

## **Frequently Asked Questions for Female Career Radiologists & Radiology Research Faculty**

*All unique questions included in this document were brought to our attention during the Academy's pilot workshop "[New Transitions: Presence and Voice of Female Perspectives Within Radiology](#)". All have been answered throughout this FAQ by a group of female leaders who attended, and facilitated, this Academy workshop. This document will continue to be added to as new questions are brought to our attention and answered.*

### **Current contributions made by:**

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### **Hiring help? When should I do it?**

- “No matter your gender and marital status, balancing the burden of household management tasks with your busy professional career can be exhausting and at times, seem nearly impossible. A somewhat unique challenge to overcome for women in medicine and the sciences is the societal pressure to “do it all, and make it look easy”. Throw that one out the window! One of the best pieces of advice I ever received from a female mentor was to hire someone to do the tasks at home that I found draining and unrewarding to do. No matter your budget, earmarking funds to invest in freeing up your time is priceless. ‘Outsourcing’ may look different for each person and will depend on family dynamics—I had a ‘dog nanny’ for a while when our puppy was young, and I have no shame in that! The most important thing is buying back valuable time you can spend on yourself, your family, and building your career.” – Dr. Jessica Fried

### **How do I pick and choose my volunteer opportunities for more control over my schedule?**

- “When I was just starting out, I had three key criteria for choosing volunteer activities – was it something I was interested in, was it something that would have an impact, and would it contribute towards my promotion and tenure. How it fit into my schedule and the amount of time it would take away from other activities was rarely a consideration, but there were opportunities I turned down for sheer lack of interest (e.g., IRB, IACUC committees). Today the first two criteria still guide my choices but the third one has been replaced by will I enjoy working with the others involved in the activity and will it be

fun! I also try to avoid things that will take away evening time but am more than willing to get up early for meetings. I can't say that I've cut down on anything (probably the opposite) as my career has progressed, but my focus and priorities have shifted towards opportunities that have much more impact on others than on me. How do I control the personal volunteer orbit in my world?" – Dr. Elizabeth Krupinski

### **When do I say yes or no?**

- “Do both when it benefits you. Often it benefits you to say yes to commitments, but not when it comes at the expense of doing something that is more important (writing grants, papers, spending time with your family). And here, I don't mean that you shouldn't collaborate or give time mentoring to those who are more junior than you are. The key is to establish your priorities so that you do well in what is important. There are only so many hours in the day.” – Dr. Pamela Woodard
- **Recommended Resource:** The Research Whisper, a group of investigators who blog on life in academia: <https://researchwhisperer.org/2019/03/05/leveling-up-in-saying-no/>

### **Why should I serve on committees beyond my specialty?**

- “Serving on committees and presenting at societies of potential collaborators (for instance, the American Heart Association Council on Cardiovascular Radiology and Intervention (CVRI) if you do cardiac MRI or CT), gives you greater exposure nationally, and introduces you to potential collaborators at other institutions. As you get more established, serving on committees where you can provide your expertise to a more global body provides you with additional national exposure and often can solidify your worth as an expert in the field (for example, serving on the Breast Imaging Commission of the American College of Radiology or one of its subcommittees, if you are doing breast imaging research). Some of these societies also have young investigator funding open to members (for instance, Radiological Society of North America). Early engagement in other societies may help your older mid-career self in becoming a fellow of the society.” – Dr. Pamela Woodard

### **Who will be strong allies for me outside of my peers and mentors?**

- “Family and friends!” – Dr. Elizabeth Krupinski
- “Office administrators, take opportunities to check in with office admin that you deal with regularly. This can be admin within your own institution or those working with other departments or institutions that you work with regularly. These people know what's going on in the day to day and can be helpful when deadlines are running tight, or you need to know how to approach allies within your network.” – Anonymous
- “I like to figure out how I can help/ally with others first. In doing so, I build a rich network of interconnected friends and groups of friends.” – Dr. Ruth Carlos

### **Is unconscious bias affecting my work environment?**

- “Probably but more often than not I think it's more conscious than unconscious. It's hard to deal with either way but I just persevere and try to address as often as I can when I see/experience it.” – Dr. Elizabeth Krupinski

### **How do I build a brand without travelling?**

- “Get social. Network among your friends. Organizations such as the AUR now have virtual grand rounds to promote junior faculty and provide remote speaking opportunities. Twitter is still a place with active MedEd and clinical research presence. It remains a good place to establish one's reputation. LinkedIn and Instagram reach different groups. Key is tailoring your message for different audiences.” – Dr. Ruth Carlos

### **Suggestions for Balance - What works for you and what does no?**

- “I set my boundaries very early in my career and stick to those as much as possible – and I think I accomplish that about 90-95% of the time. There are certain things I will do in my “off time” – review grants for NIH etc., review papers for journals, catch up on society activities etc. but even then, I have only certain times set aside – weekend afternoons. I also reserve time for exercise every day for at least an hour.” – Dr. Elizabeth Krupinski
- “It's not work-life balance. It's all life, which includes work. The best advice I've been given is to prioritize each year the most important things you want to accomplish and put them on the calendar, or they won't happen. I put down vacations with my family first, then work around that. Sticking to boundaries, like no phones at dinner or Thursday writing day, is healthy.” – Dr. Ruth Carlos

### **Is it worth my time to feel guilty? How do I overcome it?**

- “It's never worth spending time feeling guilty. Certainly don't feel guilty turning down something that you feel you don't have the time to do. But, even if your guilt is over something where you were in the wrong, make amends, learn from the experience, and move forward.” – Dr. Pamela Woodard
- “Unfortunately feeling guilty isn't really something we can always control – but we can choose to just feel it or deal with it. So – is it worth my time – probably not and I try not to think about it too much. I keep my ultimate priorities in mind and let that guide my decisions. The surer I am of those goals, the more confident I feel in saying no, thus less/no guilt. If I do feel any guilt creeping in I try to figure out why – usually it's because I know the person asking and would not want to “let them down”. But then I remind myself that they likely say no to things as well so will understand my decision and accept it without negative consequences.” – Dr. Elizabeth Krupinski
- “Guilt is a useful signal emotion. Have you been missing your family more? Or have you missed a deadline? Both are opportunities to take action consistent with your values. Responses are not necessarily easy. Perhaps you need to be honest and say that you won't be able to meet the deadline, ever. Or decline a speaking engagement to spend a weekend at home. Life is not an Instagram reel. To pretend that we can do it all and all at once hurts everyone. No sense in feeling guilty about not being perfect.” – Dr. Ruth Carlos

*Any questions on this document, and the pilot workshop, can be directed to Casey Cappelletti, [ccappelletti@acadrad.org](mailto:ccappelletti@acadrad.org).*