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**Stop Worrying About Your Personal Statement!**

**Here’s Your Easy Solution! (Hint: Use the Reflection Section in your Virtual SHOEBOX!)**

**On a very regular basis, sit yourself in a quiet place. Turn off anything with a switch, and turn on your brain. For fifteen minutes, and NO longer, write your thoughts in answer to these questions. When you have finished the essay for that day, tuck it away in your shoebox. Do this on a regular basis, weekly or monthly, depending on your timeline for application, and you’ll soon have pages and pages of thoughts and stories! Begin this part of the process NOW!**

 **When the time comes to write your personal statement, in the spring of your application year, take these short essays and assemble them. (The assembly and rewrite process will take you about three months. You will have to condense that time of course, if you are starting later.) Some you might want to expand on, others might not make it into the final product. This give you loads of material to begin working on your personal statement, and you’ll find that this makes the PS MUCH easier! No more writer’s block!!**

**Other topics to write about:**

* A patient encounter
* A shadowing experience
* A mission trip
* Your family values
* Your calling

**\*\*Just TELL YOUR STORY!! It will stand out on its own.\*\***

**QUESTIONS FOR STARTING A GREAT PERSONAL STATEMENT!**

Why do I want to do this?

What do I enjoy about medicine?

How has my decision to do medicine grown over time?

Who has been a role model for me?

What experiences have I had in health care that have

**Suggested Timeline for PS Work:**

**\*June through December**

Gather your thoughts

Every 2-4 weeks

**\*January-March**

Putting it together

**\*April**

Share and polish

Final touches

**\*May 1 Application**

You are ready!

made an impact on my decision?

What life experiences have I had that made an impact on this decision?

Have I watched any doctors, treating patients?

What did I observe? (Stay positive!)

What will I do with this life in medicine?

What challenges have I had in my life?

How did I overcome these challenges?

What are my strengths/weaknesses?

What special skills do I have?

Tell a story about a particular patient experience.

**Tips for Getting It Ready**

It does NOT have to stand out!! It should simply and directly TELL YOUR STORY!

Do talk about your personal experiences, role models

**When you share, ask your readers these questions:**

What did you get out of my story?

What is the tone of my PS?

What personal attributes are demonstrated in my PS?

Do you know who I am and why I am motivated to do medicine?

Is my path clear?

Did you enjoy my stories?

Have a THEME, or at least some ORGANIZATION

Stay positive; if telling about negative experiences, be sure to bring us around

to the positive point of the story.

Highlight your ACCOMPLISHMENTS

GRAB the reader at the INTRO, Have a satisfying ENDING

Use POWER WORDS – words and phrases that give us a strong

IMAGE and evoke EMOTION in the reader

**Detailing**

Write in the FIRST PERSON

Do the basics, like SPELL CHECK and watch your grammar

Count the “I”s

Get FEEDBACK - Let LOTS of people read it