

## Real People in Anesthesia

### The early career anesthesiologist

#### Biggest challenges in transition from residency?

Multiple challenges:

- trying to lose the weight i gained sitting on my butt studying
- balancing time with family and typical new-staff call burden - especially after family being on the back-burner while studying for months
- slowly decreasing stress and anxiety levels that have built for months
- surviving typical horrible case karma of early staff
- fitting into existing staff culture
- navigating politics

#### What you wish you had known in advance? What does your partner wish they had known?

I felt well prepared. Making patient management/work flow decisions is not something you can prepare for (cancelling/moving/triaging cases). Dealing with difficult surgeons. Having a colleague group that supports you is important in choosing a work site. I think my partner anticipated me being tired/grumpy after in-house call. Also, the urge to work as much as possible is strong in the beginning and you need your partner to help you find your balance and learn to say “no” to more work. When you’re not on call, turn off your pager and leave it in your locker.

#### How do you see the evolution of your career over next 5 or more years?

I’d like to slow down and reduce my FTE, continue to balance out of work pursuits and spending family time. A sabbatical of some sort would be nice to experience another skill set or further improve the one I have with a mini fellowship. I’ll continue pursuing opportunities to further anesthesia and perioperative care as long as I don’t get too frustrated by administrative challenges.

#### Generational issues in workplace i.e. with colleagues?

These issues exist. Key is to know which to pursue and which to leave alone. You have to respect that everyone has a different practice and they’ve probably been doing it far longer than you and it’s worked. Respect the time.

#### How do you maintain balance between work and the rest of your life?

I find that after 3-4 weeks of work I need time off. In the winter I balance that with skiing and in the summer with landscaping and camping. A big issue is to avoid looking at time off as an opportunity cost. Once you get over that hurdle, taking time off is fun and important.

**Favorite stress management tools or activities?**

Talking to my wife, any exertional activity to take the mind off work. Also chatting with close colleagues and discussing your successes and failures. Normalizing your experience helps.

**Advice to our current R5 residents?**

This year is horrible. You will doubt yourself and your abilities but you have made it so far for a reason. You have what it takes to succeed. The year does finish and come to an end eventually. Then you'll be free to reclaim your time and self-confidence.

**One sentence guiding principle?**

Take time to think of who you want to be now that you're all grown up. Then, take time to periodically check how you stack up to your vision. Sometimes excellence takes more work and effort than you think you have - patients will always appreciate it and it will add meaning to your work. How would you describe yourself? One or 2 sentences .....

Adventure seeking family-oriented father who loves his job and all that it allows him to do.

**Best things about anesthesia?**

When I'm not at work, I can be completely disconnected.

**Fave pizza topping?**

Feta

**Suggestions for me?**

Morning coffee/free speech/chat sessions. Let's break down some silos

**THANK YOU!**