

# Wave over Wave

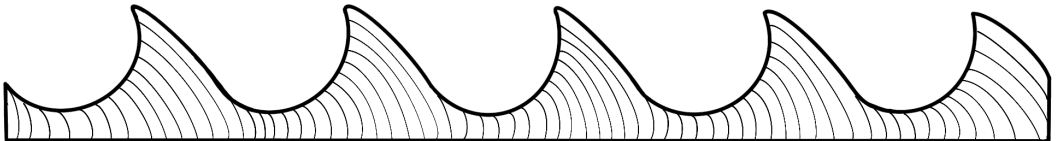
A MED School Survival Guide



By Melissa Tobin

# About

My name is Melissa Tobin and I am a medical student in the Class of 2023. I decided to create this book to help new students transition into medical school. Med school isn't always easy but I believe in each and every one of you. Over the next two years, you will learn more information than you ever imagined was possible. Remember, you deserve to be here and you were chosen for a reason. Almost, if not every student will encounter some stormy water throughout the program. Take time to take care of yourself and reach out for support when needed. There are so many people that care about you and want you to succeed. Celebrate every small victory and enjoy the experience! As Dory from *Finding Nemo* says "just keep swimming!" You CAN do it! Thanks to over 150 students, residents, preceptors, instructors, research supervisors and faculty who contributed their advice and words of wisdom for new and future students. This book would not be possible without the brilliant minds who helped to create it! A special thanks to the Faculty of Medicine for awarding me the Studentship in Physician and Medical Student Health and Well-being. Thanks to Dr. Derek Puddester for the generous funding. I appreciate the mentorship and support of Dr. Greg Radu, Dr. Teri Stuckless, and Charlotte Dove. Thank you Tina Pomroy, for your mindfulness knowledge and contributions to this book.

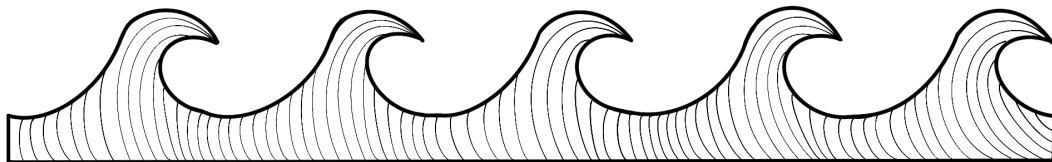


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**Links** to various resources, offices and support services are underlined throughout the book. Every page with a link also has a link symbol.



# *Who am I?*

This book belongs to: \_\_\_\_\_

Before med school I was: \_\_\_\_\_

My 3 favourite hobbies are:

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My 3 favourite foods are:

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3 values that are important to me are:

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If I had a choose a speciality  
right now, I would choose: \_\_\_\_\_

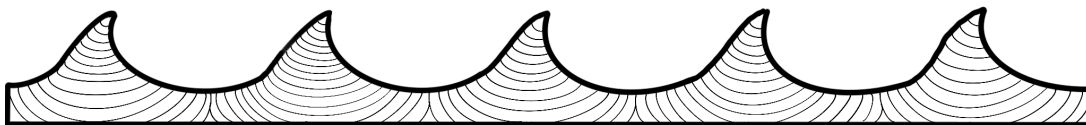




# Undergraduate Medical Education Office UGME

## Undergraduate Medical Education Office (UGME)

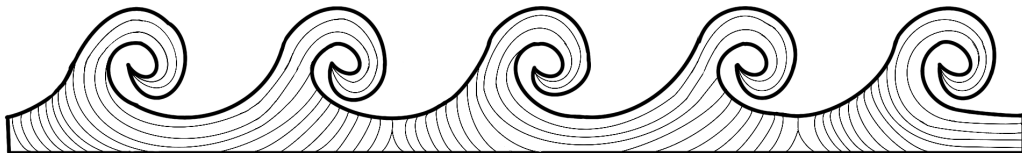
- Delivers the MD curriculum.
- The UGME website has information about the curriculum, schedules, student handbook and more.
- Associate Dean, UGME: [ugme.associatedean@med.mun.ca](mailto:ugme.associatedean@med.mun.ca)
- Phase 1 (August - December):
  - Phase I Lead: Dr. Amanda Pendergast  
([ugme.phase1lead@med.mun.ca](mailto:ugme.phase1lead@med.mun.ca))
- Phase 2 (January - June):
  - Phase 2 Lead: Dr. Heather Jackman  
([ugme.phase2lead@med.mun.ca](mailto:ugme.phase2lead@med.mun.ca))
- Other important contacts for UGME can be found here:  
<https://www.med.mun.ca/UGradME/Contacts.aspx>



# Office of Learner Well-being and Success

## Office of Learner Well-being and Success (LWS).

- Supports undergraduate and post-graduate learners through a variety of services that support and promote student success and well-being.
- All programs and services offered by the Office of LWS are free for students.
- Associate Dean, Dr. Greg Radu
- Directors: Dr. Teri Stuckless, Dr. Patti Power, and Dr. Jamie Farrell
- Learner Well-being Consultants - Charlotte Dove ([studentwellness@med.mun.ca](mailto:studentwellness@med.mun.ca)) and Tina Pomroy ([lws wellbeing@mun.ca](mailto:lws wellbeing@mun.ca))
- Learner Success Consultant - Anders Jensen ([lwsfinancial@mun.ca](mailto:lwsfinancial@mun.ca))
- Other important contacts for the office of LWS can be found here:  
[https://www.med.mun.ca/StudentAffairs/Administrative\\_Services.aspx](https://www.med.mun.ca/StudentAffairs/Administrative_Services.aspx)
- Each class has a Learner Wellness Leader who sits on the Learner Well-being Committee chaired by LWS. A list of class Learner Wellness Leaders can be found here.



# Office of LWS - Programs and Services

The Gathering Rounds – Peer mentorship program driven by LWS, facilitated by peers.

- Interested in being a peer mentor? Email [LWSwellbeing@mun.ca](mailto:LWSwellbeing@mun.ca)

Coffee Break Buddies – Coffee meet-ups (virtual or in person) with peers organized by LWS.

- Interested in participating? Email [studentwellness@med.mun.ca](mailto:studentwellness@med.mun.ca)

Meditation sessions – via WebEx and in person

- Email [LWSwellbeing@mun.ca](mailto:LWSwellbeing@mun.ca) for the WebEx link

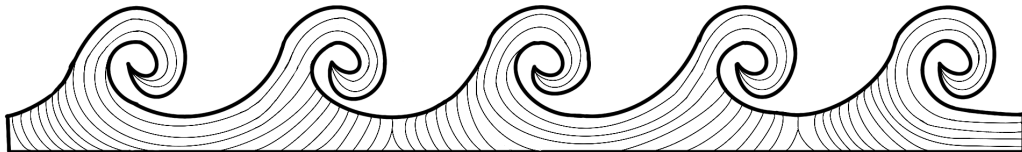
- Upcoming session dates can be found [here](#)

LWS well-being newsletters: Looking for wellness information and advice. Check out past LWS Newsletters [here](#).

Financial Guidance: The Office of LWS provides information and support about the cost of medical school, student loans and lines of credit, scholarships and bursaries, financial information, services and advice.

Information for New Learners: The Office of LWS provides helpful step by step information for new learners.

Mentorship Program: Connects students with faculty members. More information on page 84-89.





# Support for Students

Writing Centre: MUN has a free writing centre where students can get help with writing and suggestions to help improve your papers.

Library and Research: MUN has libraries where you can study and amazing librarians who can help you with your research project. In the Health Science database you'll also find online access to important resources such as Bates, UptoDate and many more!

Health Science Information and Media Services (HSIMS): The staff at HSIMS can help you with using D2L, accessing the computers and providing tech support for classes.

Academic Resources: The Office of LWS has studying and learning resources on their website. You can also reach out to one of the Learner Well-Being Consultants or your phase lead for academic advice and support.

Academic Success Centre: Website filled with tips and tricks, tools, supports, programs, and events to help students succeed in their learning journey.

Accessibility Services and the Blundon Centre: The Blundon Centre can help students access academic accommodations and other supports to provide a positive learning experience.





# Support for Students

**MCQ Exams:** Lester Marshall ([lmarschal@mun.ca](mailto:lmarschal@mun.ca)) from the SWCC can help you prepare for multiple choice exams and offer study tips.

**Office of LWS:** The Learner Well-being Consultants ([studentwellness@med.mun.ca](mailto:studentwellness@med.mun.ca) or [LWSwellbeing@mun.ca](mailto:LWSwellbeing@mun.ca)) can provide counselling services and referrals for students who need support.

**Student Wellness and Counselling Centre (SWCC):** The SWCC provides counselling services and physician services for students. The SWCC has registered nurses who can assist with immunizations and TB testing.

**Class Physicians:** Each class is assigned a family doctor whom they can book appointments with for any medical needs. You can find the name of your classes doctor on the LWS website.

**Indigenous Student Resource Centre:** Provides supports and resources to Indigenous students at Memorial.

**Trans and gender diverse students:** Guide for trans and gender diverse students with information and resources at Memorial and in the community.





