Instructions

What do (productive, healthy) research students really do all day?
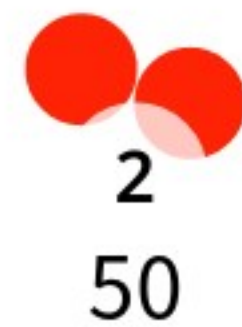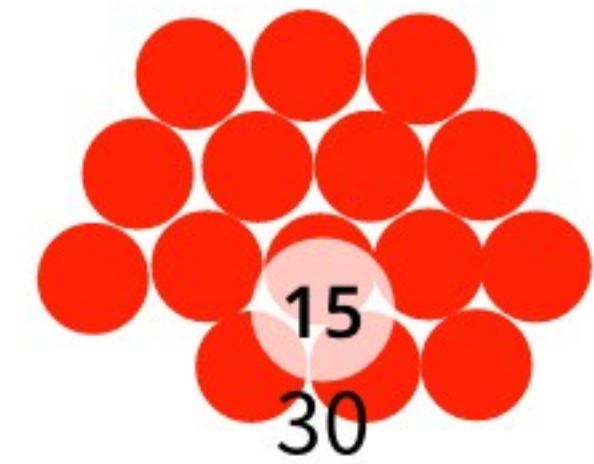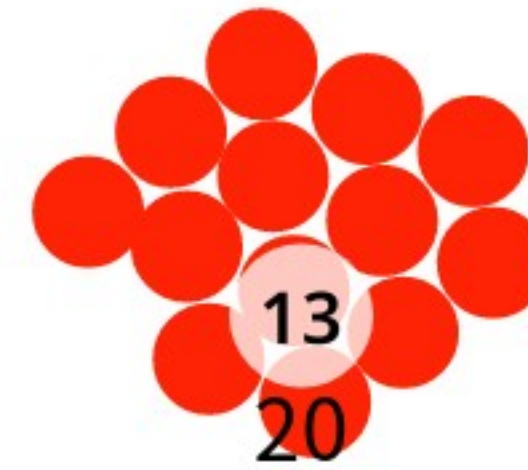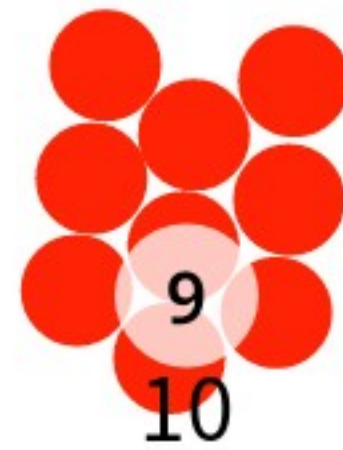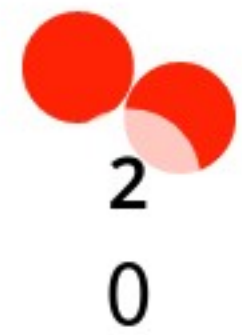
Nick Hopwood, UTS

Instructions

How many hours did you work on your PhD last week?

