

PhD Vlog Week 4 Eddie Procter

TIME	SPEAKER	DIALOGUE
0:00:00	On Screen Text	<p>Name: Eddie Procter</p> <p>PhD: Landscape Archaeology</p> <p>Location: Exeter</p> <p>A snapshot of my PhD journey.</p>
0:00:06	Eddie Procter	Hello. For my final vlog, I'm just going to reflect on embarking on a PhD when you're a career in your mid-forties which is my situation which hopefully might be useful for perhaps other people in a similar situation who are thinking of taking the plunge and giving up work and doing a PhD. So I just thought I'd reflect a little bit on some of the things that I think are...
0:00:36		... advantages of doing a PhD in that situation and then perhaps a few things which are a bit more difficult. So thinking firstly about advantages, I think where people are coming into PhD research having had quite a lengthy career in quite pressurised jobs – so I've got 20 odd years of experience of working – I think you're a bit more used to...
0:01:06		... project management, being able to kind of organise lots of multiple strands of work, lots of different deadlines, you tend to have developed your own kind of strategies for dealing with that. I think you can also bring kind of an ability to kind of network and...
0:01:36		... consult other people which is often useful and often can perhaps stop you feeling quite isolated. Perhaps it helps you bring a bit more confidence into your relationship with your supervisor so that seems a bit less daunting. So I think these are some of the things that if you have had a lot of experience

		of working life, they can really help to perhaps make the PhD process a bit less stressful...
0:02:06		... and I think generally you're just kind of a bit more resilient and have that kind of perseverance that you can bring to the process. So I think I've kind of found that has definitely been useful over the last ten months or so that I've been doing my PhD. Just my situation being a parent, just reflecting on that side of things, so I've got two young daughters...
0:02:36		... who are both at primary school. So one of the things that I've been able to do is, because my partner works, is still working. So whilst she's working, I'm able to do more of the school runs, so dropping the kids off at school and picking them up and just because my working routine is more flexible, not all the time but off and on working at home, so I'm just able to do that which...
0:03:06		... just kind of helps the general situation. I think perhaps someone who comes to a PhD at a later stage generally has quite a high level of motivation. They've generally really kind of come to the position of wanting to do their research project from perhaps a lot of thoughts, perhaps may have gone back into education and spent a few years doing part-time education to get to this stage.
0:03:36		So I think that kind of level of motivation does definitely kind of help to have that in reserve. I think hopefully by the time you're perhaps at a later stage in life, you've generally got stability in the rest of your life in terms of your home life and where you live and kids and partners and what have you which perhaps means that that stability kind of helps you focus on...

0:04:06		... the work. So those are just two things that I think my situation have helped, and certainly haven't hindered doing a PhD at a later stage in life So just to also reflect on possible disadvantages or challenges, I think the first thing to say is that I've found there's been nothing. So not have I had...
0:04:36		... any particular worries or concerns going into the PhD but I haven't found anything particularly disadvantageous. I think I mean in my situation, as it happens, I live away from my University city to my supervisor's down in Exeter, I'm in Bristol, so it's not that far away but it does mean that I'm a bit more remote...
0:05:06		... in terms of maybe social events or particular events in the department. So that's a bit of a disadvantage but I'm only an hour or so away so I can still get down to things at Exeter. I think probably the one area that I was most concerned about when I was looking to go down this route and this is probably a common thing is kind of thinking about the...
0:05:36		... finances. So I had a good well paid job previously and I certainly couldn't have done this without getting financial support. So I applied for basically a fully funded studentship. So that means that my fees get paid and I get a stipend for each of the three years.
0:06:06		And although that has been a reduction in what I was previously earning, the stipend is tax free so that obviously helps and I think yes, you do have to kind of think about your spending and perhaps reign in your spending a bit on kind of non-essential items. I think you definitely need to kind of plan out what

		your income's going to be, what your outgoings are...
0:06:36		... I'm kind of lucky that my partner has got a well-paid job so obviously we can look at the whole picture. But to be honest, it's been fine. In a way it's been quite liberating actually to kind of think a bit more about money and I do kind of thing when I was working, what was I spending money on sometimes. So actually the concerns I had on that front haven't really been realised but I did think that...
0:07:06		... I would probably have to have a part-time job as well as doing the PhD. In the event, as it's turned out at this stage, I haven't actually gone down that route. I have done a few things where I've got a bit of income but I think if I'd have tried to juggle a regular part-time job as well as doing the PhD, that might have been quite difficult actually. So yeah, I haven't found the need to...
0:07:36		... do that. So I think all in all, I'm really glad that I've decided to kind of take the plunge and I've really enjoyed the experience. It's been challenging, it's been busy and it has stretched me but that's what a PhD is supposed to do and I think if anyone else is in my situation perhaps doing a...
0:08:06		... job that they think, "Well I don't necessarily want to do this for the rest of my life." If you've got a good idea of a research project and you've got an idea of where that might lead, I think go for it and persevere and make sure that you've thought about the finances obviously but I think it's definitely the right thing to do. Okay, so that's just some reflections on how it's gone so far.
0:08:36	On Screen Text	Jobs.ac.uk

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