



NHS Health Education England  
Professional Support Development Day

21<sup>st</sup> September 2016

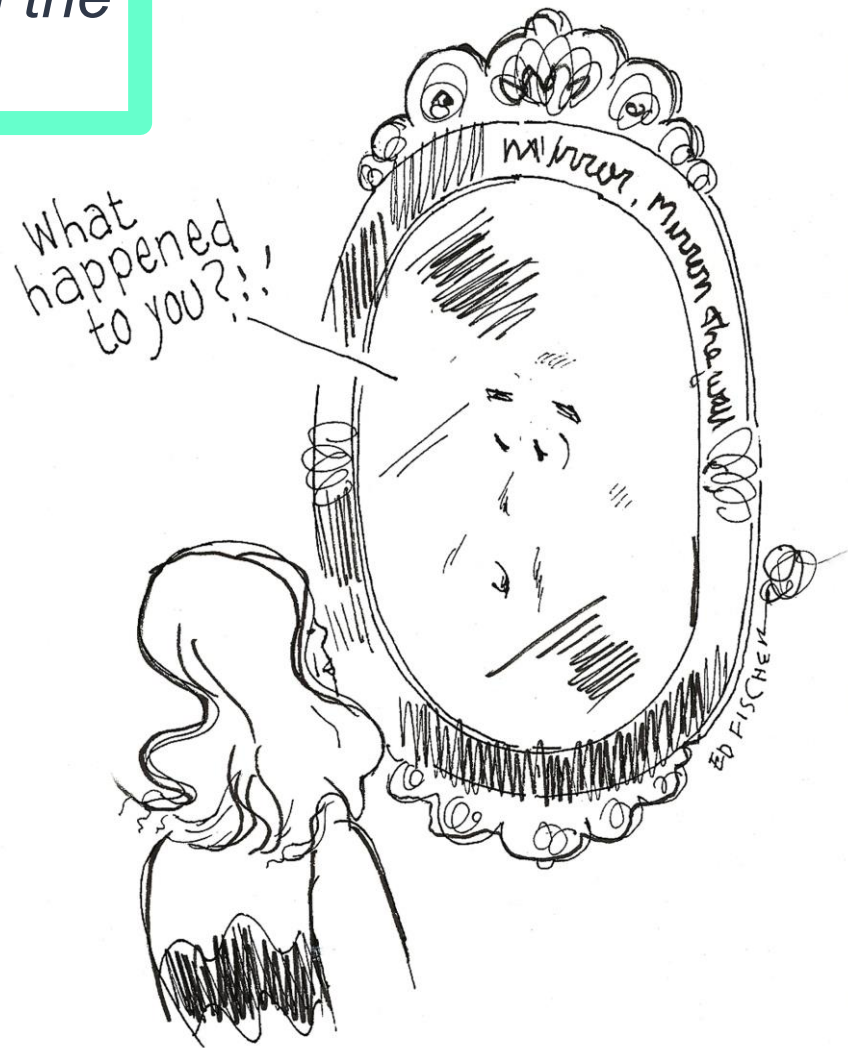
# **RETURNING TO TRAINING**

**A trainee's perspective**

# 1. The Brief

To share and learn from  
my experiences

“Mirror, mirror on the wall.....”



## Outline

- The problem and why it matters
- Share my journey
- Learning points – difficulties
- What was helpful

And finally some advice & a wish list for the future.

