



Dear 'Older' Generation' #UniversityCrisis

written by Miia Halme-Tuomisaari
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Dear 'Older' Generation,

Yes -

You with the permanent posts



the faculty members

the tenure trackers

We simply wanted to pause you

For a short moment or two

To share with you

A few things

That cause frustration

stress and angst

Call it gap of generations

or maybe something else

But we simply cannot help but feel

that despite best intentions

you're fundamentally lost

in getting our situation

And since misunderstandings

Breed ill feelings, insults and hurt



let us share a thing or two
of which you may not be aware

For when we receive (yet another)
Short post of year or two
you congratulate us warmly

on our privilege to immerse
ourselves in our ambitions
without intrusion from teaching
or bloody admin work.

When we attend a workshop
A conference – even abroad

You remind us ever so gently
Just how privileged we are
to have such opportunities
to present our work



in front of ALL those colleagues

- 'we never had that chance'

When we receive our working spaces

- shared office (maybe a window),
- small corner (in a cramped library)
- 'sorry, we have no space - it's just the library card for visitors'

you remind us (again)

just how many others

would be thrilled to take our place

and how it really is a luxury

to simply - be us.

We nod and keep smiling calmly

for of course we' re fully aware

of just how many others

applied for our posts too.



But something inside bubbles
For we burn to set things straight.

We feel that you should know
just how much, in fact,
we invest

to work in that tiny office,
to take up that post
to go to that event

That we move from country to country
That we (again) give up home
That we abandon friends and family
And maybe even more

That we postpone even HAVING a family,
since it's never good time for a break.



And how do you even have

Or hold

A relationship on the go?

Do you know that you're our Heros,

our Role Models,

our Ultimate Goals?

We put up with all this

JUST

to become LIKE YOU!

And there's little in return

That we would never do

We WANT to do that teaching

And that admin hassle too

Hell,

We'll even take on audits,



And an annual report or two

Or least of all

– the opportunity

to complain about it all!

All of that would mean

That we would have ‘arrived’

Become the ‘someones’ we always

Knew we were destined to be

That we, too, would have

An identity,

Even *career*

Why won’t you momentarily

Put yourselves in our shoes

Then each report and audit



Might be a kiss of death
Your eternal goodbye to the field
That you now view as
backbone to identity
livelihood
and glee

For that is what the reality
offers to us now
A constant flirt with ending
With no sights in the beyond

After our posts end
We're right back
to square one
With nothing left but hope
Of yet a new dawn

Or so it feels



When we compete
yet again
for meager funds
with ever increasing hordes
So qualified
determined
and YOUNG

That on bad days
it makes you weep
and thought of giving up feels
best of all

Yes,
we know that things were tough
back in your days too
But just so that you know
It ain't so great today



That's all we want to say

So maybe the next time

we frown when you expect a smile

At least you'll know why

And you'll give us a break

For we are tired, real tired

By [Miia Halme-Tuomisaari](#)

Dedicated to [Margaret Mary Vojtko](#)