2
0

9
10

13
20

15
30

7
40

2
50

0
60

0
70
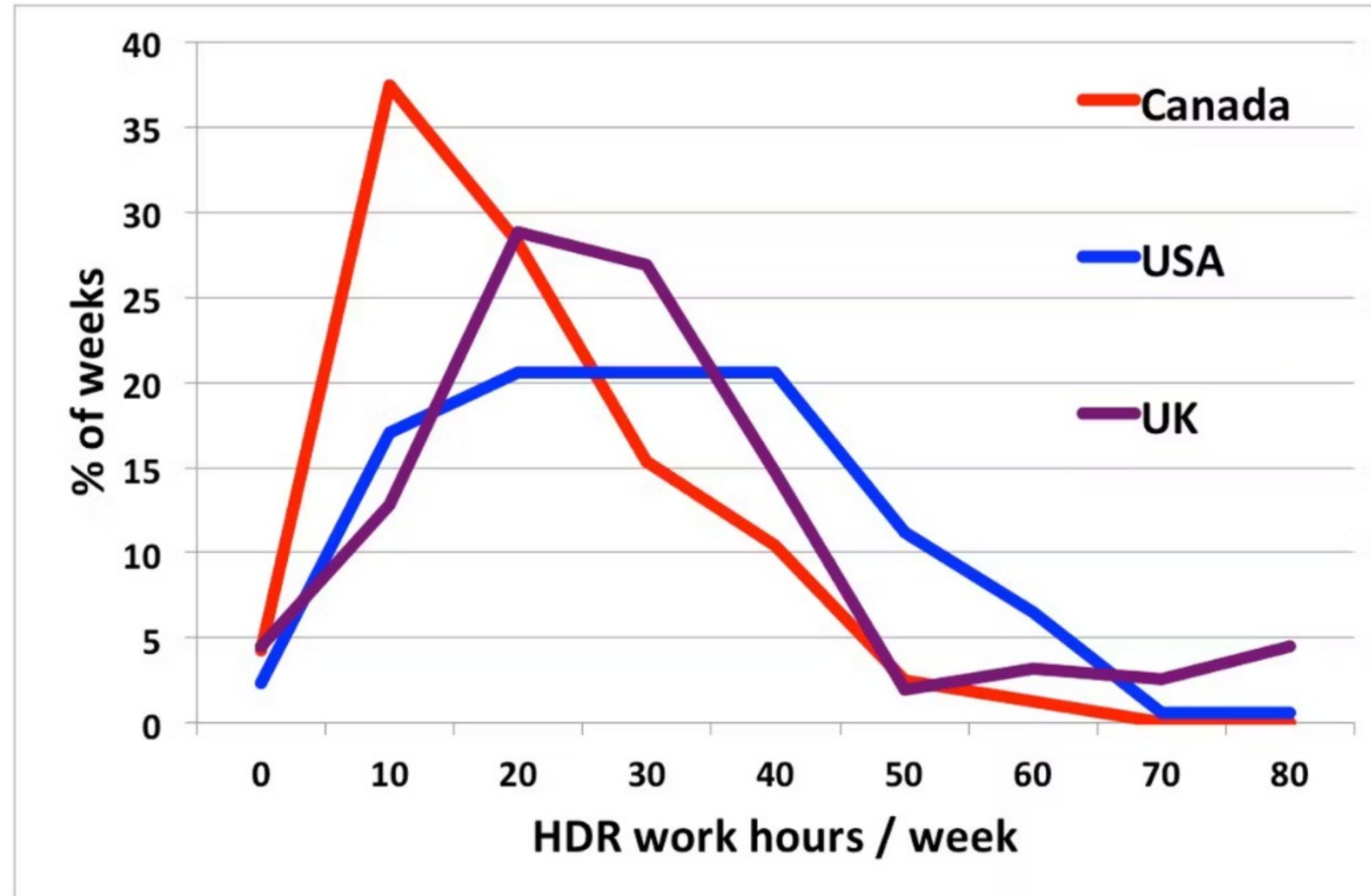
Which applies best to you?

