

Dr. Sanegrad or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the PhD

Graduate school is both a privilege and a sacrifice. It is a wonderful opportunity to study something in great depth, to see unseen patterns, connect to different worlds, and explore the vastness of the human experience. Like all great opportunities it comes with certain sacrifices. Mental health should not be one of those sacrifices, but it often is. A recent study shows: “About 60% of graduate students said that they felt overwhelmed, exhausted, hopeless, sad, or depressed nearly all the time. One in 10 said they had contemplated suicide in the previous year.¹” This reflects the difficult nature of graduate work, but is not the inevitable outcome of the graduate school experience. This paper will address the most common mental health issues encountered in graduate school and some possible ways to deal with them. These will include: depression, anxiety, procrastination, perfectionism, fear of failure, feelings of inadequacy (Imposter Syndrome), substance use, and internet addiction. Additionally, some common practices to promote well-being will be discussed.

¹ Arnold, Carrie. *Paying Graduate School's Mental Toll*. Sciencecareers.sciencemag.org, February 4, 2014 Web Aug. 17, 2014.
<http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/career_magazine/previous_issues/articles/2014_02_04/car edit.a1400031>