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SPEAKERS

Kelsey Kramer, Jenn Tostlebe, Kathleen Padilla, Jose Sanchez



Jose Sanchez 00:00

Hi, everyone. Welcome back to The Criminology Academy where we are criminally academic. My name is Jose Sanchez.



Jenn Tostlebe 00:23

And I'm Jenn Tostlebe.



Jose Sanchez 00:25

Today's podcast episode is part of our graduate life series. Specifically during this episode we're speaking with Kelsey Kramer and Kathleen Padilla about topics related to work-life balance and graduate student mental health.



Jenn Tostlebe 00:39

Kelsey Kramer is a PhD student in the Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology at Sam Houston State University. Her primary research focuses on gender and race and ethnicity in criminal justice context, especially in sentencing and policing, discretionary decision making, and methodological issues in research. She is also interested in research

surrounding disability and mental health and criminal justice and academia more broadly, her previous work has appeared in Justice Quarterly, and she is working on several other projects related to research interests mentioned previously.



Jose Sanchez 01:14

And Kathleen Padilla, has just completed her PhD from Arizona State University, focusing on police officer mental health and access to and engagement with mental health services. She also examines mental health in academia, diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts are done by organizations, including but not limited to academia, and student support services. Her work has been published in outlets such as Occupational Medicine, Psychology, Public Policy and Law, and Journal of Developmental and Life Course Criminology. So, thank you both for being here with us today. We're excited to have you. And Kathleen, congratulations on being a newly minted PhD. Yeah.



Jenn Tostlebe 02:04

So, as usual, just a brief overview of what we're going to cover in this episode. So, first off, we're going to start with talking about mental health as a graduate student during pre pandemic time. So kind of this typical experience as a graduate student. From there, we're going to move into mental health during the pandemic, and how the graduate student experience changed because of that. So, hopefully, this is more of that once in a lifetime experience that some of us are very much still experiencing. And then last but not least, talking about general work life balance and advice. And also, even until like right now, and while we were putting together this outline, I didn't realize that both of you are actually interested in like mental health in academia. So like, perfect to have both of you on for this. That being said, Jose, why don't you get us started?



Jose Sanchez 02:58

Okay, so our first question for you, is sort of regarding coming into grad school. And when you decided that you wanted to pursue a PhD. Did you have any idea what you were getting yourself into? Did anyone ever talk to you about what you might expect coming into a PhD program? Definitely.



Kelsey Kramer 03:20

Kathleen, do you want to go first?



Kathleen Padilla 03:23

Yeah, no, I'll take a stab at it. So, Kelsey, and I both actually did our masters at ASU. And so one of the things that's really excellent at ASU is that they essentially treat their Master's students as PhD students. So the the rigor, the expectations, all of that is pretty much the same as what you would get from a PhD student. So it, it makes that transition, in my mind a lot easier, because we're kind of already being held to a really rigorous standard. I continued on in education and getting my Master's and PhD, I didn't know what I wanted to do. And I figured the more degrees I had, the more options I would have. Right? So I had no idea, kind of the behind the scenes stuff that occurs in a PhD program, sorry, in a PhD program, but I was pretty well versed as far as what the expectations on paper would be.



Kelsey Kramer 04:18

Yeah, I agree with what Kathleen said. So, I had a much better idea of what I was getting into having done a Master's at Arizona State. We were taking, you know, classes with doctoral students. So, we kind of knew what to expect in terms of course, work and also the expectations for being a research assistant and things like that. So, I definitely had a better idea of what to expect when I went into the PhD program. But, as always, graduate school does throw curveballs at you. And so sometimes you just have to like figure it out as you go. And that's happened a couple of times to me personally, and I just feel like also, graduate school is a lot more glamorized, then it perhaps should have been when thinking about whether or not to apply to a PhD program. So, I think that's something that should also be mentioned is that it's not always as wonderful as everyone makes it out to be. So.



Jenn Tostlebe 05:15

People make this experience sound wonderful?



Kelsey Kramer 05:19

You'd be surprised. Yeah.



Jenn Tostlebe 05:21

I clearly didn't talk to a lot of people before I decided to do a Ph. D. program. But



Kathleen Padilla 05:27

Well, Kelsey with with that, I think one of the, one of the biggest disconnects is all we would hear from, like, the new faculty and more senior faculty is how awesome it is, right? Not how it's incredibly difficult being a senior PhD student or a junior faculty member is. So, we would only hear how like, wonderful and you know, you get you get your summers off and autonomy over your own time. And all of those wonderful things that isn't necessarily true, particularly like in today's climate, there's not that many tenure track jobs. So like this wonderful, happy, idealistic ending isn't the case for a lot of people simply because the resources aren't really there anymore.



Kelsey Kramer 06:09

Fully agree. Yeah. Yeah, it was definitely glamorized by new assistant faculty members, for sure. Suggesting or even kind of forcefully encouraging application to the Ph. D. programs. So yeah, I fully agree with what Kathleen has said.



Jose Sanchez 06:29

Yeah, that's, yeah, that's interesting. So I got my master's too. But I went to a school, that's not PhD granting, I think they offer like one PhD in education. And it's like, it's like in combination with UCLA. So it's not even like, it's not really their program. And, yeah, so I got encouraged to pursue a PhD by the people in my department, my department didn't ask for a Master's until my very last year there, they were gonna reopen it. So, I became like, the first, my cohort was the first one and like, seven years or five years, and then they suspended it after we graduated. So, I can say, I got some, like, advice about it, but it was, you know, like your typical, do your coursework, do your dissertation, use secondary data, and then you'll be done in a jiff. I was like, alright, I can do that. And then, and then I get to CU. And then so I think this is my, this is where we differ quite a bit, at least I know for with you, Kelsey, because Sam Houston, you usually believe a Master's is a requirement. But at CU, it's not. And I basically had to start from zero, like my master's, I could have had a count towards credits, but we ended up not doing, using that route, so I basically started from zero had to go through the entire coursework. And yes, my first year, I was like, woof, what did I get myself into? Like, this, like, this is hard. This is way harder than my master's program. Like, it's not even funny how much like how big the difference was.



Jenn Tostlebe 08:19

Yeah, that was my experience, too, which is something Jose that we've talked about before. But yeah, I came from master's program where there was a PhD option, but it was

just a different kind of program, I got the same advice, you know, secondary data, because that's what most of my professors were using, came to CU. And it's all, at least in our experience, a lot of primary data collection and doing, you know, the ground floor work, which is really cool. But it's definitely makes the experience different.

K

Kelsey Kramer 08:50

I will say that, when going from my bachelor's degree to the master's degree, that's where the biggest like jump was, it was like a hop, skip and a jump away in terms of like, coming from a background in psychology to having to learn all new theories and criminology and criminal justice. And so it was definitely more of a transition between the bachelors and the Masters. But having then done a Masters moving into a PhD wasn't as difficult to transition into that role. So



Jenn Tostlebe 09:24

Kelsey, did you. Oh, sorry, did you go straight from undergrad to your masters? Or did you take time off?

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Kelsey Kramer 09:31

I did. So I did my bachelor's degree in three years and crazily decided to apply for a master's degree, like right before the deadline. So I applied and was accepted and then went right into the master's program. Sometimes I wish I had taken a break, just to kind of either get job experience or to just kind of relax a little bit because you know, you're going through your whole life basically to school. So, I do wish that I maybe had taken a break. But, I really enjoyed moving on through school as quickly as I have, because now I'm almost done. And I'm still quite young. And so that is nice to be able to start a career a little bit sooner. But yeah.