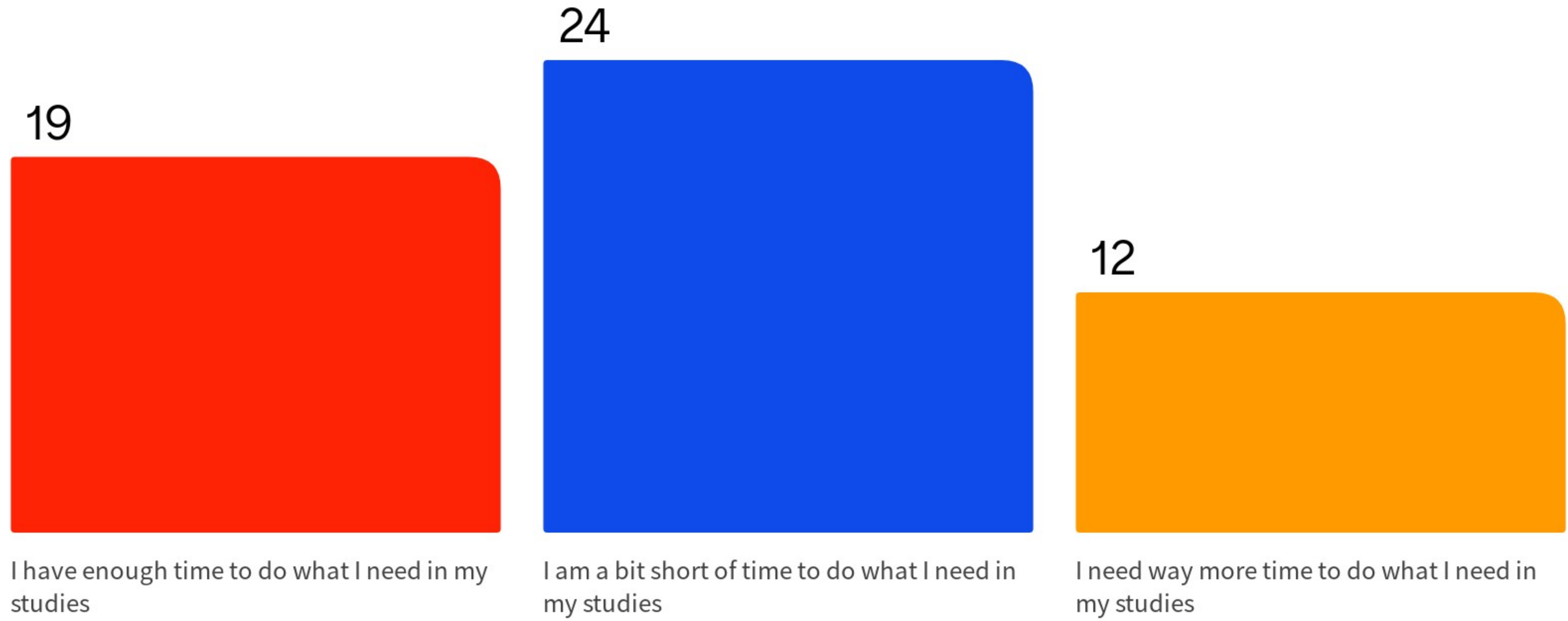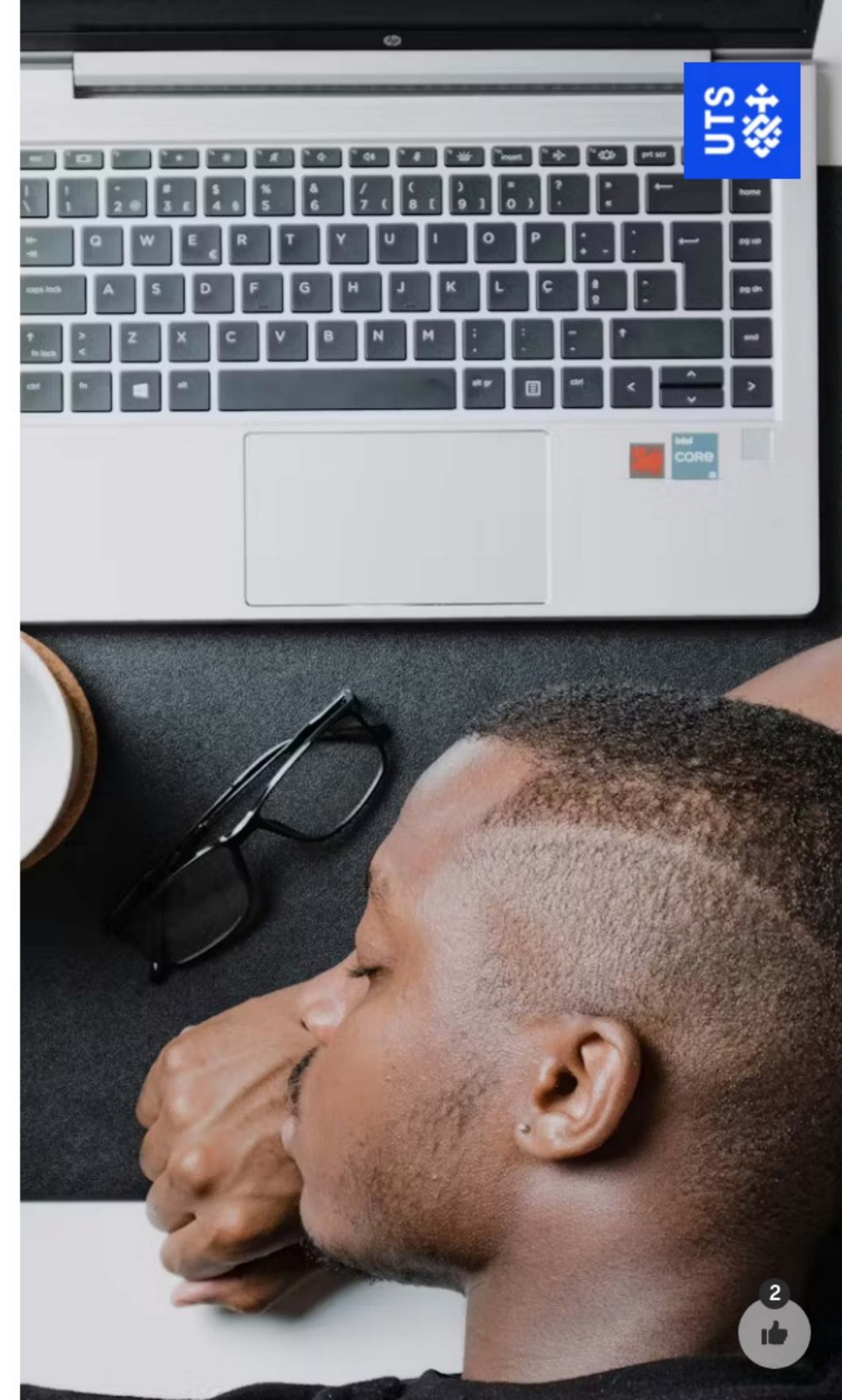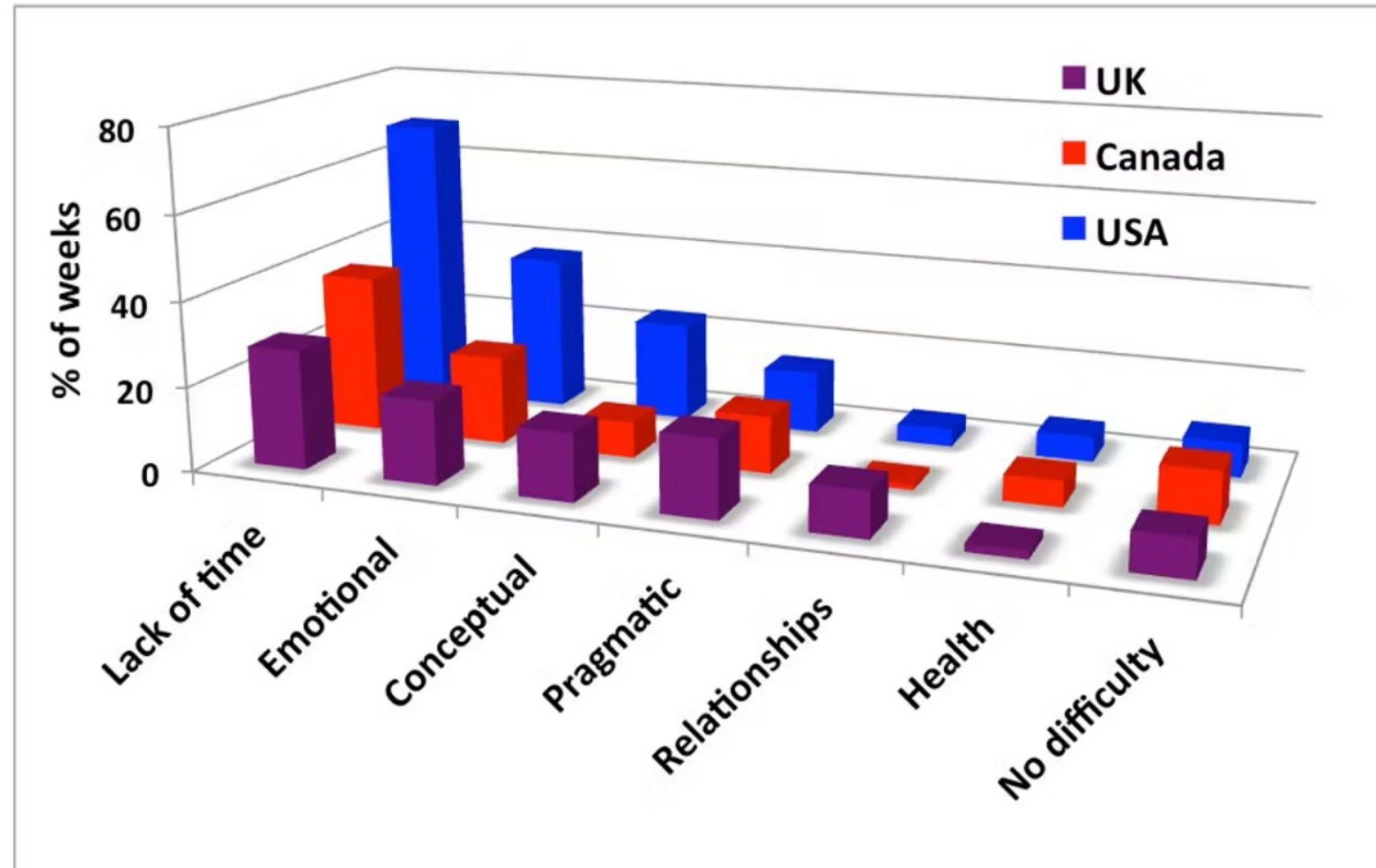| 19	24	12
I have enough time to do what I need in my studies	I am a bit short of time to do what I need in my studies	I need way more time to do what I need in my studies

