

Make a backup plan | Christin Smith Myers

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It was only going to be the third flight my husband and I had taken together in 13 years of marriage. A trip from Philadelphia to Atlanta for a wedding. We were so excited... excited to help them celebrate, excited to be going away, excited to explore a city together!

And then on Wednesday, 7/20/16, Southwest Airlines experienced a technical glitch that caused over 1600 flight cancellations that day and the next. And we were scheduled to fly Southwest on Friday afternoon.

To say we were concerned is an understatement. All the planning! All the money! All the time! What if we lost it all because of a stupid glitch? What if we missed the wedding of one of my best friends?

But before we could spiral too far out of control in panic and negativity, we stopped ourselves and made a backup plan. Thursday night I looked at how long it would take to drive to Atlanta. Not trusting our own car, we quickly priced out rental options and decided if our afternoon flight was delayed enough that we couldn't get out until Friday evening or Saturday morning, we would just drive instead. We'd miss the rehearsal dinner on Friday but have no problem getting to the wedding on Saturday night. We'd have the time together in the car and maybe make a fun stop or two. And we should still be able to enjoy the rest of the weekend in Atlanta and then catch our Monday flight back.

We didn't want to drive from Philly to Atlanta, especially since we had already made the investment in the flight, but now we had a plan. We breathed a sigh of relief and went to bed knowing we were on the same page and would not get stuck in the indecisiveness and conflict that can happen at the airport. We got a good night's sleep, instead of a worried one.

The next morning when we got the notice that our flight was delayed, we stayed relatively calm. We dropped off our kids at their grandparents', headed to the airport just a little later than originally planned, and then our flight left without a hitch. We didn't need to use our backup plan, but having one gave us a level of confidence and calm. It also helped us appreciate when everything actually worked out smoothly. We had an even better weekend away as a result.

Next time you are facing uncertainty, make a backup plan.