

# Apprise Timeline of Elizabeth

Elizabeth worked in a skilled service role before returning to part-time study for her first degree and then commenced a full-time PhD in a different subject area. She joined the UK study whilst in the third year of her doctorate; she graduated the following year when age 45. Elizabeth envisaged a career in a research role with no teaching commitments. After graduation she worked in part-time and consultancy roles as she sought a permanent appointment. She had two teenage children with her long-term partner and was concerned for her ageing parents. During the study she was diagnosed with a chronic illness and defined herself as living with disability. What struck us about Elizabeth's story was

Year	Personal	Work experience	Career Thinking
PhD Year 3	Domestic commitments as a mother and partner; practical and emotional support for teenagers taking national exams.	Often under time pressure, yet enjoyed PhD work. Felt a sense of belonging in the academic environment. Challenged by working with her male PhD supervisor who showed less interest in her work than her female supervisor. Worked part-time as a research assistant for her father (an academic).	Decided to wait until post-PhD to hone her publishing skills.
PhD Year 4	Suffered from health issues	Thesis work was focused on producing a strong theoretical framework. Employed part-time in research work not directly related to her PhD topic. Sought writing support from a friend and her female PhD supervisor. Had not presented her work at conferences or written for publication.	Hoped to become a researcher, but not a lecturer. Wanted a career with no teaching; hoped to move to a research role with a friend at a different university.
Post PhD Year 1	Children's independence increased yet ageing parents meant future caring commitments had to be considered	Applied for several research jobs. Limited her job hunt geographically as did not want to leave ageing parents. Worked on thesis corrections. Applied for research funding and was awaiting outcome.	Saw her dislike of public speaking as an important restriction. Goal remained a secure, full-time research position; wanted more certainty and security from her work. Aware of the importance of publishing to boost employability
Post PhD Year 2	Personal health much improved Diagnosed with a chronic illness and defined herself as living with disability	Employed in 1 year part time researcher role. Enjoyed high level of autonomy, yet felt isolated within the institution. Completed some consultancy, which she found fulfilling. Was co-authoring a book with her father.	Disappointed the job was not providing opportunities for the future. Enjoyed the small consultancy team and saw this as a possible future; adamant she did not want to teach. Ambivalent as to whether the PhD had been worth the effort. Kept health issues secret at work as afraid this would impact employability.
Post PhD Year 3	Despondent with job hunting; concerned she was not judged not on merit for jobs but on the basis of her visible disability  Appreciated the hardships her father had faced to obtain an academic job	Self-employed researcher with one day of guaranteed work per week. Job hunting for a researcher role. Obtained interviews, but no offers of employment.  Working on a paper based on her PhD research; planned to write several papers with friends and colleagues.	Would have preferred to be employed in an institution as a researcher. Anticipated research jobs and funding being more plentiful as the economy improved.
Post PhD Year 4	Health improving on new medication; so more energy to devote to work. As a result of experiences as a researcher had become active politically	Working with her father akin to an apprenticeship model to develop skills and networks. Writing and producing papers from her thesis materials.	Thought it important to have someone close to guide her into 'real world research'
What struck us	Health and disability Parenting and caring commitments	Writing and intellectual contribution Balancing job hunting, part-time and consultancy work	Employability and seeking the work she desired