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As Chief Executive of the Royal College of Midwives, Gill Walton is a passionate advocate for the difference that midwives make for women and families during maternity care.

Gill's 40-year career, which she refers to as a climbing frame rather than a ladder, has been driven by a natural tendency to question the status quo. Gill reflects that this desire to question began as a child, when she realised that her school's approach to debating was little more than telling each side what they should say. Determined to follow her own path, Gill left school at 16 to study at a local college before starting her training as a nurse.

At the time, she originally intended to train as a midwife, but Gill was inspired to specialise after hearing how a group of pregnant women and mothers had chained themselves to the railings of a London hospital in protest against medicalised births. Gill felt that the medicalisation of a natural life process, without choice, was inherently wrong and started out on a mission to ensure that women were empowered to make the right decisions for themselves and their babies.

As Gill's career progressed, she became one of the first midwives to complete a BSc in Nursing in order to make the most of the opportunities available to her.

