Academic Career Work-Life Balance – A View from the Trenches*

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* Perhaps immature, not very enlightening, even unhelpful, but completely true
Process for Getting Tenure

(the way it seemed to me at times)
also
and
The Emotional Yo-yo

- Reference architecture

- The system is heartburn-compliant
- Psychologists tell us it’s not good for our longevity
  - the highs or the lows
- Remind yourself that it’s the long-term picture that counts
  - this can be very hard
  - especially if nobody will tell you how much is enough
My paper got in!
My paper got in!
My paper got in!
I got a big grant!
My paper got in!
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My paper got in!
I got a big grant!
I GOT PROMOTED!!!
• Nothing wrong with this as the destination, eh?
• But try to visit along the way
  • especially since you once you actually get here, you have to leave, like, 5 minutes later
How to Visit the Special Place from Time to Time

• Don’t let the job define or consume you
  – I’m a person/husband/dad, not an “assistant professor”
  – What’s an “assistant professor” anyway? 😊

• “No email” (weekend) days
  – Try it at least for X hours
  – You’ll see, your colleagues and students will live

• Take a vacation
  – You’ll be able to afford it
  – And don’t kid yourself – you’ll need it

• Ask “What would I be doing right now if it wasn’t for the #%!@ job?” and then do it!
Where We All Get Burned

- **Advising** – who picks whom
- **Teaching** – be excellent, but not don’t let it consume you
- **Service** – be a good citizen, but don’t let it consume you
- **Curriculum development** – not more than necessary
- **Research and publishing** – yes, lots, in right places
- **Funding** – striking the right balance, managing projects
- **Taking risks** – yes and no
- **Living in your department** – do they know what you do?
- **Mismatched expectations**
  - You, students, senior department colleagues, chair, dean, “research family”
Solutions?

- The fun is in the process
- Get advice, get advice, get advice
- Get advice
- Learn
- Observe
- Don’t panic
- Don’t forget why you’re doing this
  - Why are you doing this?
Now, I just have to figure out how to get other students to do my homework for nine years.

I hear after you do that, they're not allowed to fire you.