



<https://www.time-to-change.org.uk/blog/dedication-my-mates-got-me-through-depression>

Late 80's experienced my first psychotic episode.
Admitted to West Park Hospital in Epsom on Section 2.
One weeks admission. Recovered very quickly.
Early 90's- Went Travelling to India and Thailand for 3 months,
culminating in a Full Moon Party !



- **Admitted to Suratani Psychiatric Hospital-** One week admission- 2nd Psychotic episode. Friends eventually tracked me down and I flew back to England (accompanied !)
- **2012 Depressive Episode-** 7 weeks off on Sick leave. Recovered with counselling and medication.
- **2016. Severe Depressive Episode.** Signed off sick from work. 4 days later, after abandoning my car on the A3 and walking along Guildford Bypass following my first panic attack. Taken to Hospital on Section 136 by the Police.
- Absconded from 136 suite. Was AWOL for about 3 hours- ended up walking alongside the railway lines- heading..... I don't know where !
- Eventually, I called 999 from a phone box . Returned to the 136 Suite by Police.
- Transferred to another hospital, and admitted informally
- Absconded from the ward ! Again !
- Detained on Section 2 for a month
- Recovered after 3months of Counselling and medication



Why am I telling you this ?

- I've lacked capacity regarding my own well being, care and treatment needs on at least 4 or 5 occasions- sometimes for short periods, sometimes for days. Luckily, so far, I have always regained capacity, and have been able to recall and reflect upon what happened and why.
- **This has taught me.....**
- When I am unable to make decisions for myself, I need professionals involved who have the skill to assess me, and if necessary make decisions for me to keep me safe.
- To do this well , **they need to speak with my family and friends to better understand what might be in my best interests- they know me best and understand how I behave and know what's worked before**
- **They need to speak to me and listen to what I want, and try to make that central to any plans they have to make for me because if I'm not on board- they might find it difficult.**

BUT

- If they don't think they can keep me safe at these times by acceding to my wishes, **then they need to have the courage to make the decisions that will keep me safe until I am able to make decisions for myself again- and I might not like that at the time, but I'll thank them for it later.**