

Excelling in graduate school

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DB Me

Who am I (work-wise)

- I'm an Assistant Professor at the University of British Columbia (in Vancouver, Canada, eh)
- I do research in metadata management and data integration – particularly data integration involving real world data

Who am I (outside of work)

- I have a husband, Steve he's a tenured instructor in my department
- I have a 2 ½ year old daughter, Naomi
- I have a cat, NMI
- I like to read



A key to success in research: figuring out what you need and how to get it

- Taking classes is very homogeneous
- When you stop taking classes, there are lots of ways to compare yourself: there will be someone better than you in pretty much every aspect
- So you need support. How can you get it?

Figure out what you want support in

- Is your advisor good technically, but not a good mentor?
- Is your advisor a good mentor not as helpful technically?
- Is your research topic outside of your advisor's field of expertise?

So how do you find these people?

- Go to the events in your department that aren't just about your research
- Go to conferences (even if you have to pay for some of it yourself)
- Go to events like this – and pay close attention to the other students

You'll note that I haven't talked about how to work harder. Why is that?

- People generally leave grad school because:
 - They have problems with their advisor
 - They lose confidence and lose interest
 - Their interests go somewhere else (money, love, etc)
 - They're not stubborn enough
 - They can't figure out how to get the support they need

It's almost never that they "aren't smart enough"

Having the right support network can help you avoid these problems. It can also help you get past some common grad school syndromes

Four common grad school syndromes

- The Advisor is God Syndrome
- The Advisor Avoidance Syndrome
- The Isolation Syndrome
- The Imposter Syndrome

Getting past those syndromes is much easier if you know to watch for them and have a good support network

They can help you remember that you're not alone and help you figure out how to make things better.