

Some Suggestions for Work- Life Balance in an Academic Career

- Personal Reflections -

The Ideal Academic Career

Good college



Good medical school



Good residency



Good fellowship



NRSA, K award...



Faculty appointment



R01s, publications...



Success and Happiness

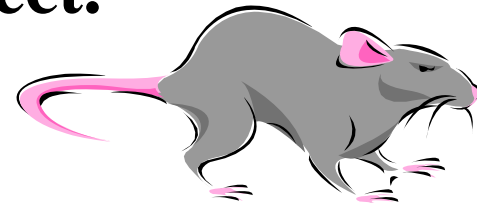
The Real Academic Career – an Example



Problem #1

Problem: I hated my NRSA project.

*“DNase hypersensitivity sites
on the rat TSHB subunit gene”*



Solution: I moved into clinical research, which I loved, and I've been doing it ever since.

Suggestion: Don't do something you hate just because everyone tells you it's the hottest thing to do. Be honest, and find something you like instead.

The Real Academic Career



Problem #2



flat

brown

Problem #2

Problem: I married a guy who owed the US Air Force 4 years of his life.



Solution: I begged for a job at UTHSC. A year later, the GCRC associate program director job opened up there.

Suggestion:

- 1. Don't attach yourself to someone who has signed a legal contract with the US government.**
- 2. Exploit open niches, even if you're not sure you're qualified.**

The Real Academic Career



Problem #3

Problem: I had children.

Solution: I started working part time.

Suggestion:

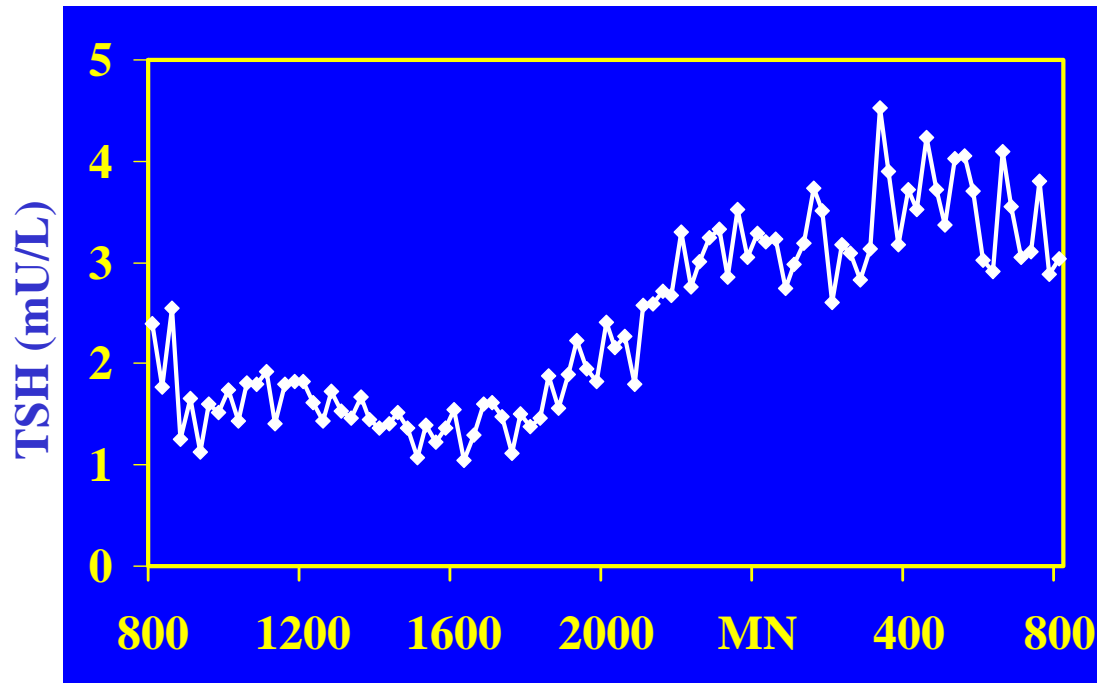
- 1. Decide what is best for you and your family, make a plan, and try not to compromise based on what other people want you to do.**
- 2. Negotiate knowing your strengths.**



The Real Academic Career



Problem #4



- **Healthy controls**
- **Dopamine**
- **Metoclopramide**
- **Somatostatin**
- **Naloxone**
- **Hydrocortisone**
- **TRH (7 days)**
- **Fasting**
- **Adrenal insufficiency**
- **TSH tumors**
- **Hypopituitarism**

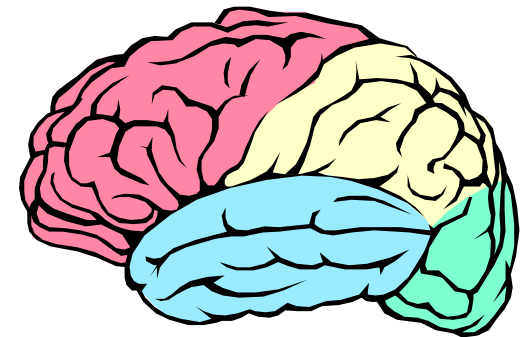
Problem #4

Problem: I got tired of my of research ideas.

Solution: I began new projects with people who have interesting ideas and are great to work with.

Suggestion:

- 1. The people you work with are as important as the projects.**
- 2. You can achieve professional satisfaction without an RO1 of your own.**



The Real Academic Career



Problem #5

Problem: Work overload

Solution: I started resigning from things and declining to do some other things.

Suggestion:

- 1. Don't agree to do anything unless it serves at least two (and preferably three) purposes.**
- 2. Don't be afraid to say no. Practice in front of the mirror.**

Problem #6

Problem: Ego

Solution: I'm trying to learn not to let external validation run my life.

Suggestion:

Don't take a job or project just because it's prestigious. If you're happy where you are, thinking about staying put.

Why I'm in Academic Medicine

- **There is someone on call between me and the diabetic patient with a glucose of 450 on a Sunday at 3 am.**
- **It is very satisfying to know a lot about a little organ.**
- **There is a lot of flexibility in what I do and when I do it.**
- **There is tremendous collegiality.**
- **It's terrifically interesting.**