## *Support for Students*

Emergency Services and Support for Students in Distress: -

Hospital Emergency Rooms at the Health Sciences Centre, St. Clare's and the Waterford.

- 24 hour Mental Health Crisis Line: 709-737-4668 or 1-888-737-4668

- 24 hour Walk-in Psychiatric Assessment Unit at the Waterford hospital (Waterford Bridge Road)

- Mobile Crisis Response Team: 1-888-737-4668 (St. John's Region)

- Crisis Text Line: Text "Talk" to 686868

- Hope for Wellness Help Line: 1-855-242-3310

- CMA Wellness Support Line: 1-844-675-9222

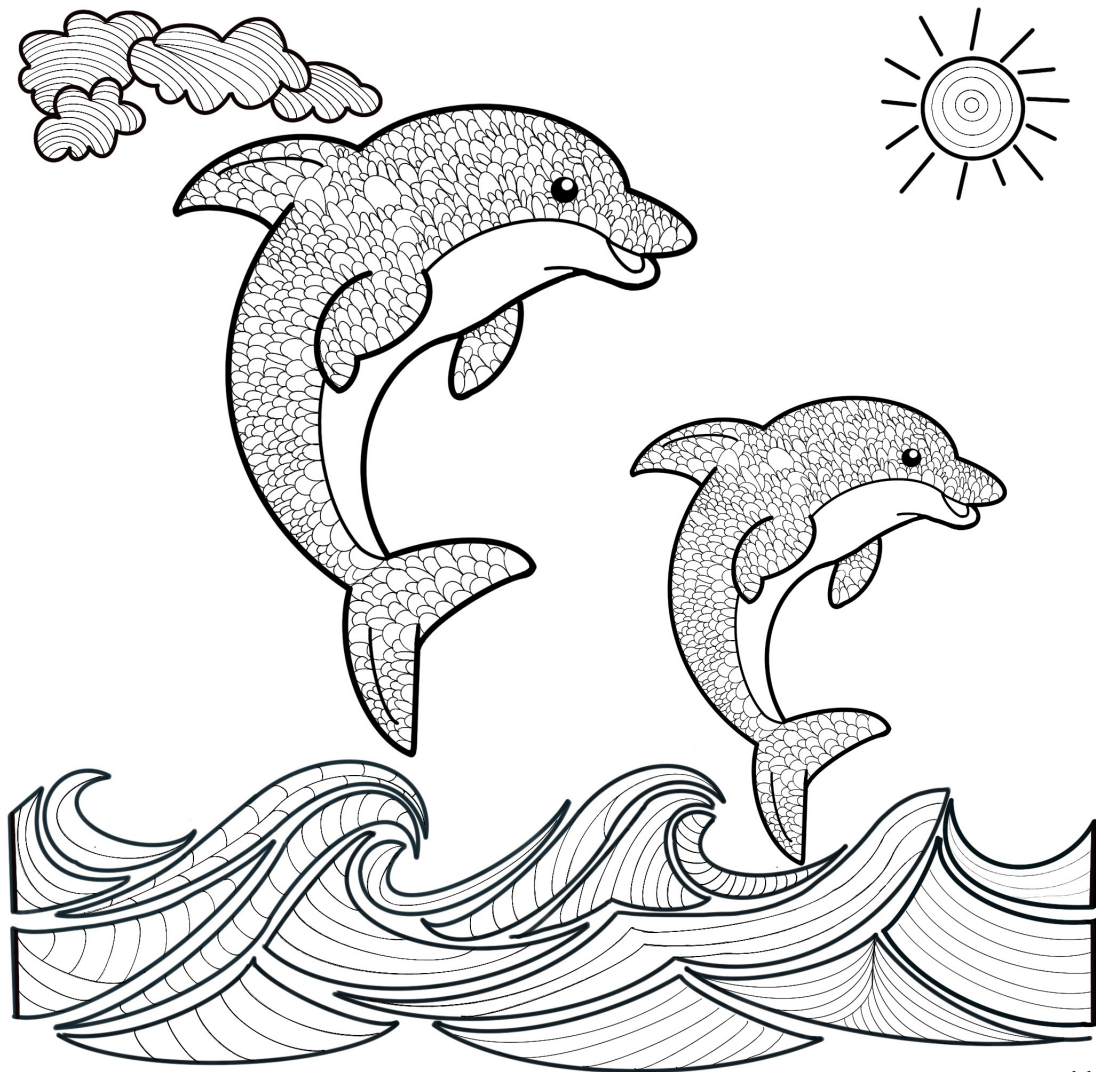
- Doorways Mental Health Counselling: 709-752-4903

- CHANNAL (Peer Support, Warm Line): 709-753-2560 (7 days/week - 10:00am-midnight)

- 2SLGBTQIA+ Warm Line (Peer Support): Call or text 1-866-230-8041

- Bridge the gApp: Mental health supports in Newfoundland and Labrador





# *Advice from Dean Steele*

## **What advice would you give to a first year medical student?**

I would like to congratulate you on entering the medical school class of 2025!! Everything you have already accomplished has contributed to your success and now you are starting the next exciting chapter in your journey of becoming a physician! Embrace every moment of the experience. You will learn something from each opportunity. Engage with and learn from your classmates, other students, staff and faculty. Ask questions and reflect on your experiences. Remember that we are all life long learners with the ultimate goal to be compassionate and competent physicians to improve the health of our patients, their families and the communities we serve. Again congratulations on all you have achieved so far!! Enjoy all your experiences!!

## **Starting medical school is an exciting and potentially stressful experience.**

### **What message would you like to send to an incoming medical student?**

It is important to take care of yourself. The stronger and healthier you are the better you will be able to manage the ups and downs of learning to become a physician. Find time for yourself to relax, unwind and spend time with family and friends. Ensure you get adequate sleep, good nutrition and exercise. Find a good balance for you between personal and professional activities. If you feel you are struggling in any way, the Office of Learner Wellbeing and Success is available to assist you. Don't hesitate to reach out to faculty or staff if you have questions about anything. This is the beginning of your career and it is beneficial to develop good practices now as they will last over your lifetime as a physician.





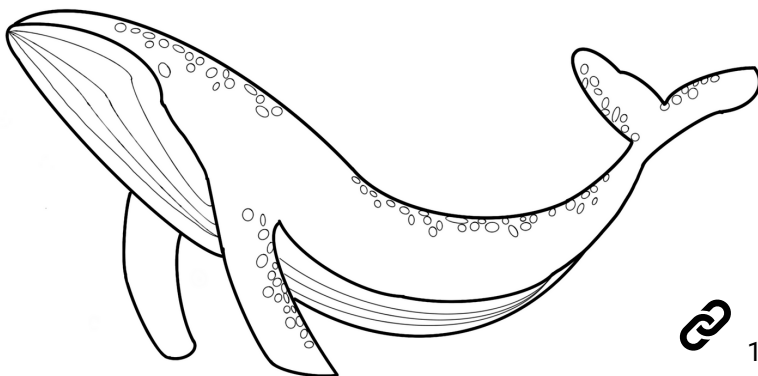
## Advice from Dean Steele

### **How do you unwind and relax? What gives you balance?**

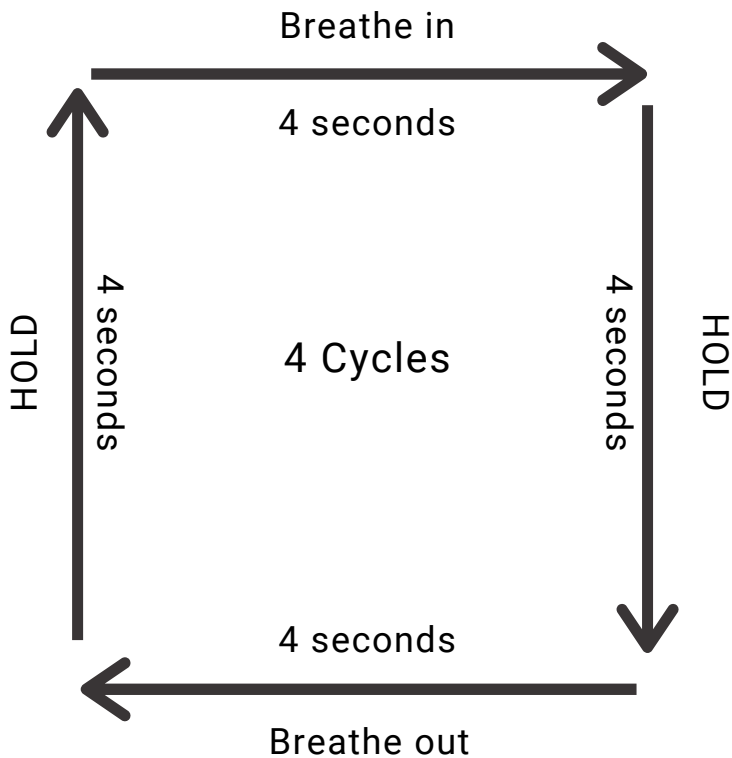
I try to maintain a healthy balance between my personal and professional life. I am a social individual and it is important to me to stay connected with family and friends, both old and new. I enjoy a good murder mystery or psychological thriller or a puzzle while I am watching my favourite television show, Coronation Street. Attending plays or going to a Thomas Rett or Lady A concert with friends is always great fun. During non-CoVID times, my passion is travelling and when I have vacations, I usually travel to somewhere I have not been before. I moved to Newfoundland and Labrador five years ago and I have had the pleasure to visit many parts of this province from Burin to Bonavista to Twillingate to Port aux Basques and up to Happy Valley Goose Bay, Natuashish and Nain. It is a beautiful place and I would encourage you to explore the province once we can travel easily.

