

## **“If I don't do it myself, who will do it for me?”**

### *Thought for the Day*

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*Broadcast on Radio Scotland, 13 January 2017*

Sometimes it's a short way from depression to elation – and sometimes longer!

I set off on my recent holiday with my trusty laptop, and spent the entire flight catching up with e-mail and other long-delayed writing. Five hours later, after we landed, I switched on to send off the proceeds of my labours – and nothing happened! Suddenly I felt I knew what it must be like to be marooned on a desert island with no communication with the rest of the world.

It's a bit overdramatic to say my life flashed before my eyes, but in a sense it did, as my subconscious constructed a list of all the different things I'd promised to do and now couldn't. But as panic wore off, reason took over: simple, I thought, there's a specialist dealership only 45 minutes away – except that, at six years old, my machine was deemed too antique to merit their ministrations. So self-help was my only recourse – I borrowed a screw-driver (actually three, since designers can't possibly use the same screws throughout!), and took my life in my hands by commandeering my wife's laptop and swapping bits of hers with mine to diagnose the problem; then I ordered a new hard disk that got home before me, and went back to struggling with unfamiliar software that made everything take twice as long, and fretting about whether the backup I'd actually remembered to make – and had, of course, left 3000 miles away – would work.

... and now, two more different screwdrivers and one back-up later – which ironically also took five hours – here I am to tell the tale, with the first thing I've written on my old but improved machine.

And in the glow of self-satisfaction, it dawned on me that this wasn't a new story, but just a modern context for the famous adage in the Talmud: “If I don't do it myself, who will do it for me? But if I do do it myself, will I be up to it? And if I don't do it now, when will I ever have time?”!