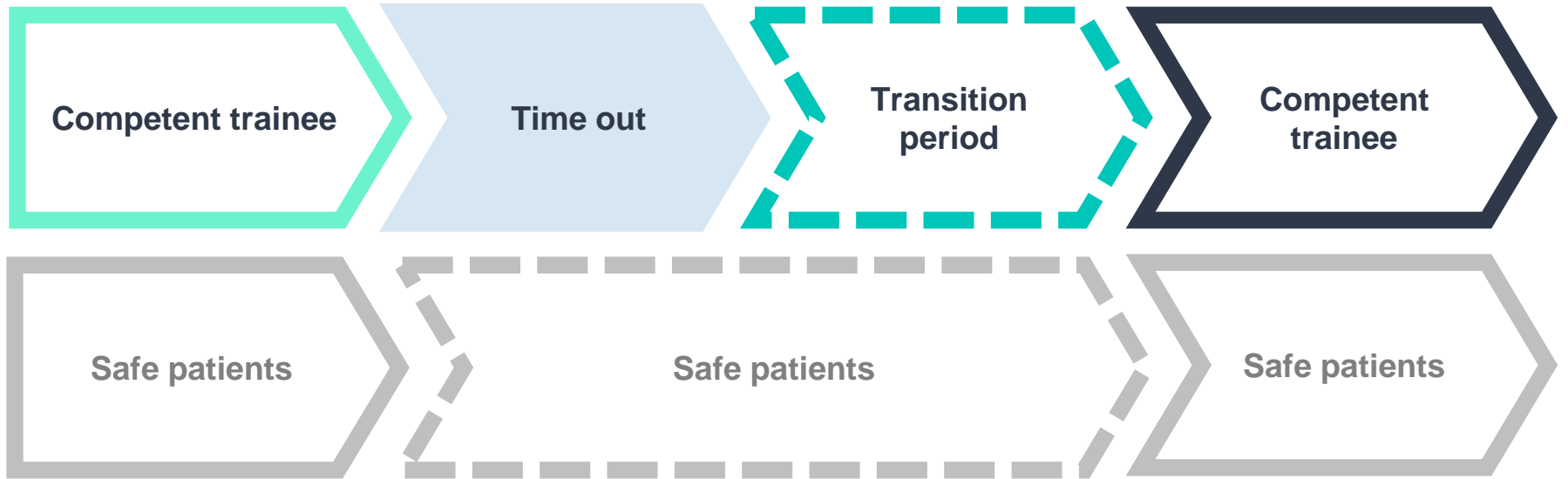
**2.**

# The Problem



and why it matters

# The problem: put simply



# The problem, and why it matters



# The problem



- Acknowledgment
- Anticipation
- Appropriate support



**3.**

# My Story

My journey and what  
happened

# 1,825 days!

**I took 5 years out (in a non-clinical environment) to complete a 4 year PhD program and have 2 babies**

# My Life Plans.....

Career