> Students who reported working the most hours were not the happiest, healthiest, and were not making fastest progress
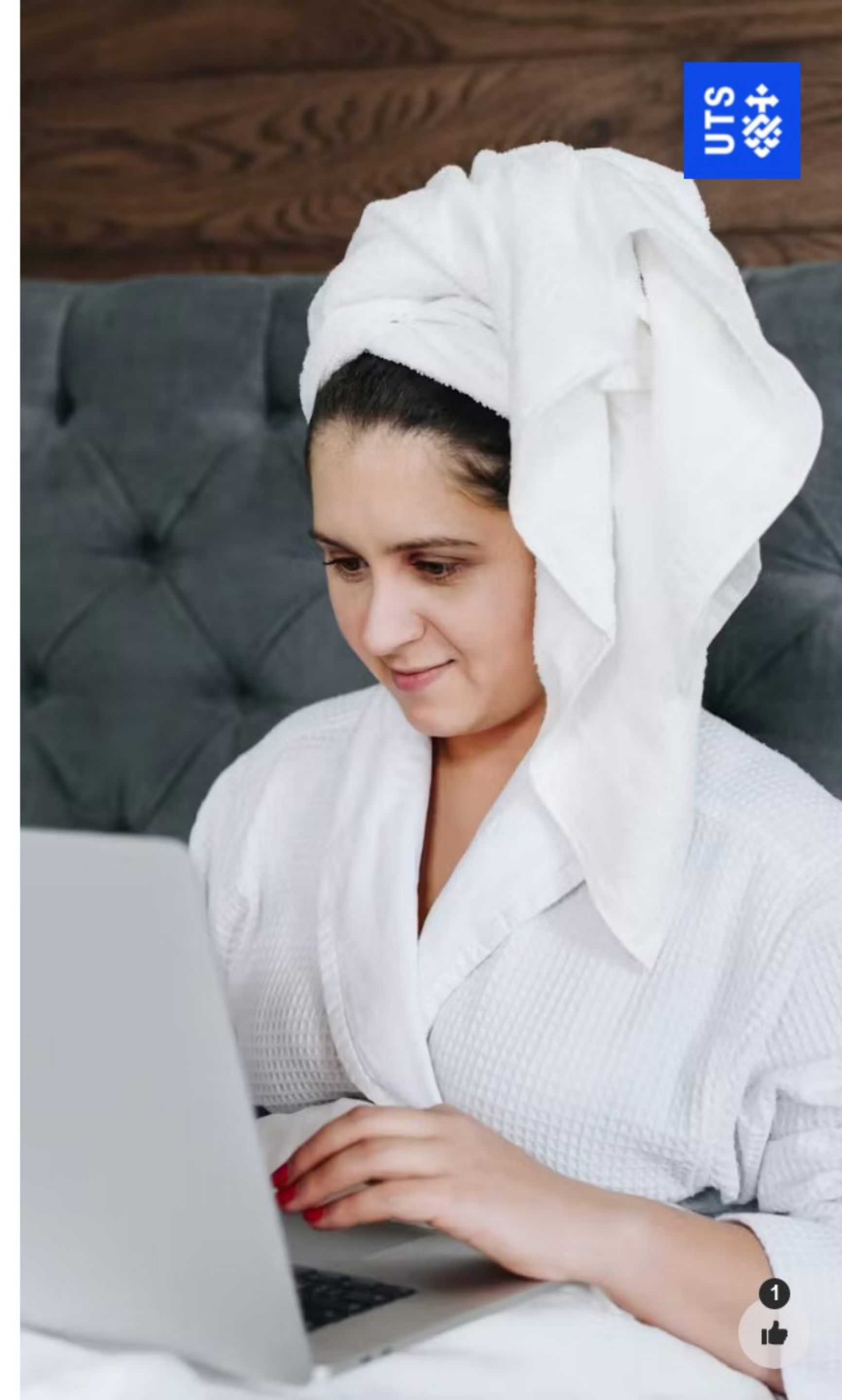
– McAlpine et al

