

Time for a change?

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An unexpected week away from making videos—thanks to a kidney stone that I wouldn't wish on anyone—gave me something I almost never have: time to stop and think.

For more than twenty years I've written about Britain's economy and politics. For the last two years we've talked about them here, almost every single day.

Together we've explored why neoliberalism has failed, why living standards have stagnated, why our political system no longer seems able to meet people's needs, and why so many people have lost faith in politics altogether.

But being forced to step away made me ask a different question.

Should this channel change?

Not because the issues have gone away. They haven't.

Not because exposing failure no longer matters. It does.

But because perhaps the time has come to spend more of our energy asking a different set of questions.

What should replace neoliberalism?

How should we reform tax?

How should we reform money?

How should government work differently?

What would a politics of care actually look like?

How do we build an economy of hope instead of an economy of fear?

Those are the questions I increasingly want to explore.

The question is whether you want to explore them with me.

So this isn't an announcement that I've already decided to change direction.

It's an invitation for you to help decide whether we should.

Please vote in the poll, leave a comment, and let me know what you think. I genuinely want to hear your views, because they will help shape the future direction of this channel.

Thank you for being part of this journey.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BTpCoD-uv20?si=iaClmpGtlrcGhXJI>

This is the audio version:

https://www.podbean.com/player-v2/?i=j2rcn-1aff13e-pb&from=pb6admin&share=1&download=1&rtl=0&fonts=Arial&skin=f6f6f6&font-color=auto&logo_link=episode_page&btn-skin=c73a3a

This is the transcript:

Hello. I'm back.

It's good to be sitting in this chair in front of this camera with Tom over there, complete with his boot around his broken foot.

Things have changed since I was last sitting here and recording.

I've had a kidney stone. I do not recommend having a kidney stone. It is excruciatingly painful. I've only had two major health problems in my life now. One was a gallstone, the second's a kidney stone, and apparently they are just about the most painful things you can experience, as I can assure you is the case.

Pain management is working now, though. I seem to have things under control. I haven't finished the treatment. I will be back in hospital again over the next couple of

weeks or so, but only as a day patient, all things going well, and so we are back making videos. But, and I want to talk to you about this, and I think this is quite important for me as a person and perhaps for the future of this channel.

A week off was good for me in one way. I wouldn't have chosen it like this, let's be honest. But when I was not in pain, and there were occasions when I wasn't in pain over the last week, I had the chance to think. There was no regular routine. I didn't really want to spend much time watching the news, or listening to the radio or watching whatever was on the web. I just had a think about what we are doing.

And that was important because we've been making videos now for over two years on this channel, every day, I think, almost without exception, over that period of time. And I've been writing a blog for more than 20 years now, which is really pretty absurd. I'm one of the few people in the world who's actually managed to ever do that for that long. And the point is this: Where am I going?

This little brush with being ill reminded me that I'm not as young as I was. I'm 68. And I won't be here forever, although I hope to be around for a lot longer yet, and doing this for many more years yet. But the point is, how am I going to best use my time?

And it occurred to me that over the last 20 years I have recorded, in various different ways, the failure of neoliberalism. This idea that markets work best and that if we only get government out of the way, the well-being of everybody is maximised is obviously false. We can see that.

We had the global financial crisis in 2008. We saw the flatlining of the economy since then. The failure to increase living standards. The failure to increase real wages. But the rise in the well-being of the very wealthiest during that period and the increasing power of the banks, the AI companies, and even of an elite in politics itself, of whom Andy Burnham is a perfect representative: a man basically becoming prime minister without the approval of parliament because Labour has selected him to be the man who looks remarkably like the man he's replacing.

There is a power elite. That is what neoliberalism describes, and I know that is bad for you, me and everybody else like us, who's one of what I would call the ordinary people.

Okay, we might be getting by, some of us. We are; I am, I admit it. But I also know that others aren't, and we are not in that power elite. How can we change things for the benefit of those ordinary people? Most of the people in the UK? 95+% of people in the UK who are not anywhere near that power grouping.

Well, that's my question, and lots of people are asking it, and we can see that people know this problem exists.

Just look at the rise of Reform and Restore. They are where they are precisely because

so many people in the UK hate what is happening in our politics.

They hate the fact that they're being ignored.

They hate the fact they're not being listened to.

They hate the fact that their needs are not being met, and the government is not even trying to meet those needs, and indeed is making life worse for them.

They know this is what is happening. They're rejecting the political system as a result, and we do need a better politics.

I call that a politics of care, of course, you've heard that phrase for some time. I also describe the underpinning economics of this as an economics of hope.

Now these are the issues I've decided I really want to talk about. I'm definitely going to be doing that more on my Funding the Future blog. The people there who I've asked in a poll say that's what they want.

They're not interested in me analysing what Labour's got wrong again and why neoliberalism is failing again.

They know Labour gets things wrong.

They know that neoliberalism is a pile of shit; let's be blunt about it. And I am now producing the evidence from 20 years of writing on these issues, and we're going to be publishing that over time. We'll be sharing some of it here.

But the point is, that's the background.

Now what I want to do, and which I'm certainly going to be doing on the blog, is look at what the solutions are. And I'm asking you a key question as a result, and I should have mentioned this earlier. The key question is:

Do you want me to continue to talk about things like crashes and politicians, and Labour's failings and why neoliberalism is not working?

Or

do you want me to talk about what we can do about it?

I believe that there are other people who can do all the first things and can do it as well as me. I can do it well, and look, it appears that some of you really like that content. We only have to put the word crash in the name of a video, and hundreds of thousands of you sometimes turn up to watch it, and I understand that. And for our purposes, that's good for revenue. So we will sometimes do these things because we enjoy doing them

anyway.

But should the balance shift towards those solutions?

What should replace neoliberalism?

How should we reform taxes?

How should we reform the money system?

How should we reform the management of the economy?

What can we do instead?

What are the priorities?

What are the goals?

How are they set?

How are they measured?

What are the outcomes?

Are there other things we should be looking at, like proportional representation, changes to our parliamentary representation and all those things as well?

Is that something that you are interested in here?

I want to know because I want to make videos that you would like to see. I'm asking you, therefore, to do two things for me.

One is to leave comments. We do scrape all the comments from the comment section, and then we can analyse them and work out what you are trying to say to us. And that's important. We need to know what you're trying to say to us. And sometimes we get over a thousand or more comments on a video, but we can still actually use those to understand trends.

And the other thing we're doing is, as usual, putting a poll down below. The questions are pretty straightforward, but I think they're telling, and what they will indicate is:

Do you want us to carry on as we are?

Do you want us to change?

Do you want us to look at solutions?

And that's what I'm looking for direction from you on. Should I be doing what I have been doing, which has worked? Let's be honest, over 12 million people have watched this channel so far in 2026. Or should we be shifting a little bit towards how we make everything better?

I want the world to be better. I suspect you want the world to be better. I suspect you are fed up with it being as bad as it is. I am. Do we want to work on that together? Let me know. That would be what I'm most interested in hearing about. Please let us have your comments, let us have your vote.

Thank you, and it's good to be here. It's good to be back, and my thanks to Tom. Between us, a pair of old crocks as we are right now, we'll do our best to keep these videos flowing.

Poll (a new variation on this issue):

[poll id="440"]