K

Kathleen Padilla 10:22

Yeah, Kelsey, I would agree on the the jump from the bachelors to the masters. my undergrad is in, says a Bachelors of criminal justice. So like, that's the degree title. That means like, I have a BA or BS like I have a BCJ. So, it's completely like practitioner based I, I knew really not very much about statistics, or theory, or research in general. So that jump when I first got to the master's program was terrifying. I thought criminology and criminal justice were the same thing. I was like, I don't, I don't know what I'm doing here. But they let me in. So I'll, I'll take it. But I also went straight through bachelor's, master's, PhD, and

now postdoc, and yeah, I wish I would have taken a break, but I don't know if I would have come back to finish had I taken a break in between.



Kelsey Kramer 11:12

Fully agree with that. Yeah. If you leave. You're like, good on the outside. Do I want to go back?



Kathleen Padilla 11:18

Yeah. Yeah, exactly. So I'm glad that I kind of just cruised through in the time that I did. But yeah, there there are other routes that I think are more plausible, more, what's the word I'm looking for, I guess better for for one's mental state.



Jenn Tostlebe 11:41

So in that way, then masters not necessarily what you expected. But the PhD, you kind of had a feel for what it was going to be like. So, I imagine people going from undergrad to a PhD, would have that same transition that both of you felt going from undergrad to masters. So, our next question is about what is called imposter syndrome. So, this is something that from my own experience, and from talking to a lot of other people is super common to feel and so I'm interested if either of you have experienced it, and if so, at what point did imposter syndrome kind of set in for you?



Kelsey Kramer 12:25

I can, I can take it first, if you don't mind. So, pretty much my entire time in the master's program imposter syndrome hit me extremely hard. I struggled with feeling like I wasn't supposed to be there. And perhaps that's because I did come from a different background. I felt like I wasn't qualified to be there. And that me being accepted was a mistake, which I know is you know exactly what imposter syndrome is. But that's just how I felt. And in some classes, there were even times where I was like, paralyzed by the fear that my cohort mates would figure out that I wasn't supposed to be there, which honestly really impacted my ability to participate in my graduate classes. And, and, I think a lot of us know, like, participation is like key to your grade in most classes. And so it probably didn't help right, like I said that I came from psychology background, but it prevented me. Imposter syndrome prevented me from talking in class from participating. And it wasn't really until I entered or applied for a PhD program that those feelings kind of went away. Even after defending like my thesis, I was like, well, I don't know if, I I don't know if I should

have, you know, gotten through this or if I'm even qualified to know this much. And so this, yeah, this feeling kind of just like followed me up until I got to Sam Houston and started the PhD program. So, feelings of imposter syndrome also haven't really gone away. I think they've just become more like background noise. You know, you're like my kind of know things now. So, that's kind of how I have kind of navigated. imposter syndrome is like, no, I am qualified to be here. I deserve to be in the program, and I earned my spot. I know what I'm talking about. So those are kind of, like, that's kind of my experience with imposter syndrome. I don't know. If I'm, I'm sure Kathleen has had a different experience. So I'm interested to hear hers but

K

Kathleen Padilla 14:33

yeah, so my, my experiences with it stem I think for more of like a racial and ethnic aspect. So, our department, our school is extremely diverse. So, it's very female oriented. So, it mostly female students, predominantly female staff, really, but it's still a very white department. And I was one of I think three or four students in my master's cohort out of 16, who were not white, one of a handful of PhD students who were not white. And so it always kind of felt to me, I carried the token status a lot. I was asked, you know, if I can translate surveys into Spanish and you know, I tell them, I don't speak Spanish. Sorry. So a lot of those, like, microaggressions really kind of played into, am I supposed to be here? Am I here in my own merit? Or am I here because they needed an ethnic sounding last name? And so I've struggled with those feelings a lot. It didn't help that one professor had, like, let it slip that I had actually been waitlisted into the master's program, before I was accepted, so I was like, cool, that's fine. But then I was one of the first top ranked into the PhD program in my cohorts was like, okay, I do deserve to be here, I do belong here. They may have only let me in because they needed, you know, some more diversity or whatever. But I will, I will, like earn my spot. So, those feelings certainly haven't gone away. I still don't. I'm like, I don't know why they gave me my PhD. She don't know why that happened. But it did. I'm not a quant person. I like yet I didn't know any of those skills coming into the program. So, I really didn't think I would be able to make it work there. But I have and, you know, that's all through the, through the work of some wonderful mentors at ASU. I can absolutely give like a shout out to like Danny Wallace and Adam Vine. And so faculty and mentors, like them have really made it possible for some of those imposter feelings to kind of go away. Sorry, I tend to ramble a lot. So if I'm talking too much, you can just be like, hey, that's enough.

J

Jose Sanchez 16:50

Don't even worry about it. But yeah, that's, that's interesting, because so with Kelsey, again, like, I think our experiences were a little different. Because during my master's

program, I then I think part of it was because I was so unaware of what exactly it is that I was doing, that imposter syndrome never hit. And one of the people in my cohort, we graduated at the same time from our bachelor's, I got my masters at the same school that I got my bachelor's at. And I think that also helped not sort of foster imposter syndrome. Because I was very comfortable in that department. Everyone in that department knew me it's, it's a small department, so I didn't feel any sort of imposter syndrome. I was like, blissfully ignorant of what that was. And then once I got to CU, and I realized that this is a different ballgame, I think it's hard to hit a little bit. And then no, like Kathleen, like you mentioned, like, CU's departments also very white. And I too have had those thoughts and those feelings. And, you know, it doesn't help that I've gone through for three and I'm probably going to go four for four with getting nominated for like Diversity Committee. I didn't ask anyone to nominate me, but I'm pretty sure I just get nominated because I'm one of the very few people that's not white in our department. And, so I can relate to those feelings of Do i even belong here. Like, sometimes, I think I might be kind of an idiot. I don't know if I quite know what I'm doing. But, I also find a little comfort in telling myself like, even if I am just faking it, like I've made it to my fourth year by faking it. So, if that's what needs to happen, then at least, I'm doing a good job of, you know, fooling people into thinking that I can do this.



Jenn Tostlebe 18:46

Kelsey, so go to your comment about how imposter syndrome is kind of like always in the background. And like it's this maybe unconscious thing, especially as you're moving farther through the program. To me, it's like imposter syndrome is a sneaky bitch because you don't expect it to hit you and you think you're doing fine. And you know, everything and then all of a sudden, it's like one day you're like, I'm the dumbest person in the entire universe. And I can't even figure out how to do this one line and find the mean in this stupid statistics program. Like so. Yeah.



Kelsey Kramer 19:20

Yeah, I, in some of my PhD classes, like there's just days, right? Like, it's a whole day where you're like, in class all day, or you have one class, and you're just like, I know nothing. Yeah, why am I here? Yeah, those feelings don't go away. Unfortunately. You're totally right. I mean, it just like, sneaks up on you. But as long as like, in your mind also, you're like, Oh, no, like, it's just one day, right? Like I am supposed to be here. That's like, that's how you get through that. Yeah.



Jose Sanchez 20:00

And I don't know about you guys, but I think it hits me the most while writing. Like, I'll be, you know, writing away and then I'll like read through my thing like, are there better words that I can use for this? Like, I don't know that my vocabulary is up to par. Like, alright, screw it I'm just gonna go with my basic ass English. Hell, you know, as long as the point gets across, but like when I'm writing I think is when I feel or I'm more susceptible to feeling insecure.