Where is all your time going?

How much is what you're about to hear a
mirror of your own practices?
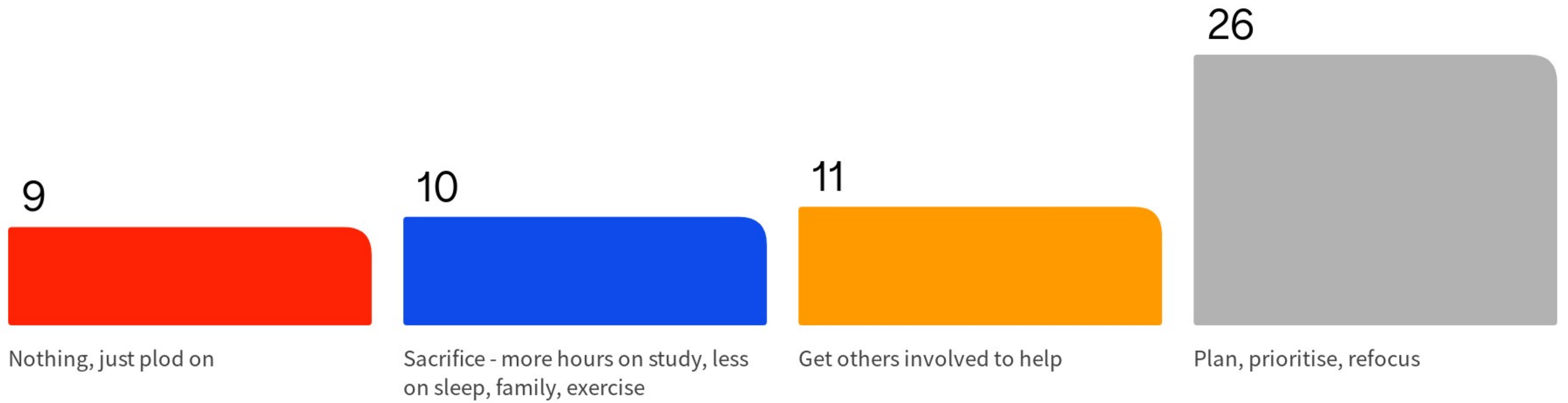
Self-sabotaging behaviours and alibis