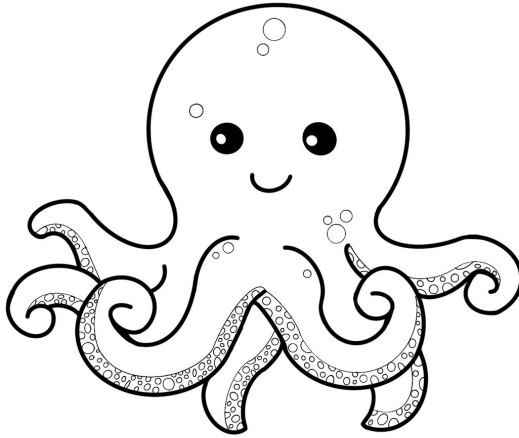
Learn more about Dean Steele and the Faculty of Medicine [here](https://www.med.mun.ca/Medicine/Leadership.aspx):

<https://www.med.mun.ca/Medicine/Leadership.aspx>



*Take some deep breaths...*





## *Advice from Medical Students*

When I started medical school, I was full of emotions. I wish I had the chance to chat with more students who had been in my shoes about their experience.

Our medical students were asked these 3 questions and shared fabulous advice:

- If you could give an incoming medical student one piece of advice what would it be?
- What do you wish somebody told you about medical school?
- Is there anything you'd do differently about your med school experience?

*If you could give an incoming medical student one piece of advice what would it be?*

"To relax and enjoy the experience."

**"Don't take things too seriously and be nice."**

"Be prepared and open minded."

**"Think about things from other points of view."**

"Have a solid support system."

**"Be a person and not just a medical student."**

"Take a deep breath and don't sweat the small stuff."

**"Go easy on yourself."**

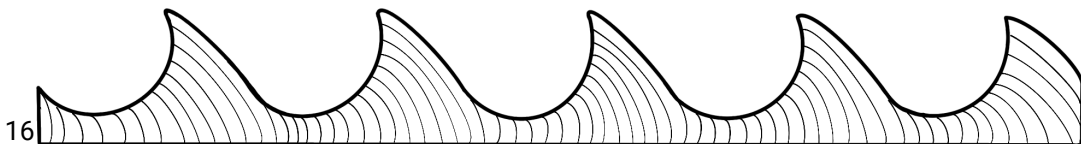
"Take care of your mental health."

**"It's okay to reassess, it is not the end of the world."**

"Be humble and work hard."

**"Stay on top of lectures right from the beginning."**

"Find a way to remind yourself what excites you about medicine, and return to that whenever the year gets rough."



*If you could give an incoming medical student one  
🔗 piece of advice what would it be?*

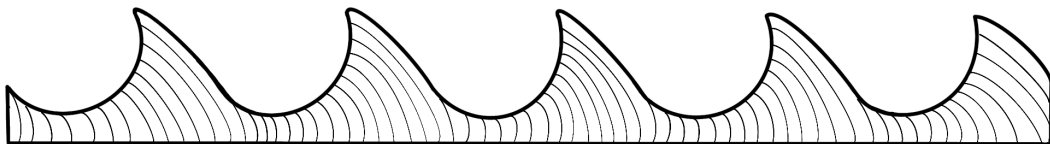
"Take notes on important points and keep them in a safe place during Orientation Week."

**"Make an effort to understand the difference between UGME(Undergraduate Medical Education Office) and the Office of LWS (Office of Learner Well-being and Success)."**

"Don't be hard on yourself over the next four years, med school is a steep learning curve, everyone is learning and growing, and everyone struggles with certain topics or clinical skills. It's okay if you do. Reach out for support whenever you need it!"

**"It's overwhelming at first - despite the stress, remember that you're meant to be here and it's going to be an incredible journey!"**

"Shadow!! Especially those things you assume you wouldn't be interested in. Shadowing is a no pressure environment where you can learn so much about medicine."



*If you could give an incoming medical student one piece of advice what would it be?*

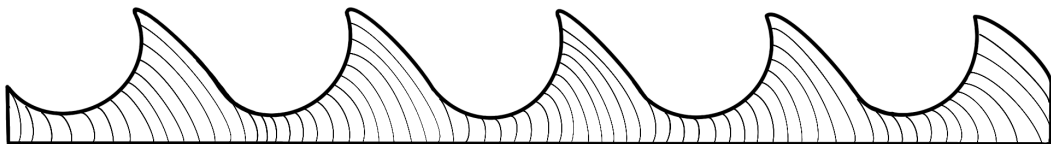
"Enjoy your time, classmates, explore this beautiful city and province. Block exams aren't the be all end all, enjoy your first 2 years of medical school before clerkship begins."

**"It is easy to become stressed in med school but don't let it take over your life! Prioritize things that make you happy, whether it's hanging with friends, working out, or watching some trash reality tv."**

"Make time for yourself! Enjoy the process because it will fly by."

**"Speak with upper year students to gain a different perspective, they often will have insights and experiences that you would have never even thought of."**

"Study as you go - cramming is almost impossible given the amount of material!"



*If you could give an incoming medical student one piece of advice what would it be?*

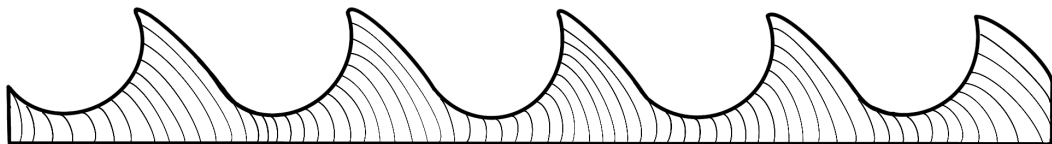
"Decide what student leadership positions are important to you - don't get involved in every single opportunity that presents itself."

**"Take things one week at a time and spend time with people outside of medicine to remain grounded."**

"Sometimes you'll feel like the world is ending and you'll be overworked and beyond stressed. But then you get through it and it's the best feeling ever passing a block exam! Don't be afraid to reach out to your peers or counsellors if you're struggling - you definitely won't be alone!"

**"Take a deep breath. Let it soak in that you are here. Make friends!!"**

"Don't feel guilty for doing things unrelated to medicine!"



# *3 Reasons to Be Mindful in Medical School*

Mindfulness has become part of pop culture, but it's been around for thousands of years. Practicing mindfulness can address some of the challenges of medical school. Here are three benefits of practicing mindfulness while in medical school:

Medical school is tough. You will face many challenges you likely have not had to face before. Mindfulness enhances resilience. Resilience will help you navigate these challenges in a healthy way and grow from them.

Free time is a luxury in medical school. Mindfulness practices do not need to take a large amount of time. Integrating informal practices into your typical day and activities you already do has shown to have the same positive impact as a formal meditation practice.

Disagreement and conflict will arise during your medical education, and difficult conversations will ensue with faculty, peers, and patients. An attitude of mindfulness can be helpful in these situations by reducing knee jerk reactions and improving empathy.



# *What do you wish somebody told you about med school?*

"You can always make time for yourself."

**"No matter what your background and personality is, you'll find people that you like being around."**

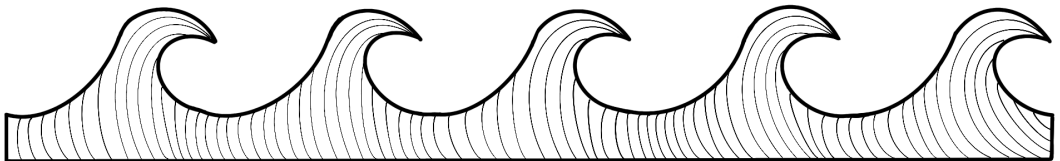
"Imposter syndrome is a real feeling—you belong here."

**"The quantity of information is unlike anything you've seen so far. Stay on top of it!"**

"That each year becomes progressively more intense, but with each year, you develop skills to handle that added workload."

**"That it's okay not to completely understand why or how you're here yet."**

"P = MD. What is most important is the relationships you build with your patients, preceptors, residents, classmates and other members of the health care team."



