

I have had countless meaningful and productive conversations with various healthcare providers over the years. Probably the most significant conversation that stands out in my mind though, was shortly after I was discharged from a hospital admission, when my second son was around 9 months old due to post-natal anxiety and depression.

My long-term GP of around ten years saw me one morning in her room and wanted to check in with me. She wanted to see how I was progressing as an out-patient and whether I was coping ok at home. I reassured her that I felt I was going quite well, however I made it very clear to her that the psychiatrist who had been taking care of me in hospital and who I had been required to continue to see for quite some time, had an unfortunate and surprisingly very difficult personality. She was inappropriate and unprofessional.

My GP had always been incredibly kind, supportive, friendly and we always had unhurried conversations. I knew that she would take what I was saying on board and act on it. I was right. Whilst some doctors would be quick to dismiss such an idea, or try to reassure and move on, my GP listened attentively and without rushing me. She offered to refer me on to a different psychiatrist straight away, who ended up being an amazing one that I still see on occasion to this day!

The ability for healthcare providers to take the time to see through the clinical side of things, see beyond that and view the actual individual person underneath is critical for optimal patient healthcare outcomes and ultimately survival. My GP was a saviour in this instance and to this day I am still grateful for her and her ability to listen deeply and with compassion that morning.

~ Josie Briand