→ Overcommitting: "I would have finished but I've had other things to do"

→ Busyness: "I set aside time but other things come and gobble it up"

→ Perfectionism: "I would have sent my chapter but it's not ready"

→ Procrastination: "I'm not in the zone to write today"

→ Disorganisation: "I lost track of my readings and version control of my draft"

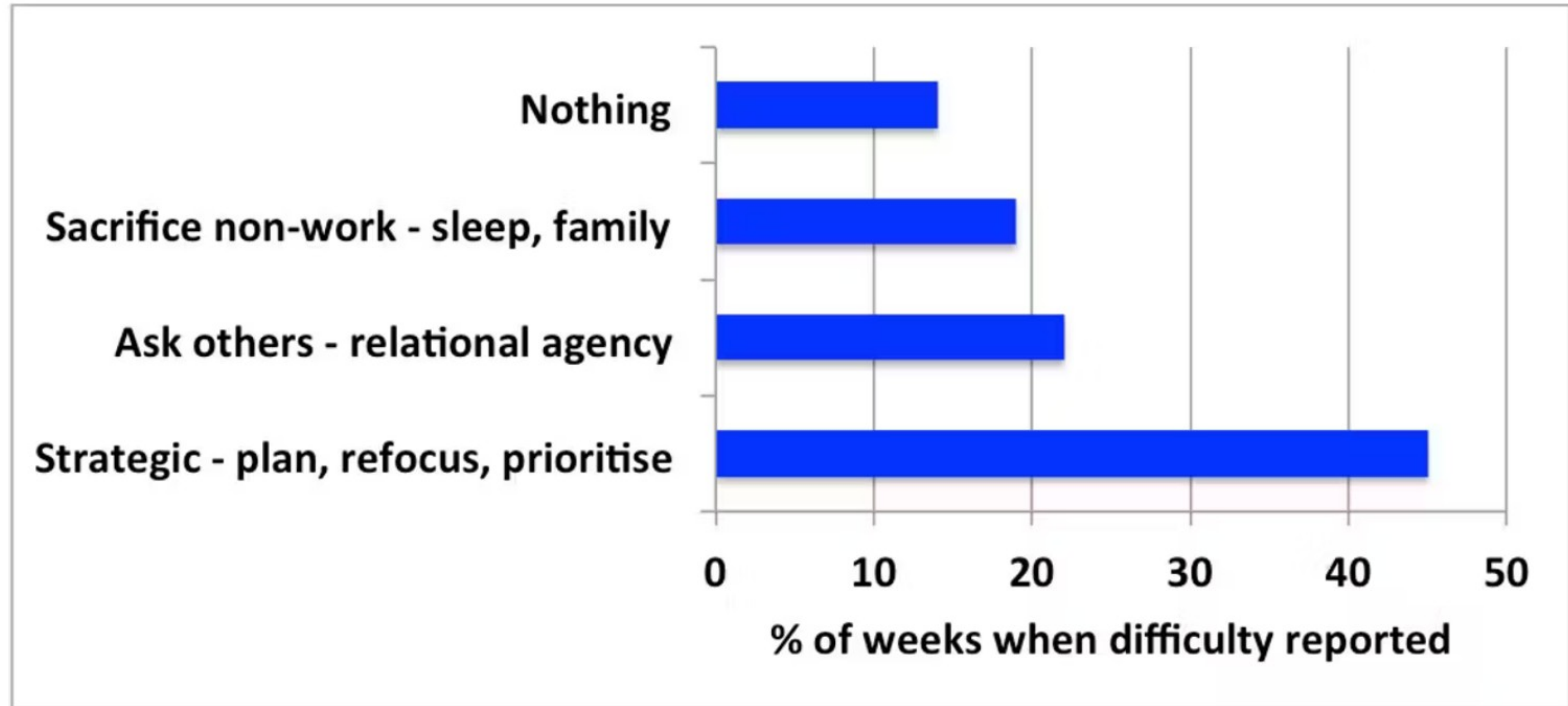→ Debilitating conditions: "If it wasn't for all the distractions I'd have finished"

How have you self-sabotaged?

