

Perspective

Reading about Merle's not so lovely view of Dartmeet, reminded me of when my husband and I went to Scotland on holiday. We ventured over on the ferry to the Isle of Skye and were met with a very bleak sight. It was dull and overcast and a drizzle had set in which decided not to relent for the rest of that day. We toured to the other side of the island and visited a very forlorn, dark and miserable looking castle. As we travelled about the Island we began to wonder what the attraction could possibly be for those who lived here. All we could see was damp, dark, bleakness. It was getting quite late so we decided to stay on the Island for the night and found a bed and breakfast. We drew the curtains on the bleakness outside and cosied ourselves inside the warm guest house.

The next morning we awoke to the sun streaming in through the curtains and as I drew them back my breath was taken away by the beauty of the view in front of me. The bleakness was completely gone and a whole array of colours gleamed back at me. I quickly changed my mind about why people would choose to live here! The change in the weather and the appearance of the sun had given us a whole new perspective of the Island. If we had chosen to leave the Island the night before we would have missed this!

How often do we miss opportunities to form relationships with people because we only stay long enough to gain one perspective? Over the years I have found the old adage 'first impressions last' to be very inadequate. It can take some time to really get to know a person; the question we need to ask ourselves is, 'have we got the patience, courage and stamina to stay?' Can we be bothered to make the effort to gain another perspective of that person?

I worked as a nurse in A&E for several years and when it was my turn to be the 'triage' nurse I would be the first person a patient saw on arriving at the hospital. Sometimes the patient could be rather irritable, especially when advised of the waiting time! Sometimes I was met with actual aggression. I remember one patient, with quite a minor injury, who became very angry when I told her how long the wait was for her category of injury. I could have sent her to the waiting room still reeling in anger but instead I sat her down and after a few minutes I learned that ending up in A&E was the last straw in what had been a very bad week for her. She went to the waiting room a much calmer person than she had entered A&E and I had a much better understanding of a patient who could have been labelled as, 'potentially aggressive'. I am not suggesting this approach as a way to handle all angry patients, I only share this to show that in my experience I have found, first impressions are not always accurate. Stay long enough and you will surely gain a different perspective.

- Jenny