# *What do you wish somebody told you about med school?*

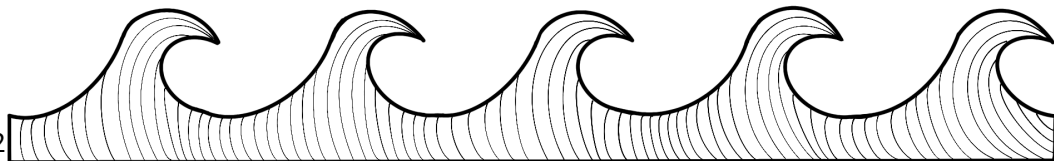
"Work together with your colleagues, they will make your life so much easier."

**"There's a lot of pressure to do extra, but you don't have too."**

"I wish I had fully grasped the importance of studying pre-clerkship material for longevity, rather than studying it and forgetting it quickly."

**"It is difficult but not impossible. There is a lot of support out there and you can do it! Also, there is nothing wrong with failing an exam. There may be topics that you struggle with, you cannot be good at everything but keep trying!"**

"It is still important to build your resume, so keep track of all the activities you participate in."

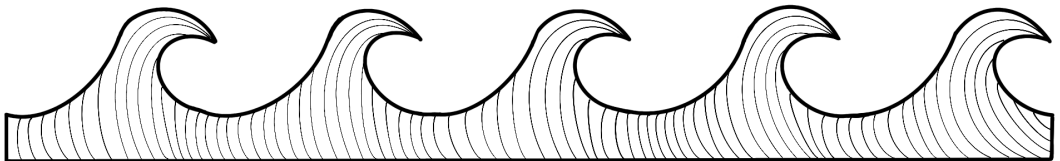


# *What do you wish somebody told you about med school?*

"The biggest shock to me when I started med school was that it just felt like....more school. I'm not sure what I expected, but I thought that every day I went to med school would be this amazing and life changing experience. But the first 2 years are really just more school. I had really high expectations and was really discouraged because of that."

**"It's hard. (Seriously! Everyone told me it was easy once you were in)."**

"I wish I was told that people of all academic backgrounds are equally as important and needed in medical school. Sometimes it can feel overwhelming that so many individuals have a biology/science background, but it's important to remember that every background brings a unique and important perspective!"



# *What do you wish somebody told you about med school?*

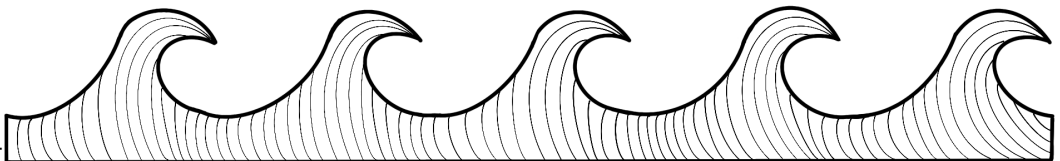
"There are A LOT of papers and assignments. You need to learn how to triage your notes appropriately."

**"I wish someone told me about imposter syndrome and how real it is amongst med students."**

"That it gets easier. Not in the sense that the material gets easier or the workload gets less, but that you learn how to balance it over time and cut your losses when it comes to doing a little bit worse on an exam in order to take care of yourself. It's not worth it to stay up all night studying for a block exam, I promise!"

**"You don't need to know what specialty you want to do right away. But do keep it in mind and try to narrow your decision as you go."**

"That clerkship may not be in St. John's."



# *Gratitude Journaling*

- Gratitude journaling is the practice of writing and reflection for a short period (5 mins) in the morning and evening.
- It can help us focus on the small positive moments that happen in our everyday lives.
- The prompts are often simple and we hope you find some inspiration from the prompts throughout the book.

**What are you looking forward to today?**

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**What 3 things are you grateful about today?**

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*Is there anything you'd do differently about your med school experience?*

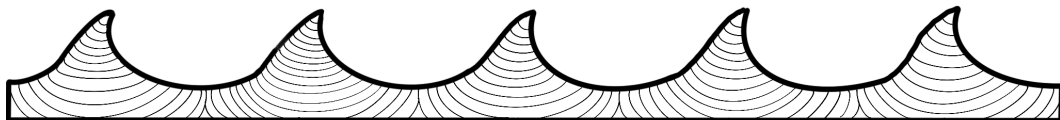
"Not feel pressured to attend o-week events if that's not your jam-- I felt very guilty and embarrassed that I wasn't interested in attending large group events, but I still found ways to make friends and connect with people, just in a way that suited me better."

**"Spend more time shadowing and exploring medicine rather than studying 24/7."**

"When things get busy, it's difficult to remember to continue doing the things you love/got you interested in medicine in the first place. I'd go back and tell myself that I'm not too busy to do those things!"

**"Put less pressure on myself and give myself more credit."**

"Prioritize myself and my relationships."



*Is there anything you'd do differently about your med school experience?*

"I would have got an iPad sooner to help me take notes!"

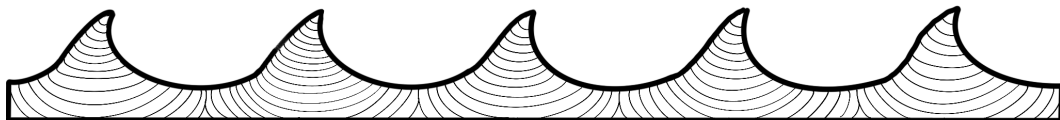
**"Get involved more in first year. Don't be afraid to try out for different positions."**

"I would have taken more detailed notes on certain topics had I known how important some of them would be in clerkship and practice. Common patient presentations should be highlighted and engrained prior to beginning clerkship, as you will have more confidence when approaching them in the future."

**"Spend more time making connections!"**

"I would have tried to be easier on myself and not put myself down when I found things hard."

**"Prioritize my own health and wellness."**



*Is there anything you'd do differently about your med school experience?*

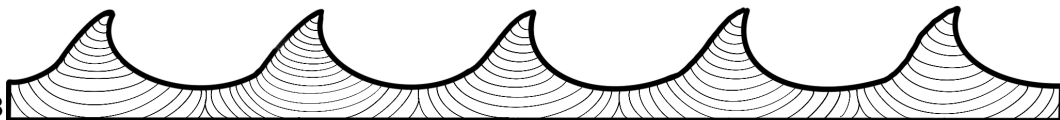
"I'd probably have tried to get to know more classmates sooner. We're all good friends now and I wish we weren't already halfway through the program! Time flies..."

**"Stress less about assignments and studying. You reach a point where more studying or analyzing would not really get you a better grade. Just strike a good work/life balance."**

"Get a furnished apartment."

**"I realized this towards the end of second year, but I wish I wouldn't have let myself stress out about seeing others studying on social media when I was taking time for myself. We all study differently and we all deserve a break!"**

"Ask for help more often."





*Is there anything you'd do differently about your med school experience?*

"I would take more time to myself."

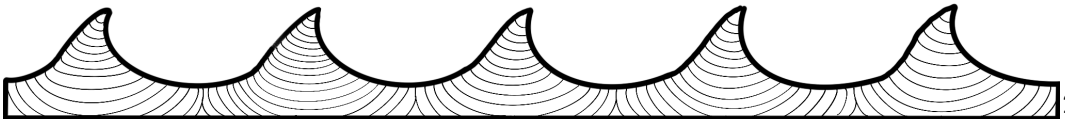
**"Take your time choosing your research supervisor, it's more important that you have a helpful supervisor than a project that is in the field that you desire to enter."**