Training number

Membership exam

Research post: PhD

Senior training

Consultant

Personal life



Meet guy

Get married

Have children

Working mum

Happily ever after

# My Life Reality.....



Out of program  
experience  
PhD

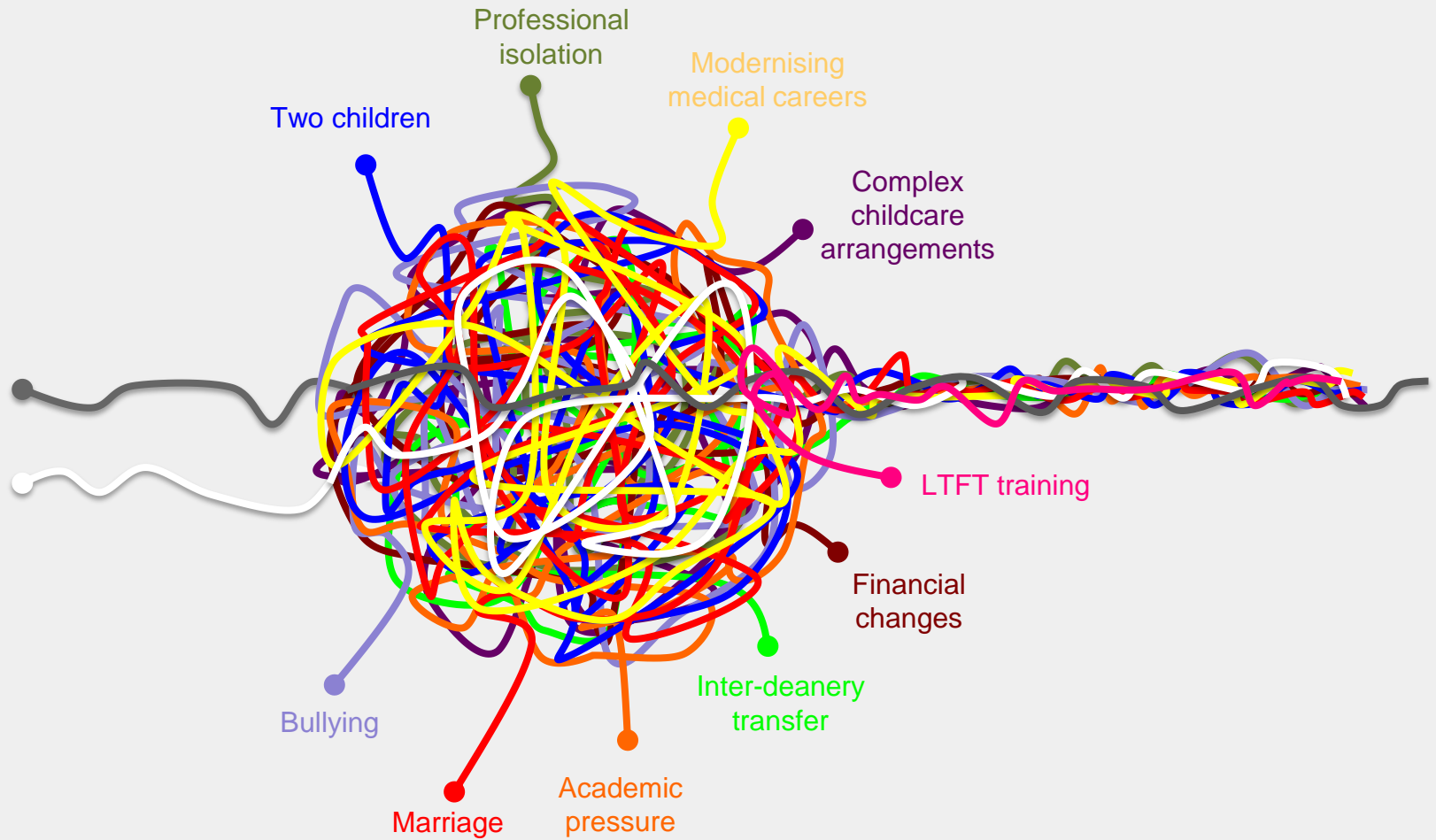
Complete 2 years of  
clinical training

- ✓ Training number
- ✓ 5 years in specialty training  
(Calman SpR3)
- ✓ MRCOG with gold medal
- ✓ Wellcome Trust PhD funding