13 Overcommitting

2 Busyness

14 Perfectionism

21 Procrastination

7 Disorganisation

1 Debilitating conditions

What do you do when you encounter a challenge (academic, emotional, logistical etc)?in your study

26

11

10

9

Nothing, just plod on

Sacrifice - more hours on study, less on sleep, family, exercise

Get others involved to help
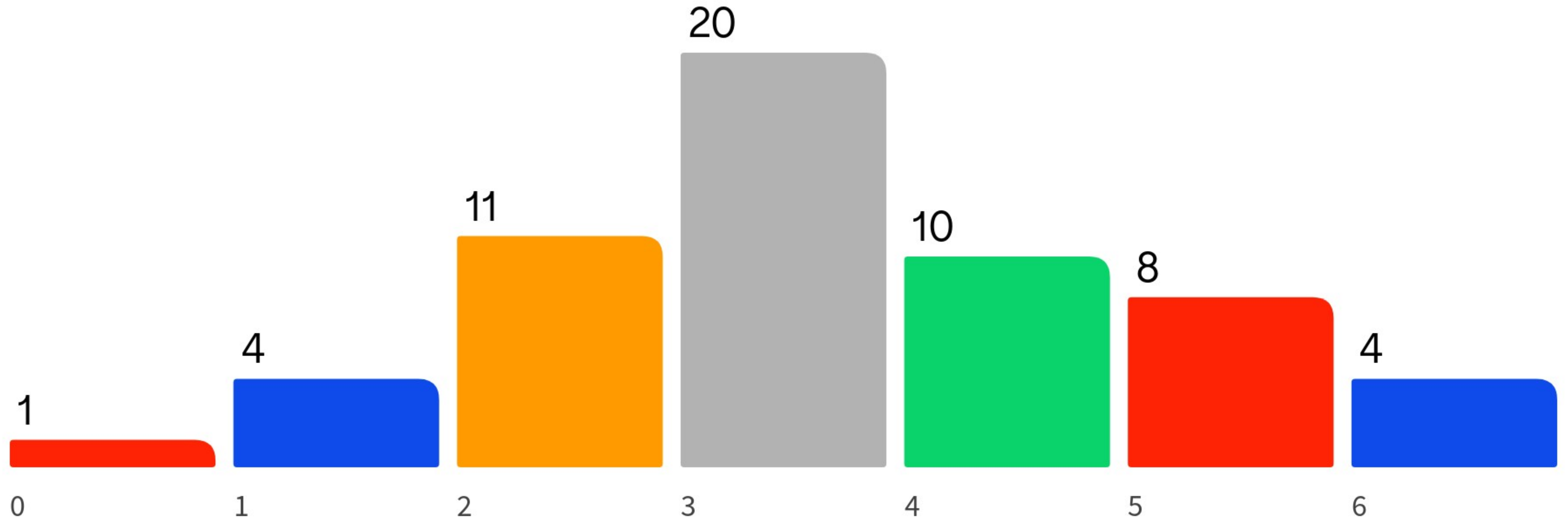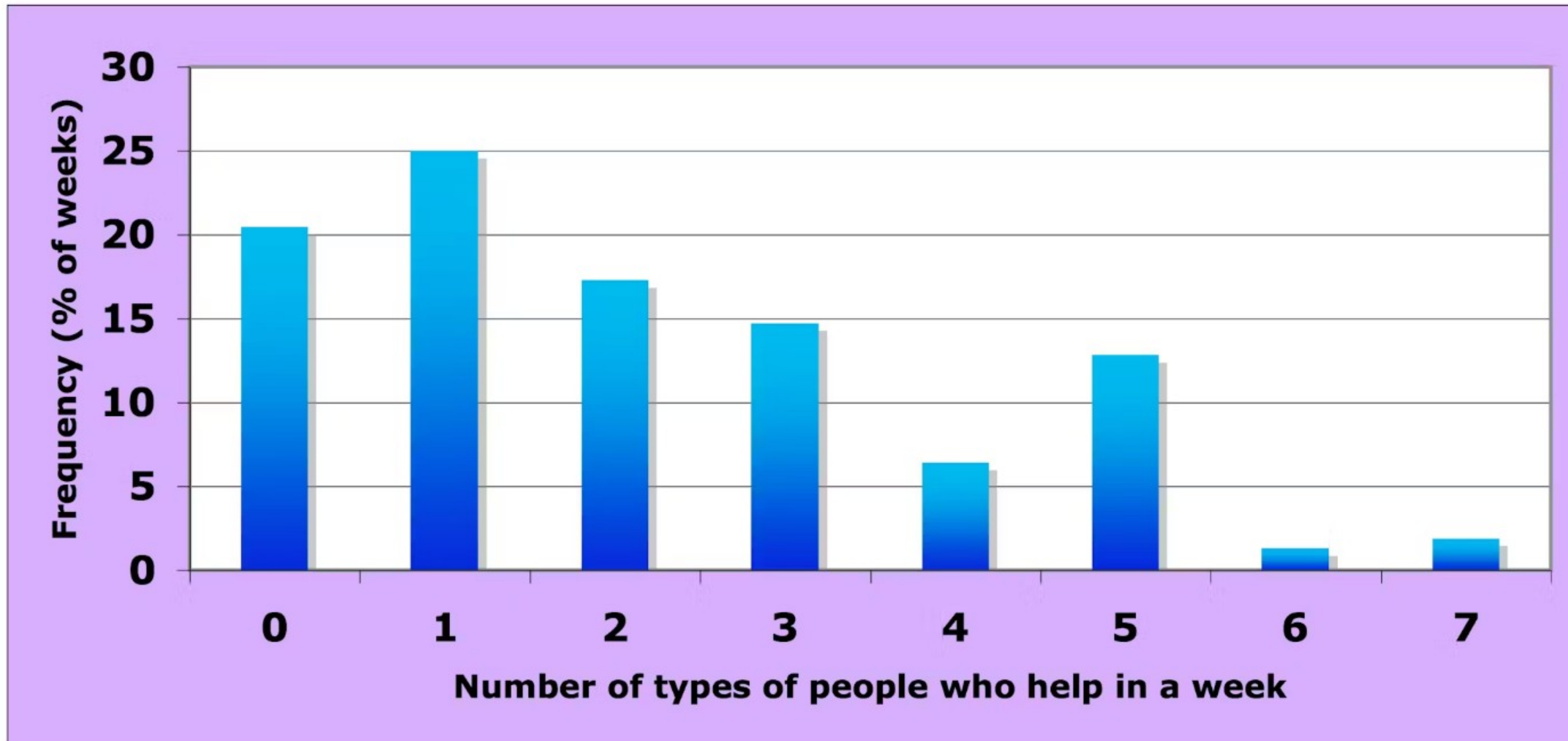
Plan, prioritise, refocus

