



CASE STUDY

DAWN HACK

ELIZABETH SPEAKS TO **DAWN HACK**

AS WE START TO PONDER, AND PLAN OUR OWN 'BESPIRING', READING AND HEARING ABOUT OTHERS EXPERIENCES CAN PROVIDE US WITH INSPIRATION AND IDEAS ON HOW WE MIGHT LIVE OUR NEXT CHAPTER TO ITS FULLEST. IN MY CONVERSATION WITH DAWN SHE SHARES HOW SHE CAME TO BE BESPIRED, SOME OF THE CHALLENGES SHE EXPERIENCED AND HOW SHE IS NOW LIVING HER BEST NEXT CHAPTER. READ ON FOR DAWN'S EXPERIENCE AND SOME TIPS FOR NEW BESPIRERS.

EF: Talk me through your bespirement process?

DH: I always had in mind that I would work as long as I could. However, as you get older you just don't have the same energy levels. I worked my way up to it and gave three months notice. The challenge was that I had been so busy working that I hadn't really decided what I wanted to do. I didn't have a particular passion so I thought I would just keep working.

EF: Did you do any planning for your retirement?

DH: I did think about it but really what I was really looking forward to was a rest. I had been caring for my mother as well as working full time so I really needed the break. The only plan I had was to do some volunteer work. Perhaps do some walking or tramping. I had saved hard all my life so that I could live well not just survive. Because I didn't have a particular plan I just fell into things.

EF: What were you looking forward to the most?

DH: Having no deadlines and being free to do whatever I wanted.

EF: What do you miss most about work?

DH: Definitely having a purpose, meeting different people and the camaraderie of having a team.

EF: What does that look like for you in practice?

DH: I have a regular weekly afternoon tea with a group of girlfriends and I have really pushed myself out of my comfort zone to join some groups. I go to U3A - University of the Third Age which is a fantastic initiative for those of us who are a little more mature. Our group have an Ethics focus so we have some lively debates. I have made some great friends through this group. My Martha Stewart side comes out at fortnightly card making classes and I'm a regular at the dog park with my two small dogs Chloe and Tilly. Of course I am blessed with numerous grandsons so I am now free to spend more time with them. Being an avid reader and knitter means I'm never at a loss for something to do.

*'Bespiring' to describe the next phase after 9-5 work, at whatever age/stage you are. A time where you're creating your bespoke world that inspires your next chapter.



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EF: Did you find the transition from full time work challenging?

DH: No. I was really looking forward to the break although I did miss the sense of purpose. Wondering what I was going to do each day was a little unsettling for awhile.

EF: Is retirement progressing as you expected?

DH: Because I was responsible for my mother during 10 years of my retirement I was tied to home more than I expected. I would have liked to live overseas for a while and definitely thought we would have travelled more. Covid has impacted our ability to travel so you do always need other things to fall back on as things don't always pan out as you would like. Y

EF: What advice do you have for someone thinking of embarking on the next chapter?

DH: Be flexible. Things don't always work out as you expect. Plan for indoor and outdoor activities and also different physical capabilities. Ensure you have good friend networks and interests before you retire. Remember that there are stages of retirement as well. I started off straight after finishing work volunteering at the Charity Hospital and continuing to work on a casual basis however, over time I have moved away from this. You also need to ensure you have a structure to your day as you can end up not doing anything. While I thought I would relish the time to read you can only do that for so long.

it really does depend on your personality as well. My husband had plans of things he wanted to make and he can always find something to do. We have friends who do everything together and never go out separately. We also have friends who are in a retirement village with a lot of organised activities however, that wouldn't be for us. You need to work out what works for you personally but I'd really encourage people to have individual activities as well as couple activities.

EF: Is there anything you would do differently?

DH: No - perhaps travelled a little more before retirement as you never know how things will change ie your health, care for parents or maybe grandchildren, a global pandemic! I do know that I'm not sure how I managed to find time to work!