# My Life Reality.....



# My Life Reality.....





**I HAD AN  
IDENTITY  
CRISIS!!**





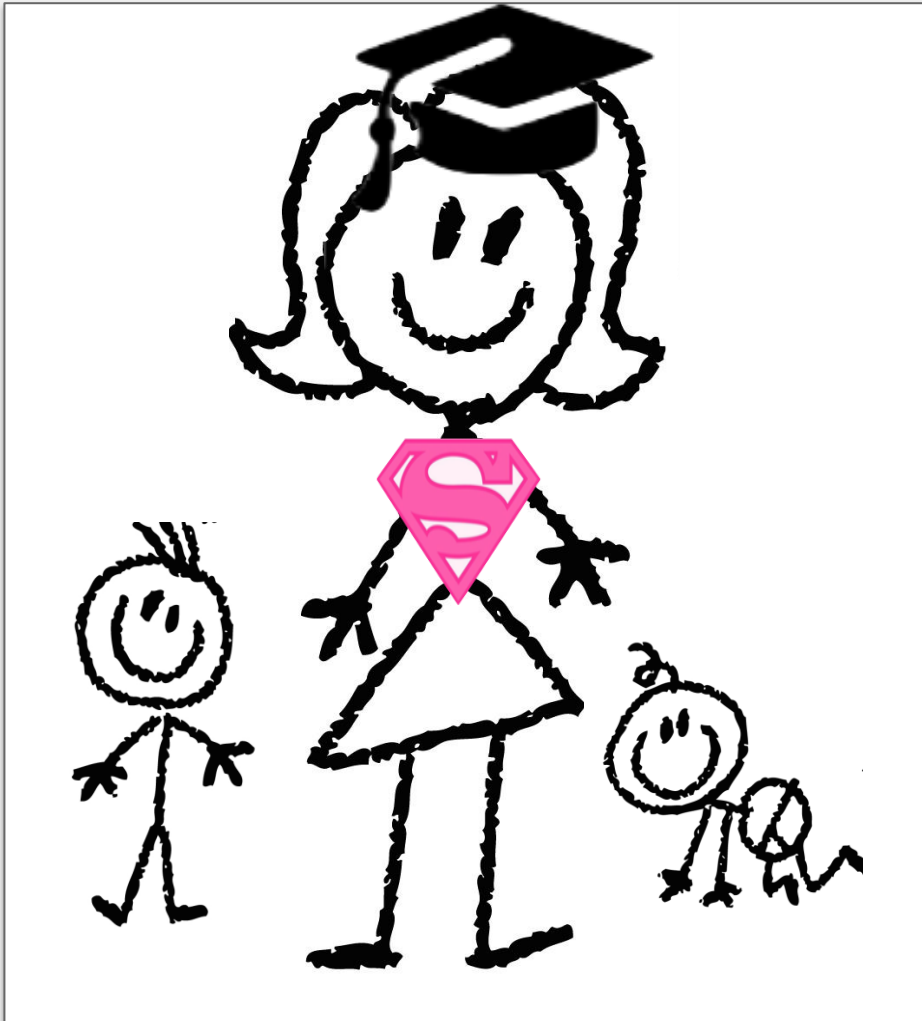


**OUT OF TOUCH**  
**ISOLATION**  
**ANXIETY**  
**IMPOSTER SYNDROME**





To make matters worse.....



and I was seriously  
exploring other career  
options.....

# What happened next.....

## Preparation

ARCP and request for support

Application for special funding

Meeting with clinical tutor and educational supervisor

Plan for return

## Supernumerary

3 months (LTFT)

New hospital

Rotation through sub-specialities

Supervised practice

Logbook review and ARCP

## Return to normal

New hospital

Supportive consultants

Gradual improvement in confidence

4.

# Learning points

What made my return  
**more** difficult

# 1. ARCP was a disaster!

- Unprepared
- Uninformed
- Unsympathetic

I had to take matters into my own hands.....

ACADEMY OF  
MEDICAL ROYAL  
COLLEGES

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## RETURN TO PRACTICE GUIDANCE

APRIL 2012

A person is silhouetted against a body of water, sitting on a grassy bank and looking down. The scene is dimly lit, suggesting dusk or dawn. The person's hair is tied back, and they are wearing a dark jacket. The water shows gentle ripples, and the overall mood is contemplative and somber.

## 2. I felt very alone

- I hadn't stayed in touch
- I transferred regions
- The hospital was new
- I was working in an acute, intense specialty
- Lack of mentorship
- My peers had moved on
- I hadn't anticipated my identity crisis
- My role was too super-numerary

### 3. Modernising Medical Careers happened in my absence!

- No logbook
- No WBPAs
- New acronyms



An ST6 with an empty logbook!!

**5.**

# Learning points

What did I find difficult?

