

# What's on Dr. Jones' mind?

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“Do what you love... and you'll never work a day in your life.” This phrase has always bothered me a bit, but I think I've finally put my finger on why. I love what I do, but sometimes it's *work*. I love what I do, but sometimes I don't *like* it.

This is a very challenging time to be in veterinary medicine and animal agriculture. These fields have never been for the faint of heart, but there's new and weird messiness mixed in.

It's hard to be a veterinarian. It's hard to be a veterinary student. It's hard to be a veterinary nurse or paraprofessional. It's hard to raise animals.

It's also *wonderful* to be a veterinarian.

What I don't want for you – for any of us – is to think that if we don't *like* what we are doing today or if it feels like *work* – and has for a while – that we don't really love it or that we are not where we are supposed to be.

You can be right smack dab where you are supposed to be and it be itchy, scratchy, uncomfortable.

“You are not alone in the hard feelings that come with this profession” is a quote of mine that I often share. You are not alone.

If you need a hand, reach out – to a friend, to a colleague, to me. Maybe it's time for a big change. Maybe it's not. But it's always time to hear that *you're doing a great job* and that the world needs what you bring.

I had a 10-week-old seizing piglet presented to me several weeks ago that had a little girl attached to it. We all know what that means. Doom. After a lot of brainstorming and work, we finally got the seizures under control about 1:30am, and the next morning, I got to watch our intern feed the little dude bananas that he was thrilled to eat. I'm not going to lie, I tossed and turned all that night and woke up the next morning to immediate thoughts of that pig. This did get me to thinking about our lives as veterinarians and veterinary technicians.

We are often accused of being in this for the money. Wouldn't they be shocked to know that we really get paid in smashed banana on a piglet's face? We don't always hear the thanks we need, so here goes:

- Thank you for the lunch you skipped to see that dog that was hit by a car.
- Thank you for respectfully handling that rude client.
- Thank you for taking the extra time to make sure that calf was settled in for the night after its delivery exhausted and froze you.
- Thank you for the extra time you spent with that new livestock owner to help ensure the best care for their animals.
- Thank you for conducting yourself and running your business with integrity.
- Thank you for inventing that treatment for the animal whose owner couldn't afford much.
- Thank you for bringing that lamb home with you to spend the night in your laundry room.
- Thank you for showing up 100% for the next client after the one who spewed accusations at you.
- Thank you for serving on boards in your community.
- Thank you for finding a home for that pitiful cat no one wanted.
- Thank you for that little bit of time you took to take care of yourself.
- Thank you letting that kid who wants to be a veterinarian hang out with you for a day.
- Thank you for backing up your staff.
- Thank you for standing your ground on that non-passing bull breeding soundness exam.
- Thank you for that extra time you spent leaning on a gate listening to your client who was struggling.
- Thank you for maintaining your integrity when you were literally being offered money not to.
- Thank you for always seeking out new information and learning new skills to serve your clients and their animals.

