one task to the next without ever being able to quite complete an activity as well as I might want to do so.

In the last few days I have even got to realise that not only is this rush no longer necessary, but that I can plan things a little more, with moments to think and reflect in between.

The inevitable consequence has been that ideas are flowing in greater numbers than they have done for some time, which is where that mind-mapping software comes into play.

I'm not sure where some of this thinking will go as yet. I think it quite important that I be open-minded about what might be the best things to do. The fact that I do, however, have time to think about that is a luxury that I now realise I had almost forgotten. If luxury is being able to do what I want, rather than those things that I felt I ought to do, and this is what retirement means, then I think I might enjoy it.