Kathleen Padilla 20:30

Yeah, well, yeah. While I'm like actually writing, I'm like, this is garbage this, like, I don't know anything. And then I go back and read it after and I'm like, huh? That's not bad. Okay, maybe like maybe I can write a paper. For me, it's always with the methods and the results and the, sorry, my brain is just like not working right now. Yeah, all of like, the analytical stuff. I'm like, I don't know any of this, like I can. I can do a logistic regression. anything more than that, like I it's just not working for me, not my thing. So, really having to kind of play up your strengths. Don't look at it as like, Oh, I'm not good at quant. But like, okay, I am good at all of these other things that perhaps really quant heavy people also need help with. So, I've always tried to kind of reframe my weaknesses as where I can contribute to other people.



Jenn Tostlebe 21:29

Yeah, I think that's a great piece of advice. For everyone who's listening. Yeah. I also know so for me right now, Kelsey, I'm not sure where you are. Kathleen, you clearly have already defended your dissertation. So, you've gone through this process. But I'm like, at the point where that is my next thing. And I need to start doing it now. Because I'm planning on going on the job market in the fall. So, I feel like very behind. But I think part of that is this imposter syndrome, where it's just like, I don't even I don't feel like I'm smart enough to write a dissertation. Like, that just feels like a lot, and it's overwhelming. So, I think the imposter syndrome is hitting me pretty hard there right now. Yeah.



Kelsey Kramer 22:13

mean, yeah. Sorry, Kathleen. I'm in the middle of my like, portfolio process, which is kind of like our version of comps, or qualifying papers. And so I'm working on that. And then eventually, I'll get to the dissertation phase. So...

K

Kathleen Padilla 22:35

the The nice thing for me is I've been writing essentially on this topic, since I got to ASU for the masters. So officer mental health has been kind of my like, area of research for seven years now. So, actually writing it, like was awful. 100%. But, I just took it in such small chunks, that it it, it wasn't too bad. And then the most fun part for me was defending itself. Because then it's like, nobody knows it the way that you know it. Nobody can really even be like, did you actually do this or you know, at a certain point, you're the absolute expert on whatever it is, especially if it's primary data collection, like you were saying, not even your chair will know it, as well as you. So, it's always kind of fun, just to like, show off a little bit. And, so that was that was the most fun part for me. So if that's any solace to you, the getting the document, written is the worst portion, but then after that...

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Kelsey Kramer 23:42

I'll keep that in mind when I get there. Yeah, yeah.

J

Jose Sanchez 23:46

Okay. So as graduate students, we're often asked to take on different roles, you know, we're students, we often have to teach, we got to do our research. But then, you know, we still have to keep like a small part of ourselves, and you know, like our own personal identity intact, somehow. So, our next question is, how do you sort of navigate these roles and some of the different challenges that they might bring?

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Kathleen Padilla 24:21

I'll go first, Kelsey, so the the biggest challenge that I have found, so I've been teaching, or I was teaching, the last two or three years, I've been done with classes at ASU, and then we exclusively teach and do RA work. So, that transition was pretty clear. From like, student to teacher. For me, the challenge is how the school identifies you. Right? So like, I'm tech, I've technically been a student this whole time, but my title was like faculty associate. So, I wasn't really a student but I was a student, and I was an employee, but I wasn't really an employee. So, it was kind of like role ambiguity as far as how the school views you. And with that comes like what benefits or you know, tuition remission and things like that, but they're going to help you out with. So, that was the biggest frustration for me. As far as kind of navigating internally, those different role changes, it was pretty easy just because of how I tried to schedule my time. So, like, mornings, were just for checking in on my classes or, you know, whatever. And, then afternoons were just for research. So trying to really just delineate my day based on my roles helped a little bit.



Kelsey Kramer 25:44

Yeah, that's a good point. I hadn't thought about, you know, how the university classifies us when we transition between Student Professor things like that. Yeah, that definitely makes it difficult because right, you don't get the same benefits as a full time faculty member when you're a doctoral student, or doctoral candidate teaching classes, which can be super frustrating at times, like you don't have access to the same resources that they do like you. For all intents and purposes, you are a student, but you still have some of the same roles that a professor would have in the department. So yeah, that's a really good point. Honestly, this is a really hard question. I was like, KB go first. And honestly, I'm not sure that I navigate these very well, I think it can be really difficult to keep your self identity as well as be a teacher to undergraduate students, or even just as a researcher, right, because like, the personal is political, things like that. But I also feel like a little bit of a imposter syndrome kind of comes out when you're switching from student to teacher. And so that, for me is the hardest transition, right? Like, sometimes I wonder if I'm really qualified to be teaching undergrad students, or other people. And being a teacher in and of itself is like a really complicated job, right? Because you're no longer responsible just for yourself, you're responsible for the education of other human beings. And that can be a really tall order to fill. Because those students are relying on you to teach them things. And if you can't, or are, like nervous or feel like you're not going to do a good job, then it will potentially reflect in the classroom. And, so I will say that, that has been probably the most difficult challenge to handle coming from student to teacher. But I will say that not being so far removed from students like from being a student myself, definitely makes it a lot easier to connect with students in the classroom. And I don't know if that just is an age or if it's just because you understand kind of like the grind and what they're going through. But that definitely helps make it a lot easier. So, I can understand why a lot of students who have older faculty members have a difficult time learning from them. I think it just may be that difference in time and the gap between when they were in school and when these students are now taking these classes. So, so, yeah.



Jenn Tostlebe 28:32

All right. So we know that that's like a big question. So we want to just dive into different elements of this very briefly. So first, starting with student So, one thing that Jose and I were talking about, and something that I felt is you know, we're grad students, for the most part, we're good students, we're perfectionists A lot of us at least, and therefore we like to get you know, A's on pretty much everything that we are doing grade wise. But one thing that we know is that in grad student or grad school, a lot of times grades aren't really like the most important thing you know, there are other things that are more important. After we graduate, no one's going to ask what our GPA was or what grades we

got. And so are you, do you think you're a perfectionist? And if so, do you think that added to like the pressure of the graduate school experience and how did you manage that how did you deal with that?

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Kathleen Padilla 29:33

So, I I will say I am definitely a perfectionist. I up through like high school, college, I was like good but lazy student, like I didn't try very hard, but I did really well. And once I got into into the master's program where obviously grades are still impacting your potential PhD program. Grades not an issue. Once I got into the PhD program where grades like don't matter, the biggest issue for me was like, okay, so you can, or the school system has conditioned us for 12, what 16, 18 years to like that, that is our metric for success. That is our worth. That's like, that's how you're telling us we're valuable. And now you're saying it doesn't matter. So, it's kind of this like, mind shattering experience of like being told that grades don't really matter. But I, I very clearly, remember, after the first semester of my PhD program, I got an A- in a class where I strongly felt that I should have gotten an A, and to me, an A- hurts more than a B, because it's like, just give me the B, just give me the B. And so I literally like from that class, I, I put it in my mind to like, stop caring. I was like, I cannot care this much about my grades like this is going to drive me bonkers. And so after pretty much that first semester, I was like, well, we, we'll see what happens. But I cannot. I cannot care this much about a grade, that's not going to impact my future.



Jenn Tostlebe 31:11

And that's a hard thing to do. Right?

K

Kathleen Padilla 31:13

Yeah. Yeah, it was, there was there was a lot of tears and a lot of red wine. And then I came to that conclusion where I was like, this isn't good. Yeah.

K

Kelsey Kramer 31:24

I completely understand that. It's, you know, if you focus too much on your grades, like, you're going to eventually like it's going to be miserable. And I think that's kind of like the point I was that was just like, trying too hard in these classes was making me absolutely miserable. And I just had to come to the realization that good is good enough. And that if it's done, it's done. And it doesn't matter if it's, you know, it doesn't matter if I think it's not very good, because chances are, it's probably not that bad. You know, when you're in a

PhD program, like everyone around you is smart. We're all, you know, super qualified to be here are all of us are great writers, you know, so like, when we turn something in think it's bad, it's really not that bad. And, so, I just think it's really important to just as someone who has struggled with perfection in the past, right, like, even up until now, like this summer is when I really was like, Okay, yeah, good is good enough. I actually read a book, my, my parent, my father actually wrote a book on perfectionism. And it was super helpful to me. And it's just basically like, figuring out how to get out of this continuous loop of trying to be perfect for everything. And the reality is, is as long as it's done, it doesn't matter if it's perfect or not. Because there's always gonna be something else like on the horizon that you're gonna have to do. And so yeah, good is good enough. And I just like have been carrying that with me since and it's worked out. So.



Jenn Tostlebe 33:06

The best class paper is that done class paper?



Kelsey Kramer 33:12

About the dissertation to a done dissertation.



33:16

Yeah, I, I literally cut out half my dissertation because I just needed to be finished with it. So, it was supposed to be mixed methods. And when I finished, like, the quantitative stuff, I emailed my chair and I was like, I, I just don't have anything left to give, which I think this is good enough on its own. I can do the qual stuff in the future. But like, I, I don't have much more to give. She was like, okay, that's fine. Like, Oh, cool. Okay.



Jose Sanchez 33:47

Yeah. I had the great experience. My first semester, it was like, A, A, A-. And I just went into like, rage mode. I was like, Are you kidding me? Like, you're gonna give me an A- and ruin my 4.0 like this some bullshit. Like, I was livid. But and then yeah, talking to some people, like, it's not really going to matter. Like, at the end of the day, no one's gonna care. Like, this is the last stop of this, like, academic journey. No one's gonna ask you for a transcript. And yeah, don't pay. Because the other thing I would do too, is I would like bump up until the deadline working on a paper, like if it's due Saturday at 11:59. I'm gonna bump up to 11:59 trying to get it to be as good as I possibly can. But eventually, like it's not good. That's not good for you.

K

Kelsey Kramer 34:46

It's not sustainable. That's for sure. Yeah, patchiness is is completely unsustainable in the long run. So I agree. Yeah, I got a B in my first semesters statistics class, and I was like, well, this sucks. But moving on, I knew that the grade wasn't going to matter in the long run. So I just kind of was like, alright, whatever. But yeah, totally. Yeah, it's just not sustainable for sure.

J

Jose Sanchez 35:19

Alright, so the other thing that's a big part of what we do is our role, as researchers were often put under some pressure to publish. So, can you talk to us about, you know, this pressure of having to publish? How do you sort of devote time to your own work? And how do you deal with this? So there's one thing that no one ever talks about, and we did an episode on it, but failure, right, like, chances are, when you submit an article, the most likely outcome is that it's going to be rejected. How do you how do you guys deal with, with with life as a researcher?

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Kathleen Padilla 36:07

So as so almost all of my data that I work with is primary data collection for my master's thesis, my dissertation, I've all collected it myself. And there is this like, intense pressure to be like, turning papers out of that data set that I have, or datasets that I have. And it's like, you know, if I had somebody else working for me, or if I was like, the PI of the labs, and I could be giving that data out to people, but I'm like, I'm one person. And I'm, you know, at the time going through a PhD program, how do you expect me to be publishing on this work that's like raw data while still doing all this other stuff, but to the point about rejection, so my, my, he still mentor? Yeah, he's still a mentor. Yeah, the faculty member that I work with, we just got an article accepted after it was rejected from eight journals. And so we basically been working on it since he got to ASU, and it finally got accepted somewhere. And it is the most satisfying feeling having an article be accepted after that long. At this point, I mean, I'm, I don't know if it's fortunate, or if it's that I got really cynical really quickly. But rejections don't really, like faze me. At this point. I'm like, I just anticipate rejection. Which isn't good either, right? Like, it's not good to just be like, I'm gonna fail, no big deal, but it does kind of remove some of the pressure, just being a little bit more fearless like that. Because, you know, if you understand it's probably gonna get rejected than anything other than that is kind of like a cherry on top. The first few rejections that I would get, were, were really rough. And I remember reading this, this little bit or hearing this little bit from the scholar, he said, every time she got a rejection, she would go by herself, something like a new pair of shoes, or, you know, luggage or something like that. And so it became a way for like, that was her way to de stress from the rejection process.

So, I've always kept that in mind too, like all when I get a rejection all, you know, have some chocolate, you know, a wallow in my sorrows for a little bit, and then I move on and find a new spot, because three years later, it could land somewhere.

K

Kelsey Kramer 38:32

I think, for me, Well, okay, so time management has always been a struggle for me, like in just all honesty, and I think it is a struggle for a lot of people. So I know, I'm not alone in this. So when I, I, and I have really weird work hours. So I work like late at night, sometimes, like, overnight, basically, which I know a lot of people can't do. And those are just like, that's just what I have worked with. And so that's kind of the time I use for my own research is at night. When I'm at home and like a comfortable space, I can do my own research, like, you know, at school if I need to, but I just prefer to be in my, like, the comfort of my own home and my like pajamas, you know, because it's just, it's just better that way. And so that's kind of like, I set time aside at home at night, like when my partner's not around, or when he's working to work on my own research. And as far as like handling rejection, I am in a weird place where I haven't actually had to handle that much rejection, but I will say that I was rejected from several PhD programs. And so that was like my first experience of rejection. And that's done a lot. But I think you know, it's just like, inherent to the job. Right, like you're, there's gonna be rejection in academia, even in just normal life. And so it's really important not to take it too personally. And that's kind of like how I try to deal with it is I just like, Oh, it's gonna like Kathleen said, like, it's gonna happen. You just kind of like, know it's gonna happen. You just move on eat some chocolate, like you said, ice cream in there. But yeah, I think it's just like, instead of like anticipating the rejection, you're like, oh, okay, well, if this happens, like, Okay, I'm just gonna keep going, because like, a rejection's a rejection, but eventually it's gonna find its home. Right? So or you're gonna find your home as a graduate student. And that's kind of what happened to me, right? Like, I was accepted at Sam and I knew that it was going to be a good fit for me at the time. So, that's kind of like how I handled that. But as far as like journal articles, I haven't handled rejections yet, but that's because I haven't submitted as many as other people have. So, pref, preface. I haven't submitted as many articles as others. So that's why.



Jenn Tostlebe 41:12

Okay. All right. So, moving into kind of, you know, we've talked about a lot of the different struggles or challenges that can come up in grad school. So moving into kind of talking about how to deal with them more specifically focusing on mental health. So when you've come into experiences where your mental health has been impacted, have you been able

to speak to your advisors or your mentors about this? And if so, do you have any advice for people who are looking to do that to speak to their advisors?



Kelsey Kramer 41:49

Kathleen, pretty well, yeah.



Kathleen Padilla 41:52

No, no, I'll hop I'll hop first. So this is like, this is the question that I, I was ready for, and I will be as tactful as possible. So for for context, so I, I was diagnosed with Type two bipolar and generalized anxiety disorder and obsessive compulsive personality disorder. So I have kind of this like, hodgepodge of like mental health issues. And so I was diagnosed with those, the second year of my PhD program, I had started the PhD program using our school like counseling services, like a proactive method of self care. And then I was diagnosed with like, all these mental health issues. And so the, the very first person I told was my advisor at the time, and I dealt with some really harsh repercussions, I believe, of having disclosed, obviously, like new medications, having to figure out what that does to your body, like it is a process. To one figure out your mental health, two, to figure out the right ways to manage it. And so after that experience, where I was, I was kind of a little scorned, I felt after as a result of disclosing and so after that point, I was very, very cautious about who I talked to about it, my entire dissertation committee, like they, they didn't even know through the whole process, because I was like, I just need to be done like this isn't going to be I'm not going to make it an issue. The one faculty member that I work really closely with now has been aware, but that's because he comes from a developmental psych background. So, I think he's inherently a little bit more understanding of those issues. And he has been fantastic and like, if you need a day, tell me you need a day, like it's not the work isn't going to go anywhere. So, he has been wonderful in helping solidify some of those work life boundaries for me and other members that are that are in that lab. So, my advice would be like, if you feel genuinely comfortable with your advisor, comfortable enough to disclose, then it certainly can help bring a greater understanding of your, your working relationship, your working habits, just like letting them know. But, you do I would say like just be cautious because it can, unfortunately, it can go negatively. And you know that that negative kind of not backlash or wasn't backlash, but just that negative encounter really ruined a lot of the trust that I had in disclosing aspects like that. So even you know, going on the job market, they asked, you know, do you have any? There's like that disabilities form that's on like the last page and I always indicate that yes, I do technically have a disability, but I am terrified still to disclose it on a job application. Because I'm like, okay, you're gonna think that I don't know how to handle it. And that's not the case. So it did open up a wonderful or create a

wonderful relationship, but it didn't like it came with, with some costs there.



Jenn Tostlebe 45:17

And I'm sorry to hear about that. really unfortunate, you know, it's not what you want.



Kathleen Padilla 45:23

Yeah. Yeah, it wasn't, um, it was, it was very frustrating. But, you know, looking back now, like, that wasn't the right working relationship for me anyways, I needed a little bit more grace than what that faculty member could provide. And that's okay. Right? Like I were I was out wasn't going to be helpful for the work that they were needing done. So, you know, it wasn't going to be beneficial for either of us. But it was unfortunate that it, you know, came came down that way. But everything's all good now. So.



Kelsey Kramer 45:58

Yeah, I have to echo some of what Kathleen has said, right? Like, in terms of managing, if you, you know, disclose mental health issues to certain faculty members, right? Like, they might think that you can't do your job, which is not fair. And it's not right. And, but unfortunately, that does happen. And so that's something that as somebody who has, I have complex PTSD, and anxiety, and depression. And so navigating, how to talk to certain faculty members about it, when it's necessary is still really hard. But I think the biggest or the most important thing I can say, is to find an advisor who you feel comfortable talking with about that type of stuff. And I'm very fortunate to have multiple mentors or advisors now that understand and get it and understand like the struggles of mental health, but also even physical health. And so that has definitely made a difference for me in terms of like, how I go about doing my schoolwork, and providing that grace, exactly like Kathleen said, like, I need a day, I need some time to focus on me or otherwise, like the work that I give you might not be where it should be in terms of quality, or just may not get done. And it's not because I don't necessarily want to do it. It's just I like either physically cannot or mentally, like it's just not possible. And so navigating those conversations with faculty can definitely backfire sometimes, and it has for me before, some faculty members don't know how or don't have that. I don't want to say like nurturing side, but they just don't understand or have the ability to connect with people in that way. And that's, you know, it's unfortunate, but there's nothing that you can do about it. And so, you just have to kind of like, be a little flexible, if you're somebody with issues like this. And you may have to ultimately change mentors, or find somebody that isn't your mentor that you feel comfortable talking with about it, even if you still work for this other

person. There are other people in your department or hopefully at your university that you can talk to about these issues. And I never, I guess if I'm rambling, let me know. But I also never really felt like someone with mental health issues like it was okay to talk about them. And until it got to the point where it was like so bad, it was necessary to talk about them. And so I don't recommend other people waiting until like, it's so difficult in your personal life that it is like truly impacting your professional life. But you know, sometimes it be like that, and there's nothing you can do. And so, yeah, it is really hard to have these conversations with faculty members. I don't know that it gets easier. For some, but I'm very fortunate, like I said to have people that are really supportive, like Dr. Miltonette Craig has been wonderful. And Dr. Shelley Clavenger has been really fabulous. I'm able to talk to them about these things. And Dr. Danielle Wallace, at Arizona State, honestly is a huge reason why I was able to even get myself into therapy. And so, like it's important to have those people and find find the faculty members that are caring and willing to listen and are I'm not going to judge you, when you have these problems, because a lot of graduate students do. There's no way around it. So yeah.



Jenn Tostlebe 50:10

Yeah. And like things come up during grad school, you know, it's a intensive part of your life. And I've had multiple family members pass away, I've been dealing this year, things that are still super close to me. So I don't want to start crying. So I'm not going to talk about it. But just like, terrible stuff that's like going on and having advisors that will be super understanding that's, like, critical when it comes to that. And even, you know, Kelsey, like you said, even if it's not your specific advisor, your main advisor, just finding someone in the department if you need to talk about it, that you can talk about with.



Jose Sanchez 50:50

Yeah. Okay, so we've been talking about so the challenges of our lives as grad students under I guess, quote, unquote, normal circumstances. So, now we'd like to talk about during our very much, not normal circumstances. And so, how did the coronavirus pandemic impact the the challenges or stressors of grad school, whether that be all the roles that we have to manage, imposter syndrome, or just your mental health generally?



Kathleen Padilla 51:38

You want to go first Kelsey?

K

Kelsey Kramer 51:39

Yeah, I can. This is the question that I was prepared for, like the most, or that I thought about the most. So, yeah, I think just in general, the pandemic really affected my mental health. And as a result, it definitely affected my stress with graduate school, but just life in general, right? Like, so I don't really have anything to hide, but my anxiety and like other mental health issues, were exacerbated during the pandemic extremely, I even had to take an incomplete in the class so that I could just like survive. And I just, like, just living through this has been probably one of the most difficult times, like there's were, there were days where, you know, we had online classes, and I'd have to turn off my camera so that I could like go cry in the other room. Because it was just like, the stress of it all was just so much. And there were also days where like, I couldn't leave my house, because I was like, I couldn't, I just couldn't do it, I couldn't bring myself to get out especially to like go to the grocery store of all places. It was just so stressful and anxiety producing that sometimes I would get like physically sick. And just thinking about going to the grocery store, you know, and which is awful, because it's just the grocery store. And, but people you know, don't wear masks, they get right up in your business. And as someone who also has a compromised immune system, I have a autoimmune disease that causes me, my like, immune system to attack itself. And so, that just like was such a terrible experience for me. So, not only was like I stressed out already, because graduate school is just stressful in general, with the amount of coursework and doing like, my portfolio has been really stressful. But just the anxiety of like not feeling safe leaving my house made it almost like impossible to really function as a as a human, let alone as like a graduate student during this whole thing. So, that's that's kind of been my experience just more generally with mental health. I will say that it wasn't as difficult to navigate like, student to teacher because everything was just online. And like imposter syndrome really wasn't an issue for me during this time. It was really mostly just managing my anxiety and depression being stuck at home and with people not being very respectful of boundaries during the pandemic for people that you know, really can't get sick because the consequences could be really dire. So that's kind of my experience.

K

Kathleen Padilla 54:49

And then for for me, so I moved to Texas, from Arizona in the fall of 2019 my now husband is a PhD student at Sam. And so once I was done with coursework and everything I was able to move that we could be co-located. So I had already been doing everything remotely, I only teach online classes, all of my lab work research work was done remotely anyways, so I was very fortunate that my work life really didn't change. There were of course, like, you know, the, the worldly adjustments and not really being able to go places, I have asthma and get chronic respiratory infection. So kind of similar to Kelsey, I was like, I am kind of nervous for my safety, but I, you know, generally that was okay, my biggest

adjustment and concern was with my my students that I was teaching. So I, in addition to teaching for ASU, I teach for a community college in Southern New Mexico. And a lot of these students, you know, they're either still in high school, or this is their first experience of college. And it's now remote. A lot of a lot of my students, you know, it's from a very low DRD area. So they're having to find ways to make ends meet for their family. And school really wasn't a top priority for them, as it shouldn't have been, right? Like, so for me, my biggest adjustment was making sure that my students were safe, and were financially secure as much as they could be, you know, that they had access to mental health care services that they felt supported by me. And so I had to make a lot of adjustments to my my standard teaching style, really just allowing a ton of grace, a ton of leniency, where I could, and then, you know, on the job market side of things, the job market last year, and will be again this year, is it really allowed me to apply for more jobs. So,, one of one of the things that I hope sticks post pandemic is that a lot of these job opportunities will be done virtually, because you can bring in more people, more people who may not have the financial means to be able to travel, you know, across the country for a two day job interview. So, I think the the presence of zoom has made things a lot more equitable in a lot of senses. But then, you know, also on the flip side, for some of those low SES areas, you're really thinking that they have access to WiFi, and stable WiFi, and a webcam, you know, if you're using webcams for your classes. So, my biggest issue this last year was really kind of keeping an eye on my students and making sure that they were doing okay. And felt supported.

K

Kelsey Kramer 57:48

Yeah, I'll agree with that. Which I know I didn't talk about, but yeah, transitioning from in person to online, definitely a priority of mine was to make sure my students were okay too, you know, obviously, I had my own things that I was worrying about. But, you know, I had, you know, a ton of students who are, you know, first generation college students who are trying to navigate going to school, but now school is online. So, that's a whole new ballgame, too. And so yeah, I completely agree with KB that like, during the pandemic, or I mean, the ongoing pandemic, I should say, making sure students are taken care of, and that they're getting the resources that they need has been really important to me also. You know, and just reaching out to them, you know, every once in a while or once a week, and just checking in on them not saying like, hey, by the way, you have an assignment due, but how are you? How are you doing? Do you need anything for me? Do you need me to set up an appointment or take you to or get you into the counseling center? Do you need other things for me? Do you need an extension? Do you need a break, like a mental health day one day isn't going to ruin your career, it's not going to ruin your undergraduate GPA. You know, it's okay to take breaks, which some people will say like work work until you die. That's not my philosophy. Breaks are a good thing. If anything, they keep you fresh for

longer. And so, yeah, definitely. Taking care of students was like a really top priority. For me, and I know for a lot of my like cohort mates that were teaching online during the pandemic as well.



Jenn Tostlebe 59:45

I think that's great. You, oh, I was just gonna say I think that's great that both of you like we're focusing on your students because I know I was teaching and a lot of my students were like, these professors don't care at all that they have. Nuts like, I was sad.



Kelsey Kramer 1:00:03

It hurts. You're heart. It really does.



Kathleen Padilla 1:00:05

The amount of like, I mean, the posts that would go like viral on Twitter, right about professors just being total jerk, like, there's no need, like, there's no class that is that important that you need to treat somebody like that, yeah. But I would like to add, so all of last year I was I defended my perspective in September. So from like, January, basically till September, I was I was writing and so I have been extremely engulfed in the stress literature. So, from a medical standpoint, psychological like, all of these areas of stress, like I was very, very, very painfully aware of what stress was doing to everybody, as well as myself. So, it was kind of this like, meta relationship with my dissertation where I'm like, I'm sitting here engulfed in this, like, mental health and stress literature for police officers in the midst of like, the revolution that is occurring across the country. You know, so my, I am very fortunate to study what I am passionate about, but my goodness, that was the most exhausting topic to be studying last year, because like, I know exactly what's happening to my body right now. And it's not good. Not good.



Jenn Tostlebe 1:01:28

Yeah. That sounds difficult to deal with. And I don't know if you because I'm sure there are other people who are doing research on similar topics. And, and I think that, you know, when you're in criminal justice, criminology, you're dealing with a lot of populations where you are hearing about really difficult things that these populations are going through. How did you manage that? Do you have advice for people who are doing research on topics like this, that can have an impact on your own mental health?

K

Kathleen Padilla 1:02:06

Yeah, so, a lot of a lot of my work is also is qualitative. So I do a lot of interviews with officers and homicide detectives about their worst cases and what they've done, you know, to deal with it. And I think generally, academia doesn't do a very good job of preparing students for the emotional toll of a lot of the research that we do. And, I think for any, any methods class, any research methods class, whether it's qualitative or quantitative, or just a general class, I think like the right structures need to be put in place to teach students, one like this is what's going to happen, like whether your research area is like sexual assault or child crimes, or you know, homelessness, like there's so many just really emotionally taxing areas that we all study. And so I think one, just making sure students are aware that like, this is going to impact you, like, there's no way that it won't impact you like it's going to, and you need to have the mechanisms in place to properly deal with that, whether it's like taking time off between interviews, if you're doing you know, qualitative work, or just making sure after you're coding data or writing a paper or doing something that you're then doing something that gives your brain a break. And really kind of try to like disconnect, because otherwise, like, there's no way for, you know, that secondary trauma on top of the, you know, just the environment to be in graduate school on top of being in a pandemic, right? Like, there's so many factors. And I think universities need to be doing a much better job at providing tools for their students above and beyond, like, here's a number for a crisis center. And like, be actually teaching them how to be processing these emotions, because that's what's going to translate into how they're teaching their students in the future. And so that's really how we can kind of create this generation of students and researchers that know how to take care of themselves and then then know how to respect and appreciate the populations that they're studying.

K

Kelsey Kramer 1:04:26

I think Kathleen hit it, you know? Yeah, I just think like, my experience with research, in terms of like dealing with difficult, emotional, emotionally taxing, you know, issues. I haven't really had to deal with too many of them. I think, inherently criminology and criminal justice can be a little bit emotionally taxing anyway, even if you're not studying things like victimization or you know, incarcerated persons and things like that, right. But I think for me, like, the one time that I was working on a grant where there was emotionally taxing information, there wasn't a lot of discussion amongst the project team about how that was affecting us. I was working on coding domestic case, or domestic violence, like case documents, which kind of describe what happens during the incident. And some of them were really awful. And I was like, I need to take a break. So like, I would have to stop and walk away from my desk. And just like, go get some fresh air, go get a coffee and just like, take a physical break from what I was doing, because it was just seeing it and then thinking about it, and, and just experience being the emotion attached to what you were

reading was just, it was a lot. And so I completely agree with what Kathleen has already said, like the university setting, in, especially in research methods classes should be talking about when conducting research with or on difficult topics, how to handle decompressing, as well as like, gosh, I lost my train of thought, but just to handle decompression, and how to handle navigating those emotions when you're like in the thick of difficult topics, I guess. But yeah, Kathleen had hit the rest. So.