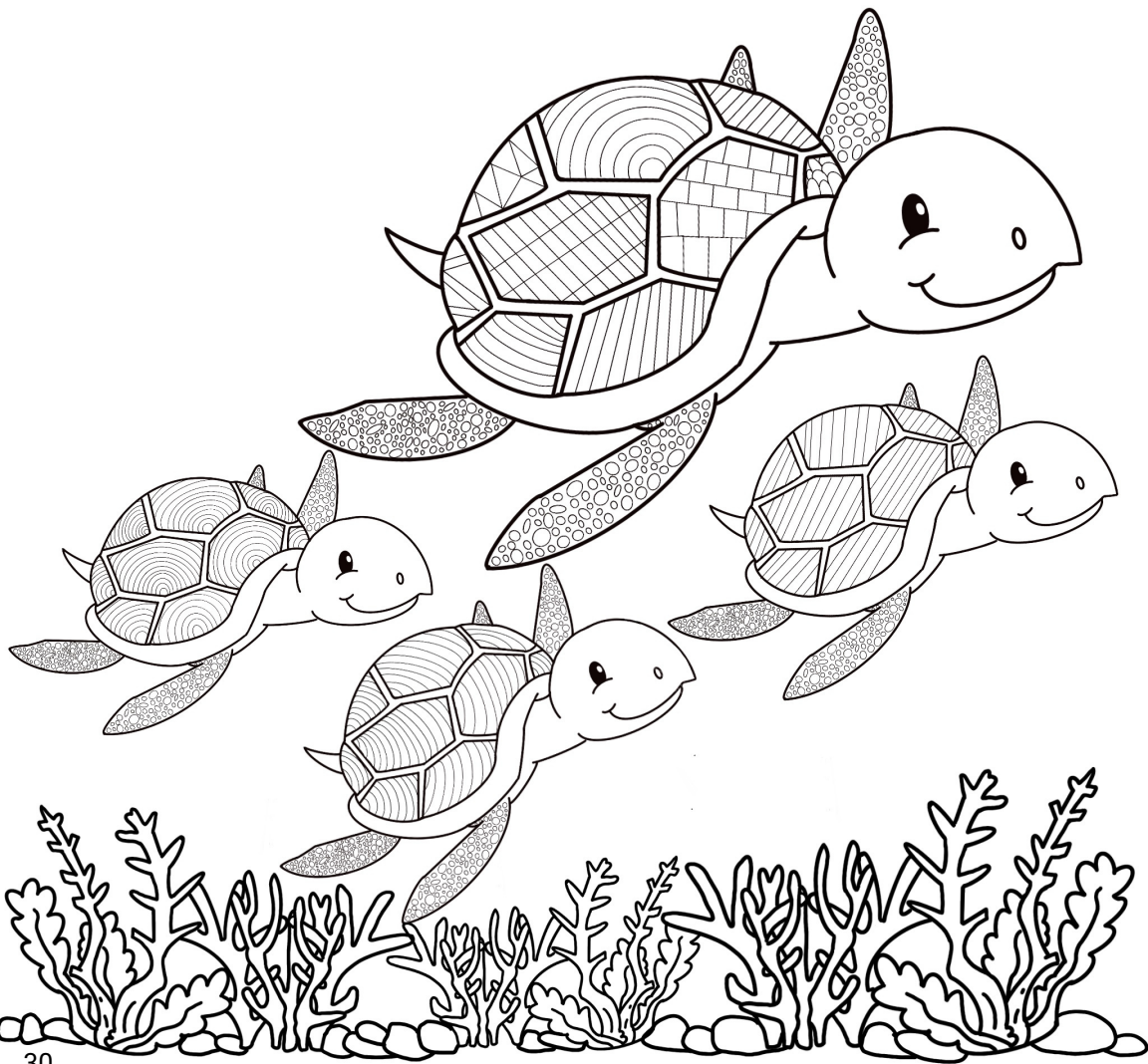
"Getting really into fitness during second year did wonders for my energy and my motivation, so I wish I had been more active during my first year."

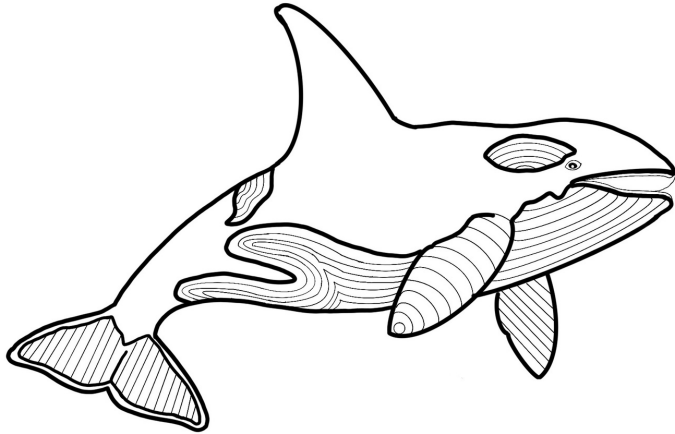
**"Shadow more, start building my CV earlier."**

"I would try not to get caught up in how other people seemed to be doing with school. We are all fighting our own battles and everyone's experience is unique and personal. At the end of the day, we are all going to be doctors!"

**"Enjoy every moment, it goes by quick."**







## *Advice from Faculty Members, Clinical Skills Instructors, Mentors, and Preceptors*

Who is better equipped to give advice than the amazing physicians who teach, mentor and support us?

These fine folks answered the two questions below and served up some great advice:

- What message would you like to send to an incoming med student?
- What advice would you like to give to students before their first clinical encounter?

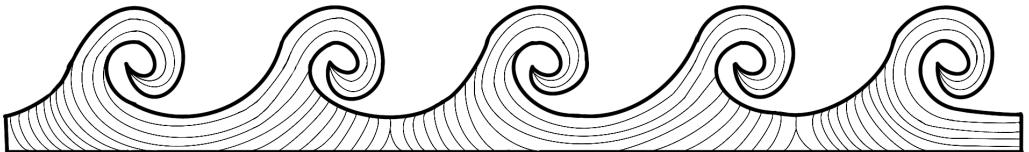
# *What message would you like to send to an incoming med student?*

"You're here because we saw your potential. Remain humble; be open to critical feedback and to new ideas and perspectives; be kind to yourself; show compassion to others; see every failure as an opportunity to grow."

**"Don't be afraid to reach out and ask for opportunities. COVID has left people more isolated and it's really important to feel connected and part of a community of learning and to be engaged in all aspects of training."**

"Write a little note in your phone or journal about all the reasons you wanted to become a doctor! Keep this on hand for those times when the pessimism and challenges present themselves!"

**"Take advantage of all learning opportunities. Sitting home reading books will only teach you some of what you need to know. Participate in shadowing, meet people, ask questions. Connect with a student in the class ahead of you. Join groups and get involved with MedSoc."**



# *What message would you like to send to an incoming med student?*

"Enjoy your time in this phase of medical learning and stay human. Treat your patients as you would if each was a member of your own family."

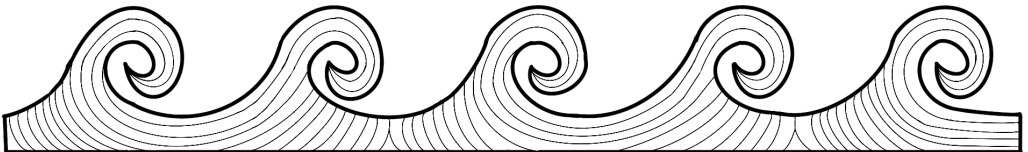
**"Be your best self with kindness and humility."**

"Enjoy it! Make time to study AND for what makes you happy. Exercise!!"

**"Don't lose track of the important things in your life. You have been given an incredible opportunity that many would love to have. Enjoy it. Learn, study, observe, listen, read, memorize, and you will get through it. But remember to live, love, and laugh - spend time with your friends, family and classmates. Socialize. These are the times that you will remember when all this is done."**

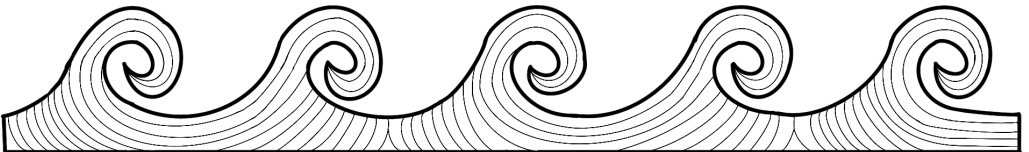
"The art is long, don't be in a hurry."

**"Make friends that you can rely on to get you through the rough patches!"**



# *What message would you like to send to an incoming med student?*

"Whatever distress you're in, you are not alone in it. There is nothing wrong with you. You are not weak. You are not less than those around you. You need support, so ask for it. If it's not enough, ask again. If you feel sick, see your doctor. If you aren't sleeping, if you aren't eating, if you feel hopeless or inadequate, see your doctor. Everyone who ends up in medical school, has worked hard and overcome obstacles to get there. You are already at an increased risk of mood and anxiety disorders, because of your characterological makeup, because of your high expectations of yourself, because you are primed to strive for the top. Someone who develops a mood or anxiety disorder, or suffers an exacerbation of illness in medical school is NOT an exception. Seek treatment. Be proactive. You do not have to work hard to earn therapeutic leisure. You are ENTITLED to therapeutic leisure. You NEED therapeutic leisure in order to stay healthy. Therapeutic leisure is not a reward, it is a MEDICINE that keeps you well. Prescribe yourself therapeutic leisure EVERY DAY."



# *5, 4, 3, 2, 1 Grounding Technique*

**Look around you and notice the following:**



5 things you can see



4 things you can feel



3 things you can hear



2 things you can smell



1 thing you can taste

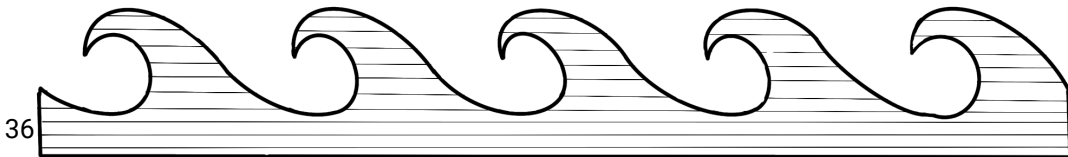
# *What advice would you like to give to students before their first clinical encounter?*

"Don't be afraid to ask questions and don't feel like you have to remember everything you see/talk about - just enjoy the experience."

**"Be curious. Let the patient talk. Ask more questions. You can learn most of what you need to know from the history. Plus, people's stories are what makes them interesting!"**

"Think back to a time when you were a patient, and base your interactions on how you would have liked to be treated. Show up on time and be present - that's all that's really expected of you in the beginning."