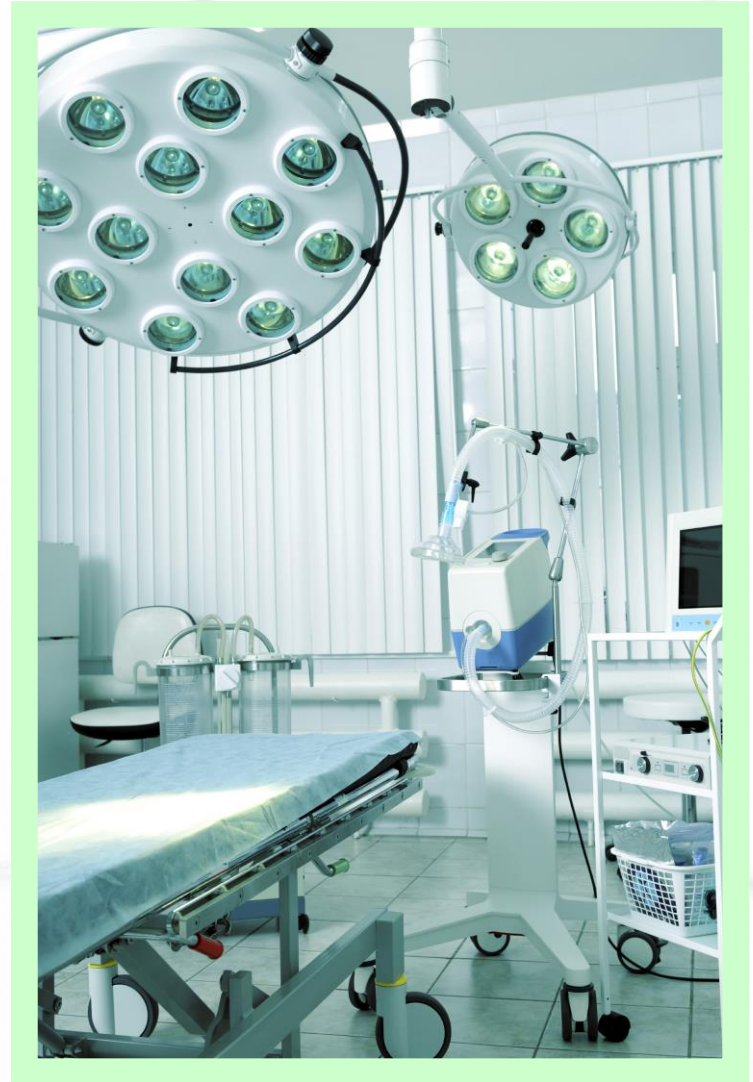
## What did I find difficult

- Drug doses and detail
- New guidelines
- Changes in practice (WHO)
- Maintaining others' confidence in me
- Time management as a working mother
- My self-perception and expectations



**But practical procedures still felt familiar**

And everyone else  
worried about  
this.....



**6.**

# Learning points



What really helped me



# KEY INDIVIDUALS

Knowledgeable, understanding, supportive &  
pragmatic

## What really helped

- Key individuals
- Moving to a smaller hospital
- Respectful mentorship
- Developing strategies to deal with other staff
- Peer friendship and support

**7.**

# Advice



and a wish-list

# Be Prepared





## 1. Anticipate

Where possible, anticipate the problem and understand the potential difficulties. Acknowledge the potential difficulties, new identity, and loss of confidence



## 2. Keep in touch

Peer group, suitable mentor, clinical issues.  
'Keeping-in-touch and up to date' workshops



## 3. Mentorship & support

Mentorship – formal & informal  
HEE – knowledgeable, pro-active, non-patronising



## 4. Try to stay local

Avoid returning to totally new environment. Return to supportive environment.



## 5. Pro-active strategies

Proactive thoughts on how to deal with new roles and identity .



## 6. Pragmatism

Less fear, pragmatic decision making

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING

