

## How to Advocate for ... Yourself

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### **What are some things you wish you would have known about advocating for yourself in graduate school?**

I wish I would have realized earlier that sometimes advocating for yourself means NOT doing things and saying no. This can be so hard for [us] who like to achieve and contribute. Academia so often feels like we are constantly needing to prove ourselves, but the reality is that our humanity and personhood must still be a priority.

### **What advice would you give to individuals just starting their graduate career?**

In the words of Socrates, “Know thyself.”

Understand your limits, your specific mental health and self-care needs, and that your feelings are valid. Some folks come in with a good sense of that, but many more get sucked into the grind and quickly lose some of their sense of agency.

I would also advise that it’s worth it to take the risk of speaking up. Surely, at least in school psychology programs, someone will listen. More often than not, they will be able to do more than that. Kindness sometimes comes in surprising abundance.

### **What advice would you give to individuals in the middle/end of their graduate career?**

Continue to know yourself and be willing to re-evaluate your needs. Life happens; stresses change. Advocating for self-care can be a moving target.

### **What is the main thing you want readers to know about when advocating for yourself?**

Though it can be scary, it’s worth it. Make self-advocacy a more involved piece of moving through the interesting experience of higher education. Find the support you need that will help you be brave and bold to stand up for your needs and your rights as a full, valuable person—no matter how the trials of grad school and life may make you feel.