

Jeremy Kyle, fish and chips, and terrifying farming magazines. They're all part of a typical day for Shropshire-based producer and award-winning columnist Roger Evans.

Day-time TV

I was getting a little concerned that my life had drifted into a predictable pattern. I was concerned enough to actually analyse it. And then I discovered that it was my wife that has the predictable pattern and I just fit in around it.

When she gets up she has one piece of toast and marmite and a banana and then she watches the Jeremy Kyle Show. I urge you all to watch it – if only to see what sort of people there are in today's society. And to wonder what sort of upbringing, and what sort of lives, their children have, because there are mostly children involved.

When the programme finishes she gets into her car and disappears. She visits friends, she goes out for coffee and sometimes she goes out for lunch.

But mostly she goes shopping. Why buy two loaves of bread today if you can buy one today and another tomorrow?

My own life is varied. Most days I have some writing to do, which I enjoy. I go to fetch things and take things and I am quite good at blocking lanes if there is stock to move.

There's the dog to take for a walk and this gets me about the fields and the farm. By about 5.00 pm, depending to how wet or cold or dark it is, I'm not far from the house. There's still no wife about and, as getting the evening meal is still one of her responsibilities, I usually switch the television on. She could be home by 5 but it's often nearer 6.

There are upsides to this: "I got held up so I bought some fish and chips." Sometimes it's a curry ready meal. I like both so it's a bit of a treat, though how she can afford to buy these on the money I give her is beyond me.

Mostly I have a film recorded or downloaded to watch. I prefer westerns with a happy ending. But last week I didn't switch the TV on. I was getting behind with my farming reading. There were five magazines, including this one, that were waiting to be read. So I spent more than an hour on catching up.

Reading five farming magazines in quick succession can be scary stuff. There are articles on bovine TB (lots of them), trace element deficiency, sub-clinical disease and the dangers of antibiotic immunity.

There's pneumonia and Johne's disease. Every blade of grass is bent over with the sheer weight of parasites waiting to infect your stock and your silage clamp is full of micro organisms that are just waiting to do their worst. And we've not mentioned lameness and mastitis yet! Farming is certainly not for the faint hearted, is it? But not to worry, for every article that identifies a problem there is an advertisement for a product that will cure it. Except for TB. That cure is available at your local chemist and it's called paracetamol.

Years ago I went to a management meeting and a consultant was talking about his top 5% most profitable farms. He was asked if they had anything in common. They did, none of them used silage additive. Now there's food for thought. And, speaking of which, I think I can smell fish and chips.

