

Apprise Timeline of BRIDGET

Bridget had worked for many years as an academic professional in a North American university where she oversaw a research collection and provided pedagogical support to those using it. In the early 2000's, her job was expanded to include community engagement. She very much enjoyed this new aspect of her work and intended to remain in it. She started a PhD part-time when she was in her mid-30s to expand her knowledge and become more effective. She continued to work full-time, while also raising a family. She joined the Canadian study in 2007 in her second year of doctoral study. What struck us about

Bridget's story was

Time pressures and family responsibilities during degree (personal)

Lack of supervisor support and wanting to stay in same job (work experience)

Doing degree to be more effective in work (career thinking)

Year	Personal	Work experience	Career Thinking
PhD Year 6 (Part time)	Children early to mid-teens; too much distraction at home to concentrate on PhD.	Started analysing quantitative data; wanted more supervisor support. Little contact with supervisor; always away and if there, interactions were challenging.	Great enthusiasm for position; intended to stay as long as possible. PhD to explore ideas related to work, but work prevented focus on PhD.
PhD Year 7 (Part time)	Lacked time for PhD given family.	Positive responses to paper at conference; made some progress. Interacting with supervisor and committee, but not 'connected' with supervisor	Committed to exciting listeners about her subject; wanted to bring history to life.
PhD Year 8	Six months of tremendous relief mixed with tinge of personal disappointment; family thrilled feeling she was happier.	Analysis produced no significant result; lacked knowledge of how to proceed; dissatisfied; could not get feedback from supervisor. Difficult decision to stop PhD.	In the academy, seen as a failure, a loss, e.g. work supervisor disappointed.
Master's Year 1	Had time for personal and social activities for 1st time in many years.	Encouraged by colleague to 'salvage' PhD; talked to 'motivating' faculty member who became her Master's supervisor. Started Master's.	Attended professional conference; enjoyed discussing issues with peers.
Master's Year 2	Tension of very busy job and working on Master's; experienced insomnia, confusion, nervousness.	Did qualitative research closely related to her work; learning useful personally and for work (quantitative research antithetical).	Wrote grants to extend educational programmes.
Master's Year 3	Children in their 20s; dynamic in family very significantly changed.	Research complimented her working life	Submitted large grant to support programmes; work life much richer due to research
Master's Year 4	Family dependent on salary so planned to work until 65.	Completed Master's degree	Research has turned around the way she supports learning.
What struck us	Time pressures Family responsibilities	Lack of supervisor support and discontent with research approach Wanting to stay in same job.	Doing degree to be more effective in work



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