**"Introduce yourself to everyone. Get to know the allied health workers. Show respect to everyone. Educate yourself on disparities and inequities in medicine. You will see them all around you and it will be challenging. Please have a good mentor or speak with your supervisor who can help support the patient."**





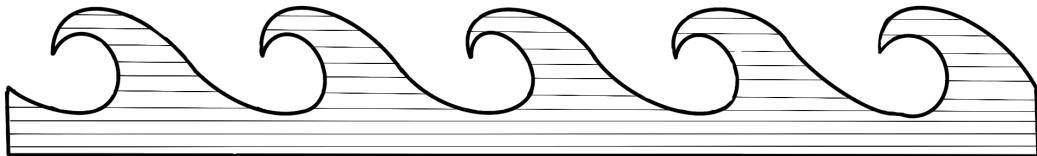
# *What advice would you like to give to students before their first clinical encounter?*

"Remember that patients come to the doctor looking for help and advice, not to be chastised. What may seem like common sense to someone in our position may be information a patient has never heard before so always use a non-judgemental approach."

**"Take a moment, take a breath, make a plan and try your best! Sit with patients, they feel more heard than if you're standing. Respect that the patient is the expert in their own experience. Remember people wouldn't be coming for help if they didn't feel they needed it. Act as if what you do makes a difference, because it really does."**

"It's a privilege to see patients, even if you're a fly on the wall. Try to appreciate that. And try to learn from the experience."

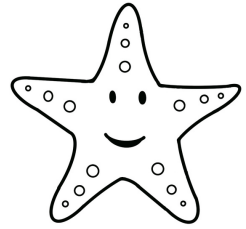
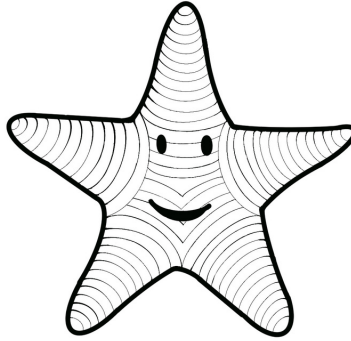
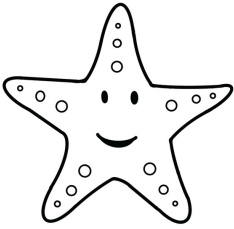
**"Let the patient talk with you, they'll give you almost everything you need to know if you give them time to tell you."**



## *5 Simple Ways to be Mindful*

Mindfulness is not gained from knowledge, rather it is learned through experience. Here are five simple practices that can help you build your mindfulness muscle:

1. Notice where you feel your breath in your body.
2. Stop and listen to the sounds surrounding you.
3. Feel sensations in your body.
4. Notice your tone of voice.
5. Pause before speaking.



## *Students and Work-life balance*

Work-life balance has always been a challenge for me. Over the past two years I've been trying my best to strike a balance between school and the other important things in my life. Other medical students have expressed this same sentiment.

We wanted to share some advice with you so that you start to find your balance on day one:

- Med school can be stressful. How do you find a balance and what do you do to cope?

*Med school can be stressful. How do you find a balance and what do you do to cope?*

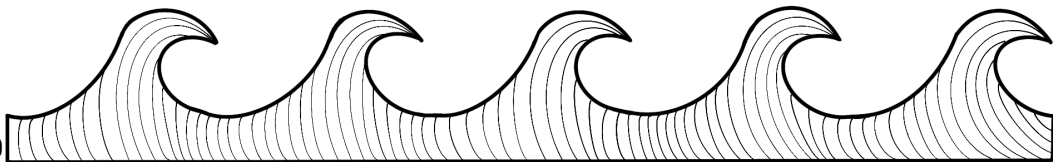
"YOU HAVE to CHOOSE to put yourself first."

**"Keep the perspective in mind, ultimately if you fail a test you'll still be a great doctor! You just need to learn the best you can and give yourself a break if there's a few exams that don't go your way. We're all people going through this, and everyone has a different workload outside of school on their plate. Keep that in mind and don't compare yourself to your classmates."**

"I choose myself when I need to. If that means that no review happens that day (whether in pre-clerkship or clerkship), then so be it. Also it is very therapeutic to rant with your fellow classmates. They get it."

**"Exercise, eat well, and keep up your hobbies."**

"Music, exercise, cooking and hiking."



*Med school can be stressful. How do you find a balance and what do you do to cope?*

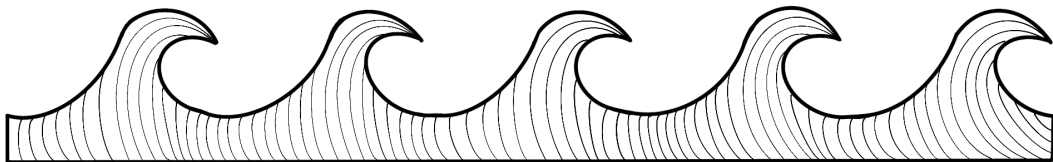
"Journalling helps a lot! Also, surrounding yourself with people that support you."

**"I always make sure I get enough sleep which puts me in a better mood! Venting to friends and peers always helps :)"**

"I always take my mornings to exercise (the thing that makes me relax and free my mind) before I start my day of school/study."

**"When I make a schedule in my agenda, I try to schedule not only school deadlines/exams, but also schedule in time for extra curricular/relaxing."**

"For me, exercise is a huge contributor to keeping me calm. So for me, prioritizing ~1 hour every 1-2 days to exercise has helped."



*Med school can be stressful. How do you find a balance and what do you do to cope?*

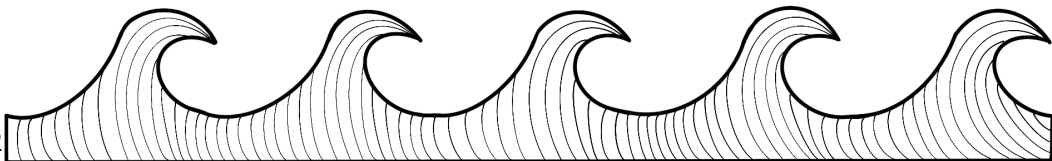
"I spend time with my family and take 1 day a week where I don't do any school work."

**"Take time each week to reflect on how you are feeling and identify what sort of break you need and how to recharge."**

"I make sure that I take the time at the beginning of the block to just stay on top of my work, and the rest is used to enjoy my time with friends, exploring, etc... However, I make sure to keep my schedule clear when studying the week before."

**"Recognizing when I'm stressed and realizing that it's not productive - taking time to go for a run, watch Netflix or take a nap always helps me refresh my brain."**

"Hang out with friends."



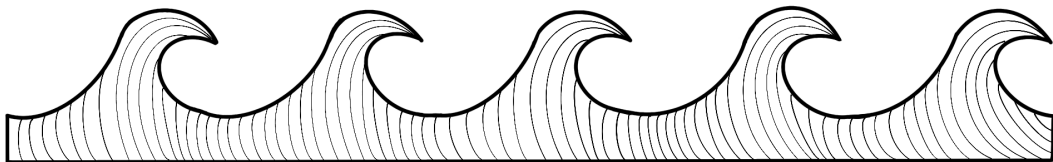
*Med school can be stressful. How do you find a balance and what do you do to cope?*

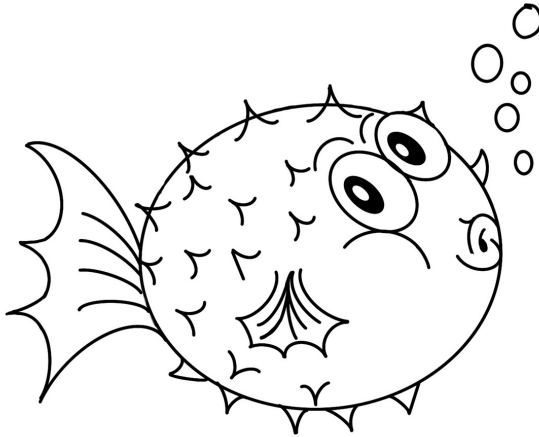
"Talk to people outside of medicine. When I was overwhelmed, I always would talk to friends or family that are teachers, social workers, accountants, nurses. It allowed me to realize that not everyone thinks about medicine and block exams every day!"

**"Getting enough exercise, enough sleep, and eating well."**

"In order to stay mentally and physically well, I make sure to go to the gym or exercise most days, get enough sleep, and eat as healthy as possible. If I don't do these things, it is difficult for me to be happy and be successful in school. Your health has to come first!"

**"Minimize time wasted so I can enjoy some hobbies and relax after a day of studying and learning."**





## *Some Physicians' takes on Work-life Balance*

Work-life balance is important now and will continue to be important during throughout life.

Our physicians gave us some insights about their work-life balance by answering this question:

- Work-life balance is important. How do you find balance? What tips do you have for students?



