Becoming and Being a Psychiatrist

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Why start with this?

- In terms of transitions, this is a big one
  - School kid to uni student
  - Uni student to doctor
  - RMO to registrar
  - Registrar to consultant
  - Consultant to retiree
  - Retiree to dead person

- Registrars have multiple roles, many of which are conflicting.
Why have YOU chosen psychiatry?
Being a Registrar - your roles

- Student of psychiatry
- Doctor for your patients
- Team member for your unit
- Teacher of other doctors
- Employee of your hospital
- Member of your community & family
Balancing your responsibilities

- Multiples masters
  - RANZCP
  - University
  - Hospital
  - Supervisor
  - Consultants
  - Patients

- Fit into many hierarchies
It's hard at times!


- Be aware and be prepared!
Many responsibilities conflict...

- How do you balance a busy job with exam preparation?
- What if your consultant demands that you assess all the new patients but you have MPM starting in one hour?
How will you prioritize these responsibilities?

- Employee of a hospital that pays your wage and expects you to work
- Trainee who wants to qualify in the minimum time
- Person with a life
Tips

- Be flexible: change priorities according to the circumstances
- Don’t neglect any or you will pay the price later
- If you need to neglect one for a brief period, repair the damage ASAP
- Be receptive to feedback
Common Traps

- Pass first time but annoy everyone you work with
- Pass first time but forget all of your friends’ names
- Be the best registrar but never get around to sitting the exams
- Demand all your rights but forget your responsibilities
- Whiz through but be unemployable
What do psychiatrists do?

- Clinicians
  - Hospital Vs Private
  - Bio, Psycho or Social or any combinations
- Academics
  - Teacher or researcher
  - Uni, college or media
- Administrators & Leadership roles
  - Hospital, Uni and college roles
Is it much better than being a registrar?

- Own boss
- More choice
- Extraordinary range of professional options
- Leadership in the community
- Untold wealth!

(sadly, just kidding!)
But....

- It's not a learning environment, so you have to try much harder to keep ahead of the game
  - So use your registrar time wisely
- It's hard to get feedback, so easy to become complacent
Some of the challenges in psychiatry

- Evidence is lacking
- Also lacks in the rest of medicine, but more so in psychiatry
- To be honest, we are not *that* different to alternative medicine in our evidence base
- This isn’t necessarily a bad thing – don’t be an apologist, be a realist!
- We are clinicians, our unique skills are history taking, mental state examination and talking to people.
Some of the challenges in psychiatry

- The “high priest” syndrome
  - We get afforded an awe we don’t necessarily deserve
  - Its *VERY* easy to get sucked in to it (remember our system of working is self-fulfilling)
  - Pedestals make precarious perches
Conclusions

- Think about your roles and balance them
- Talk about the challenges with each other and your supervisors
- Listen to everyone, be respectful of their ideas, but don’t be afraid to draw your own conclusions
- You are joining a great profession, enjoy it!