

Book Review

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Review for the book: Women in Academic Psychiatry, A Mind to Succeed edited by Sophia Frangou

Being a woman in academic psychiatry, I approached this book with great interest and I can write without doubt that it exceeded my expectations. Academic career is not an easy path and unfortunately there is no instruction book to help you through its challenges. Other people's experiences, advices and mentorship often help you navigating your way through. However, a woman pursuing an academic career inevitably faces additional challenges, which are partially shared by all the women reaching the top of their organizations. Young women arriving to the field of academic psychiatry often find themselves searching for some guidance or role models; but certainly, everyone has a different story and what has worked for someone close to you may not necessarily work for you.

Here is a book taking to your doorstep stories, experiences and advices of some of the most successful women in academic psychiatry. In the first part of the book, 16 among the most influential women in academic psychiatry answer questions about their earliest ambition, what they enjoy the most in their job, what was their best career move and the obstacles they had to overcome. Each one of them also shares their thoughts about what role being a woman played in their career and how they dealt with the issue of work-family balance; each one of them ends the chapter with an advice for young women starting their career now. These are probably questions that you would always wanted to ask to some of these women, but possibly never have felt comfortable to do it. Here you will find a great book, which collects these answers across women with different experiences, giving you a truly

exceptional and all-round perspective on what being a woman in academic psychiatry means and how to get there.

While reading the book, I was struck by the openness and the generosity of those women in sharing their personal experiences in their academic journey. I am sure the reader will find themselves like me nodding or feeling deeply moved through the pages, recognizing themselves in some of the situations described and appreciating the different perspectives that these women bring to the table. They introduce concepts, which you may have not appreciated or considered before. I found it at times truly illuminating.

The second part of this book is a more detailed reflection and review of the themes highlighted through the previous narratives. In this section, Prof Frangou discusses important steps to consider when struggling in the balance between academic and personal life and strategies to overcome these issues. She will give you an overview of possible external and internal barriers in your academic pathway and offer some invaluable advices about putting yourself first and putting yourself forward.

This is not a book only for women, it is a book for anybody who wants to understand more about ways towards success and balance in working and personal life. It is a book, which should be read equally by men and women who wish, and work towards, an academic career. It is also a book for mentors and supervisors of young women, and for anyone who wants to understand how to get to a better and equal academic environment. I strongly suggest reading it.

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