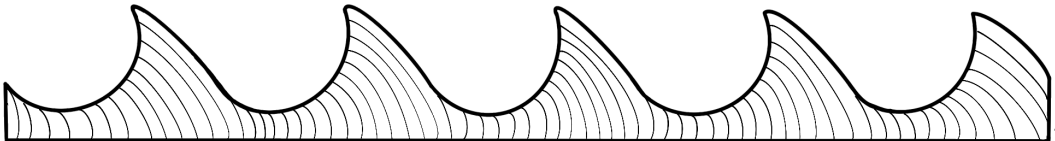
*Work-life balance is important. How do you find balance? What tips do you have for students?*

"It took me a long time to be a physician but I don't define myself by my job. I'm a husband and father whose job is medicine, not a physician that has a family. I learned to say no when I need to and I don't take my work home."

**"Balance - ALWAYS taking a lunch break. I unwind and relax by putting away my phone and giving my kids my undivided attention, gardening, tending to my house plants, art of any kind, walks in the woods, beach combing."**

"Depends on the day. Sometimes exercise and cooking for myself, and others ordering pizza and watching tv for an entire day. Acknowledging that my needs ebb and flow and there's no way to be perfect all the time."

**"Creativity! I love being creative and writing stories!"**



*Work-life balance is important. How do you find balance? What tips do you have for students?*

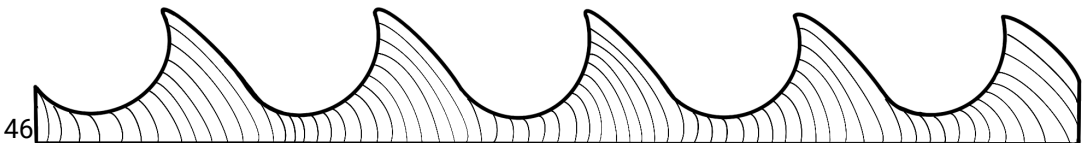
"Schedule time for study, as well as for exercise and fun. Stick to your plan - make exercise mandatory, not optional. Make time for the things you like to do and put it in your schedule."

**"Being with friends and family."**

"Your mind will retain more if you give your body the attention it deserves. Move every hour. Get involved in a physical activity whether it's alone or with a group. Nourish your body and your soul. "

**"Exercise. Limit the amount of work I take home. Leave town for vacations! Book more vacation than you think you need - you can easily add more work but hard to take it away!"**

"Hiking, meditating, board games with the family, alone time."



*Work-life balance is important. How do you find balance? What tips do you have for students?*

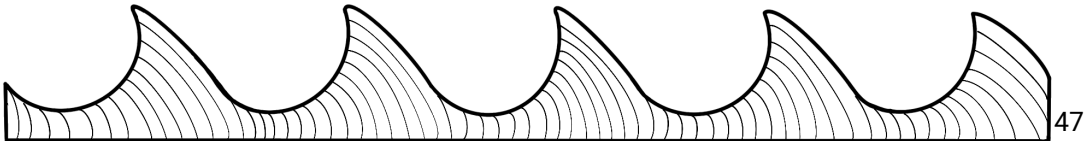
"I say "no" to things now. That is not as easy to do as a medical student (I am faculty). But remember you can say "no" to things!"

**"Maintain your extracurricular interests and activities. If you feel like you are overwhelmed, seek help and don't worry. The faculty and staff are here to help you."**

"I get balance largely from my family - both my very supportive husband and my children. I also love to bake, garden, sing and travel. Gardening, especially is very good therapy after a stressful week at work!"

**"Learn to say no. Learn to say no. Don't let other people raise your kids...find a balance to be there for your kids."**

"Choose a healthy escape like art, music, outdoor sports, not drugs or alcohol."



# *Gratitude Journaling*

Affirmations are positive statements that can help you challenge negative self-talk. Affirmations are designed to be repeated regularly and can help with confidence and self-esteem. Here are some examples: I am worthy of good things, I am talented and intelligent, I am capable of doing anything I put my mind to, opportunities are all around me.

**Create a list of affirmations for yourself because you are enough.**

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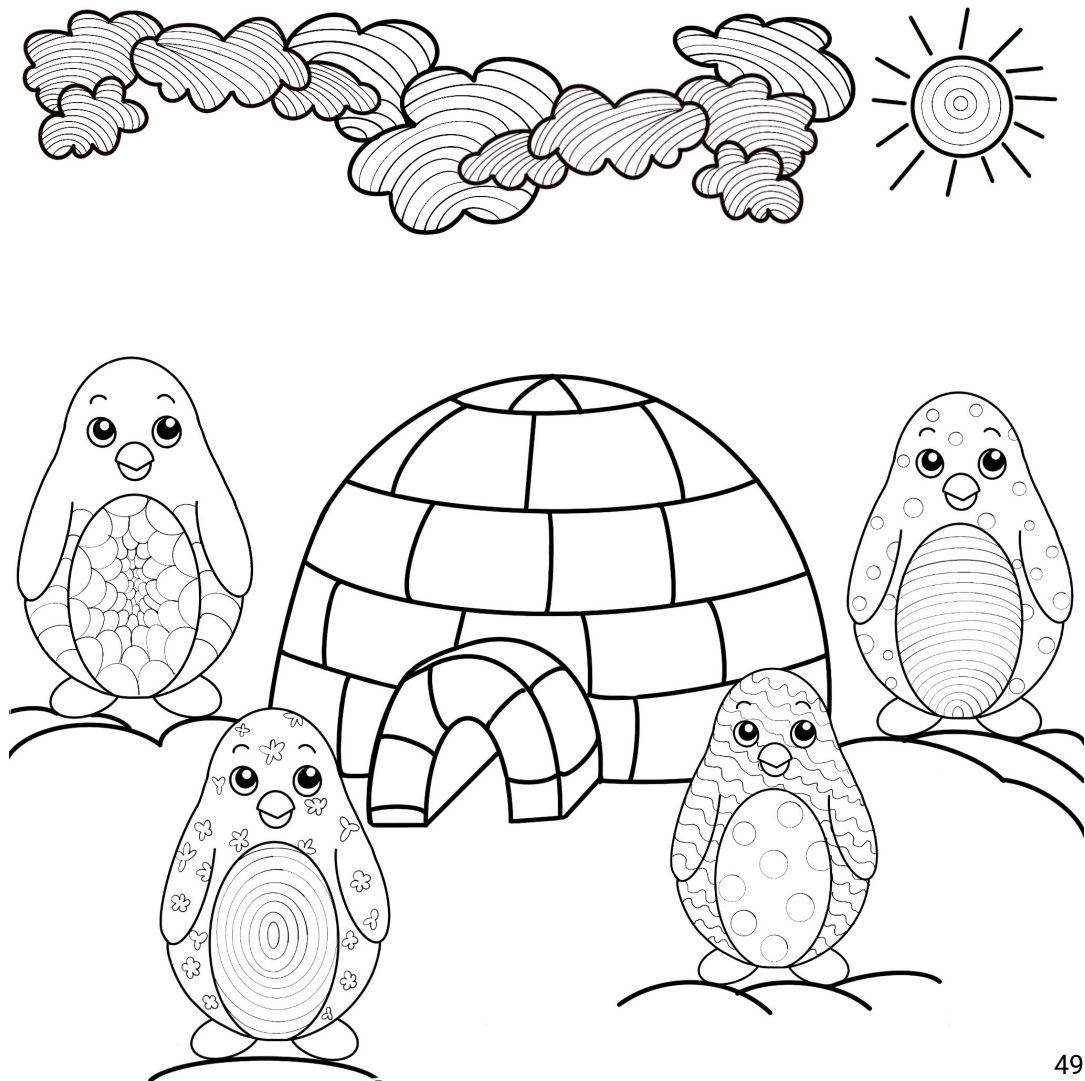
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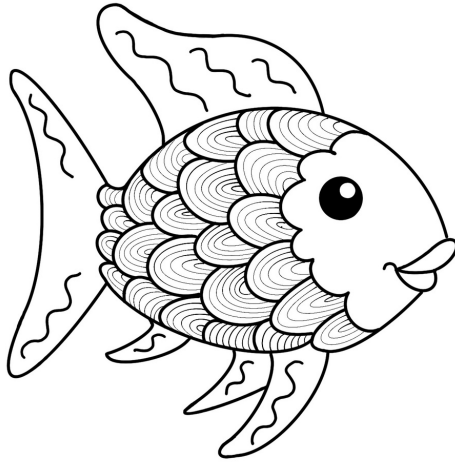
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## *Assessments in Medical School*

Medical school can sometimes feel like you are drinking from a firehose with all of the information that you are expected to learn. I've created a Coles Notes Summary of the different assessments you will have during pre-clerkship. There is no right or wrong way to study for exams. My peers and I have compiled a list of study tips that we've found helpful during our block exams.



# Block Exams 101

- Block exams are the main method of evaluation in **The Patient I, II, and III** courses during pre-clerkship.
- The dates of the exams and the block associated with each exam can be found online in the Phase 1 Assessment Plan.
- Multiple choice exams.
- Contain all of The Patient content for a specified period of time (usually 2-4 weeks) while you are covering a block (topic/unit).
  - Basically a "final" exam for each period of material.
  - There are no cumulative exams at the end of each phase. Instead the material from one block helps prepare you for the next block (or other blocks further down the road).





