

I didn't do it alone: An autoethnographic analysis of the emotional journey of a graduate student

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When I was a graduate student in a linguistics doctoral program, I often wondered whether I would ever be able to complete my studies and obtain a PhD. Although I eventually managed to achieve my goal and get the qualification, I found myself unable to give a clear answer when asked 'How did you do it?'. Did my research progress in fits and starts or more steadily? What fostered progress and what hindered it? To attempt to provide answers to these questions I turned to my dairies and notebooks from the 3 years of graduate study. An autoethnographic analysis of my notes revealed that emotional highs and lows occurred throughout the 3-year period and increased as the research journey neared completion. Another finding relates to the degree to which advice and comments from mentors and peers impacted not only the direction of the research, but also my emotional state. Having reflected on and analyzed my graduate research journey from an autoethnographic perspective, I realized that obtaining a graduate qualification is truly a team effort. The answer to the question 'How did you do it?' is simply, '*I didn't*', or to be specific, '*I didn't do it alone*'.