Who helped you last week? Score 1 point for each category of person that helped (range 0-7)
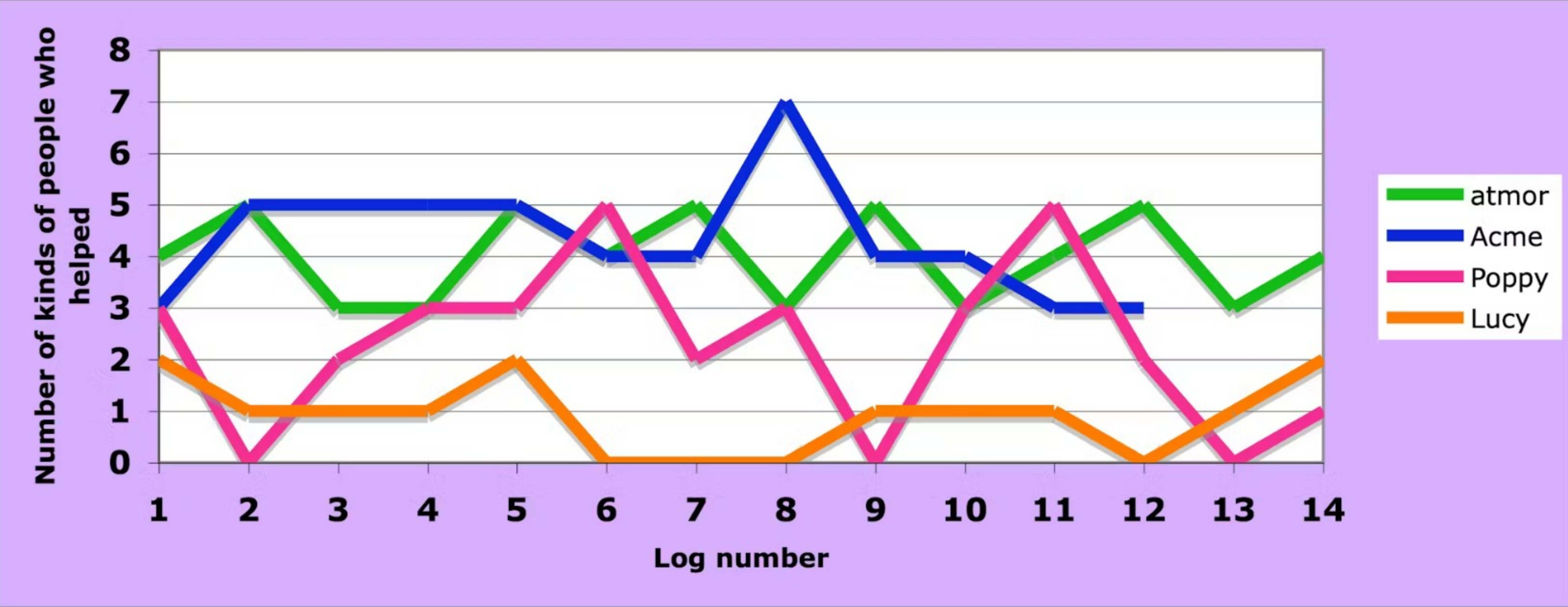
→ Other students

→ Supervisor(s)

→ Other academics

→ Other uni staff

→ Friends

→ Family

→ Other

Relational agency is key

Some keys to a productive, healthy candidature

→ Choose what NOT to read (not FOMO)

→ Relational agency: regard your supervisor as a unique, finite resource

→ Relational agency: know when and whom to ask for help

→ Honest self-reflection: know your inner self-saboteur

→ Self care

2