Jose Sanchez 1:06:49

Correct. So now, things are starting to open up a little more, more and more. And it looks like most schools are really pushing to go back to in person classes. What's that experience been? Like, on your mental health and your well being? Are you excited? Nervous? Kind of mixture of both? Yeah.



Kathleen Padilla 1:07:20

Yeah. Yeah, I don't teach I don't teach in person at all. So I think that one's more you.



Kelsey Kramer 1:07:27

Okay. Yeah. So I found out that we were going back in person at the beginning of summer, and shortly after, I also found out that all like protective equipment and precautions that were put in place early on in the pandemic, when we made the transition to online or hybrid classes, were no longer in place. And so going back in person, I have a lot of mixed feelings about it, given that I am immunocompromised, an immunocompromised individual. And so I will say that I am not fully comfortable going back in person. And I know I'm not alone. In that sentiment there. There are a lot of disabled folks like myself that now have to kind of navigate around the lack of protective equipment in the classroom, which I don't think for like Equity and Inclusion sake, that that's something that's okay. I really feel like when universities make these decisions to go back in person with no mask requirements, no protective equipment, no vaccine requirements for students, that they need to consider how disabled people, whether physically or mentally are going to experience being back in the classroom. And so yeah, I'm super worried about going back to teaching in person with a full capacity classroom with no precautions in place. But I will say I am happy to return to somewhat of a normal experience, because I'll be able to interact, you know, with my cohort and other faculty members, but I'll be doing it with a mask on and six feet away from them. Because I have to protect myself first and foremost. So yeah, I really wish that universities would be more considerate of folks that do have disabilities that now have to figure out what they're going to do, whether that means they're taking their precautions into their own hands, or you know,

whether or not they're actually going to return to a classroom or not, and just give you know, and and not go back to teaching, because I know that that's also something that runs through people's minds as well. So yeah, not super excited. But, also kind of excited. So super mixed feelings about returning in person. And, you know, it's hard. It's so hard because you want to be so excited. But at the same time, you're like, man, I don't want to get sick. If I get sick, like it could really, it could do some damage. And there's like, even the potential that you could not be here anymore. And so it's something that I think about a lot, and that probably hasn't helped my mental health at all. And so, yeah, I mean, that's just yeah, I'm, I'm excited, but not. And I think that's kind of a general sentiment among a lot of people who are returning in person. So.



Jenn Tostlebe 1:10:45

That's, I am, I guess, I don't know if surprised is the right word. But that's what I'm going to use, because I don't know what else to use. But I'm surprised that there's absolutely no regulations whatsoever. Kelsey, for Sam Houston, like at CU, everyone's required to have a vaccine. I mean, they can opt out through certain mechanisms, but for the most part, you have to show proof that you've been vaccinated.



Kelsey Kramer 1:11:11

Yeah, no, no requirements for students to be vaccinated if they are free to students if they want them. Right. But that, that puts the autonomy on the student to go and do it, which, you know, obviously, Texas is a very conservative state. And so that definitely plays into that a little bit. Which I'm not afraid to say because that has been an issue throughout this entire pandemic. And I just feel like, and it's, it's really frustrating. But, you know, there's only so much I can do as a graduate student. And all I can really do is try and take care of myself and just do my job to the best of my ability. But, you know, when when I asked if I could have students wear a mask in my class, I was told no, because it is against university policy at this point to require masks in the classrooms. And of course, you know, all university policies can change. So with, you know, this new variant that is around and highly transmissible, right, like these policies may change, but yeah, I have a lot of feelings about this one.



Jenn Tostlebe 1:12:33

All right. Well, let's move into we have like one main question for our last topic here, which is on work life balance, feelings of being burned out kind of general advice. So have either of you experienced the feeling of being burned out during graduate school? And if so,

when was it and what were kind of the signs that you were burned out?

K

Kathleen Padilla 1:12:59

So I definitely have been right and so the the signs like the three signs right of burnout are like the reduced personal accomplishment, emotional exhaustion, and then kind of like, reduced, like, removing yourself from your job, employment aspect. So it's definitely like an occupational thing, which I can guarantee all students have felt once you start asking yourself, like, oh, am I burned out? like you typically, already are, like, if you're thinking about it, for the most part. And so I definitely have, and for me, it, it presents itself mostly as just like, the exhaustion, and just like, like, my body is exhausted, and I can just cry just from being tired. That's usually when I know that like, okay, like, I need to be making a change, you know, if I don't make the change, my body is going to do something for me to require me to rest if I don't listen to it. And so when, when that does happen, like, my, my husband is always the first one to notice, right? Because he's around me all the time. But it you know, I take a day, the next day, I let my my PI know, I'm not doing anything tomorrow, I lay in bed or watch, you know, Scrubs, usually or Agents of SHIELD. And I just, I get to do whatever I want for that next day, just for, you know, a 24 hour period of doing whatever I want. And that usually ends up just bingeing Netflix and eating chocolate and, you know, all that fun stuff. But beyond that, like that's, that's really a privilege that I can do that. That I have the social support to let me know when I've gotten to that point. And that I have the understanding faculty to be okay with me taking a day and I understand that not everybody has that kind of privilege. I think especially as you move into like some of the hard sciences field like, it's like mental health is just even less focused on than it is in the social sciences. And so I understand that that's not viable for for a lot of people but the, the easiest thing that I've been able to do is just find an hour a day to do something that is just for you, whether it's taking a walk around your house or reading you know, a for fun book. And for me for fun books are still kind of like nerdy and academic. But like reading a fun book, taking a bath, watching some TV, just like taking an hour to just do something that is just for you doesn't impact or isn't like for the benefit of your partner, your kids, if you have them, your friends, your your job, like is just like to fill your soul a little bit has been the only way that I've been able to, like, stop burnout from happening. But it's still certainly happens a lot. I you know, I work at a, I like live my life at a 10 which isn't sustainable or healthy, but where I'm at.

K

Kelsey Kramer 1:16:13

Yeah, um, I think for me, um, I really started to feel the effects of burnout in my second year of the Ph. D. Program, which I think is a lot of a lot of people experience it during that year, because you're almost done with coursework, but you're not quite there yet. And so

you're like, man, I really wish I was done. But, during the first semester of my second year, I was actually in like a little bit of a, I was in a car accident, and I hurt my back during it. And so, I know that makes me sound like an old lady. But that's like, that's when I started to feel burnout. Really, it's just because I didn't, I didn't want to go to school, I didn't want to do my coursework, I felt like it was really a chore for me, I kind of like became a little bit more of a recluse and just kind of hung out at home a lot. And I even like felt the feeling like, Oh, I'm so burned out, I just want to quit, but I'm too far along in this program to do it. So, I'm just like, Oh, just power through. But yeah, for me, really, the biggest indicator of burnout was I was just, I was just super unhappy during that time. And I just didn't want to do work, I didn't want to do anything. And so, that was really a struggle for me, because like, obviously, I was still working, I was still in classes, and I was trying to do it all. But I was just super unhappy and didn't feel like I really wanted to be there anymore. And so really, the only reason why I stuck it out is really out of spite. My PhD is out of spite at this point, I think a lot of people share that with me. And so like I've come this far, I'm gonna do it, you know, if it takes me a few more years to finish it, that's fine. There's no, you know, I mean, there is a time limit, it's like 10 years or something like that, but there's not really a time limit, because I'm gonna get it done, I'm going to do it at my pace, I'm going to do it with my needs accounted for. And that's kind of how I pulled myself out of this, you know, burnout phase, but also, changing advisors really helped me too. Finding somebody who was more supportive. And that who I could talk to you about also like what was going on in my personal life. Within reason, right? Like, obviously, there's a professional line there that you don't want to cross sometimes. But just being able to talk about mental health, what's going on, at home, what's going on with my family, and things like that really did help pull me out of that feeling of like, I don't really want to be here anymore. And I'm just over it and super burned out. So yeah, that's kind of what happened for me and how I snapped out of it a little bit. But I don't think the feeling of burnout ever really like goes away either. It's kind of like imposter syndrome. It's always there. But you just you make it work.



Jenn Tostlebe 1:19:24

Goes back to Kathleen's point of living life at a 10 which is not sustainable. But I think a lot of us do that in grad school. That's Yeah, lifestyle.



Jose Sanchez 1:19:36

Which, yeah, I think at least once a week, I'll be like sitting at my desk or driving home. And I just started telling myself like, Damn, I left a good job in LA for this. Like, what am I doing? Like I took a serious pay cut. Like, I wonder if they'll take me back. Maybe I can email my boss and she'll give me my job back. I mean, I'll just like, yeah, I'll just take even

like a half a day, just to kind of just sit and, like not do anything that takes a lot of brain power is beneficial. I'm like, okay, like, let's get back to it. Like, I want to do this, like, I want to be here. I'm gonna get it done. I'm just a little tired right now.

K

Kelsey Kramer 1:20:27

Yeah, yeah, the taking breaks has been hugely beneficial. Also, you know, working for like 30 minutes, and then taking a 15 minute break or stuff like that. And also, like, finding hobbies that are not graduate school has been wonderful. Like, I'm an ultra nerd, like I play Dungeons and Dragons every other Sunday. And that's, like, been super fun and super great. And, you know, I play some video games and do things that aren't academic in the slightest. And that has made a huge difference in how I you know, am able to continue working and living life at attempt essentially. But yeah.

K

Kathleen Padilla 1:21:22

I will also say one of the things that like really easily kind of pulls me out of that funk is anytime somebody is like defending or giving a presentation, like watching other people defend their prospectus, their dissertation, you know, their master's thesis or just give a presentation on a topic that they're passionate about, like seeing that energy in that positive, positivity is always so contagious for me. I always feel so energized like, Okay, my turn like they did it. They crushed it, they rocked it. Now it's my turn. And so seeing people like actively finish their program, whatever program it is, and like, okay, there is a light at the end of the tunnel is always a really nice like, refresher.

K

Kelsey Kramer 1:22:07

I love that. Yes. Watching your like cohort mates defend their portfolios, or their dissertation prospectus? Yes, it like, it reminds you like, hey, the train is still moving. There's a light at the end of the tunnel. I'm going to get there soon. Yeah, yes, I agree. totally, completely.

J

Jose Sanchez 1:22:29

Yep, I agree to well, to wrap all of this up any last comments or advice that you guys have when it comes to graduate school? In general, anything we didn't touch on that you want to get off your chest?

K

Kathleen Padilla 1:22:52

Yeah, the the most important like piece of advice that I that I have for people wanting to start a program or who are in a program. And it's a little cliché, but whatever, like, find your people like find your village. Because it's not, it's not something that you should do alone. Like, you need a lot of social support to get through a PhD program. It's supposed to be grueling, and it's supposed to be challenging. But it also shouldn't break you. And so by finding your people finding your village, you're building that social support, you're, you know, whether it's just having venting sessions or finding other people to do new hobbies with. And those people don't have to be within your institution. They don't have to be at your school, they don't have to be in academia at all. But just find the people that will support you through it, because it like you need people.

K

Kelsey Kramer 1:23:49

Yeah, I agree. find, find your people is a really good piece of advice. definitely find, find the people that will support you, and who will listen to you when you're having a day and need to talk about it. The other like small pieces of advice that I think people should really take into consideration is take care of your body, trying to eat healthy exercise, if you can, you know, do something that nourishes your body, not just your like brain. And so that is a big thing. I think people kind of neglect their physical health when they're in graduate school because they're so focused on working and then graduating and you just kind of, you know, maybe don't give it as much attention as it deserves. And then the last little thing is if your university offers free counseling services, utilize them or else they just they just sit there not the counselors but just like the free sessions don't they go to waste basically because no one's using the and I think if I wasn't seeing a therapist at the university, right, like, I probably wouldn't have been able to afford it outside of that. But also, like, I wouldn't have been able to handle the stress of the stress and the anxiety of the pandemic without talking to somebody. And so yeah, I think good advices start seeing a therapist even if you think you don't need one, because you may need one later on and eat healthy and exercise. So those are definitely my like, little general advice pieces for graduate students.

J

Jose Sanchez 1:25:42

Awesome, great advice. Yeah, definitely. Well, thank you both for joining us today. We really appreciate it. Is there anything that either of you would like to plug anything we should look forward to come in on new articles, book chapters? I don't know. Anything.

K Kelsey Kramer 1:26:00
Um, I don't have anything right now. Hopefully, some things in the near future, though. So I have a couple of articles that will be submitted soon. So.

K Kathleen Padilla 1:26:14
I do have an article, the one that finally landed after, what, like seven or eight journals. In police. There's so many policing journals, PPR, PPR. Policy practice and research, I believe, on adolescence, positive youth development and police officers. So that that was a really fun piece. Right. So that should be coming out soon. Ish, I think and then. Now, you know, that's the end of my pipeline. So back to.

K Kathleen Padilla 1:26:46
Kathleen is on the job market. said so. Yeah. Anyone who's hiring.

K Kathleen Padilla 1:26:53
Yeah, I am on the job market. My husband is starting a job in Austin. So, we will be relocating to Austin. So really, those Austin area universities are kind of where I'm looking for anybody who is hiring.

J Jose Sanchez 1:27:16
Well, good luck with that. I hope you land somewhere that's enjoyable. And where can people find you two? Twitter researchgate. Google Scholar, email.

K Kathleen Padilla 1:27:34
Google Scholar and researchgate. Just Kathleen Padilla and then my Twitter handle is @kpadil1. And then that's actually my the prefix for my email address too.

K Kelsey Kramer 1:27:52
yeah, um, people can find me on Twitter or by email. My handle for Twitter is @klkram13. And then my email is just on my University's website. So if you just Google Kelsey Kramer, you can find me.



Jose Sanchez 1:28:14

And we will post all of this info up as well. Okay, sounds good. Thank you both again, we really appreciate it.



Kelsey Kramer 1:28:23

Well, thank you guys for us. And I'm excited to see how it turns out. I've been listening to all your guys's episodes and have loved everything you've done so far. So, I'm excited you



Jose Sanchez 1:28:37

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