# Block Exams 101

- The number of multiple choice is based on the number of "Lecture hours."
  - Lecture hours include lectures, labs, independent learning modules, e-modules and more. Assume everything under The Patient course is testable unless *Elas* ([ugme.assessment@med.mun.ca](mailto:ugme.assessment@med.mun.ca)) tells you otherwise.
- Each lecture hour = 2 multiple choice questions (Ex: If a lecture is two hours then you can expect 4 MC questions).
- There are formative (i.e. for learning purposes only) quizzes posted each week that contain sample questions for the content covered that week.
  - DO these quizzes!! The quizzes can give you an idea about the types of questions that you may be asked.
  - Some students do them every week once they are posted and others do them leading up to an exam. Find what works for you!







# Block Exams 101

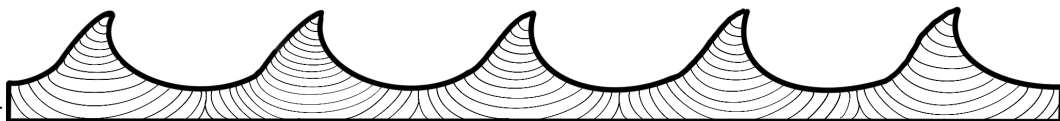
## - Grading of block exams:

- Block exams are summative (i.e. count towards the final grade).
- Block exams are graded using a PASS system.
- PASS = 70% or greater (this is where the famous P = MD saying comes in).
- What happens if I don't pass an exam?
  - This means you are in the "bubble" and may need to reassess the exam.
  - The modified Hofstee method is used to determine the final pass mark (detailed info is available in the [assessment plan](#)).
  - Being in the "bubble" does not mean you are a failure, or that you should drop out of med school (I had that thought once). It just means that you simply didn't get enough questions right to pass the exam.



# Block Exams 101

- More on the bubble:
  - Most, if not all of your class will end up in the bubble at some point in time during pre-clerkship.
  - Some learners may have to reassess, which is okay too.
  - Everybody will have their strengths and weaknesses throughout the curriculum.
  - If you find yourself in the bubble, keep your head held high, get your objectives from *Elas* to see what areas you need to work on and keep on pushing. You got this!
- So if a block exam has 100 questions that means I can get 30 wrong and still pass the exam?
  - While that is true, I try to focus on getting 70 questions right instead. This way every time I know a question, I get a point. Giving myself points, instead of taking points away, helped give me a positive mindset during an exam.



# Block Exams 101

"Block exams are not everything!! Do not place your worth in them. And it is 100% okay to fail them sometimes - you will be alright :)"

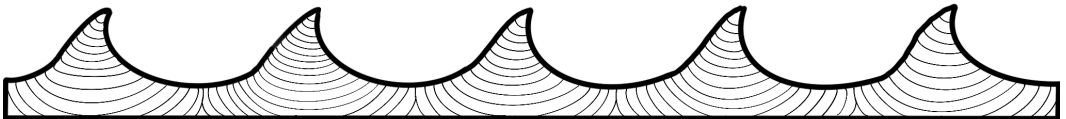
**"It's okay to reassess, it is not the end of the world."**

"Keep an open mind, take your time, don't stress if you fail an exam- EVERYONE fails at some point and it's not a reflection on your abilities."

**"Just when you think you've written your last exam, there will always be more."**

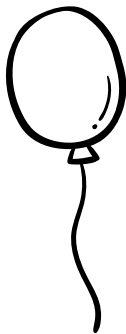
"It's okay to not be successful on your first shot at exams/assignments and you have to reassess. This does not define your worth as a medical student. It is okay to have to do it again."

**"It can take a while to figure out how to succeed, but the system is very forgiving. Try different study styles to figure out which ones work for you, and don't get too stressed if you end up in the bubble a few times while you're learning."**



# Balloon Breathing

Balloon breathing is a simple breathing exercise that you can complete anywhere and anytime.



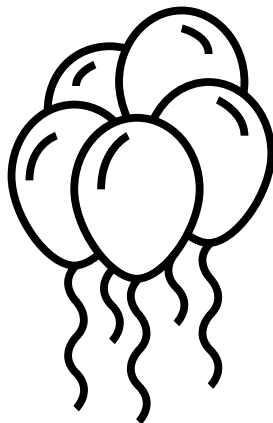
Think of your belly as a balloon.

Place your hand on your belly to feel it rise and fall as you breathe in and out.

Take a deep breathe in through your nose and slowly fill up the balloon.

Slowly exhale and deflate the balloon.

Repeat 5 times.



# Study Tips

"There is no right or wrong way to study or prepare for exams - find what works for you and stick with it."

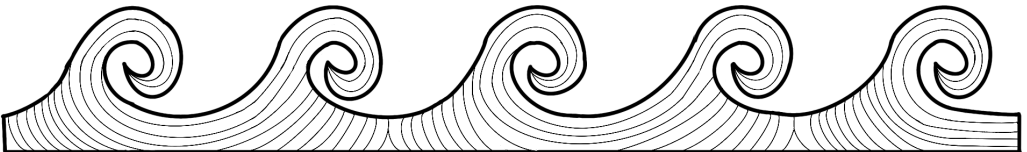
**"It is impossible to absorb all of the information thrown at you. Just try to take in as much as you can and do your best."**

"Stay on top of lectures right from the beginning."

**"Try to approach lectures and clinical skills experiences as opportunities to learn about real clinical knowledge that will apply in clerkship and residency, rather than as resources to help you prepare for a test. While block exams are the main form of evaluation early on, once you hit clerkship, you need to be able to put that knowledge into practice."**

"Study with friends who are able to help talk through the material (while also keeping things lighthearted and fun)."

**"Repetition was most helpful for me."**





# Study Tips

"Get an iPad with an Apple Pencil and a note taking app (Goodnotes, Notability, etc.)."

**"Try to group similar topics together, and understand how they relate to one another."**

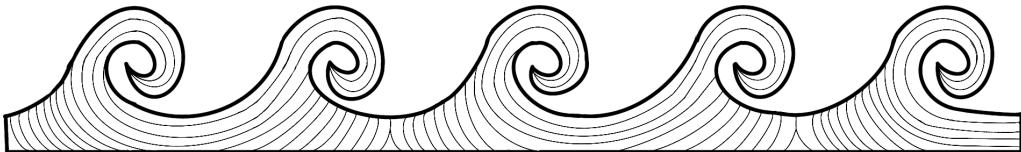
"The amount of material covered is a BIG adjustment regardless of your undergrad program. Recognize that you will likely need to switch up your undergrad study strategies and simply be okay with not knowing absolutely everything."

**"Take breaks. Cut it off at a certain point in the night to get a good sleep. Don't feel guilty about closing the books and doing something you want to do!"**

"Study what works best for you. Anki (Flashcard program) isn't for everyone."

**"Study with friends! Study on your own first, then meet with friends and quiz each other. This will fill in each others' gaps in knowledge and reinforce what you have learned."**

"Study as you go, don't try to cram."





# Study Tips

"Learn to love it as best you can. You'll be spending a lot of time doing it, so make your best cup of coffee or tea and try to find purpose in each moment of studying. Someday the material will be used in your everyday life."

**"Put your phone away!!!!"**

"I love ANKI! (Flashcard program)"

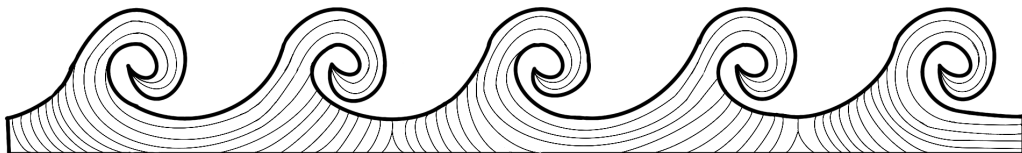
**"I found it helpful to read through the slides for the upcoming lecture to "orient" myself and not get lost in jargon, graphics, etc. once attending the lecture live."**

"Find what works for you, everyone studies differently, my strategy changed for each exam."

**"Make time for it everyday."**

"Find a core study group! You can physically study together/quiz each other & be there to answer the inevitable logistical questions about assessments."

**"Don't cram, get a good sleep the night before."**



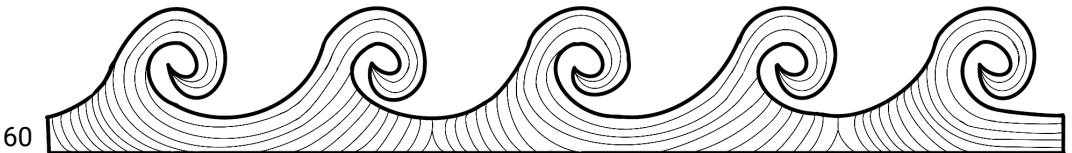
# Study Tips

"Everyone's studying experience is unique to them - some people study consistently throughout the block, (what I do!) while others like to study just a few days before. Try and find what works for you as early as you can so you can stick to that routine. Also, getting an iPad changed the game for me - so much easier to take notes and study!"

**"Don't cram - try your best to actually learn and absorb the material."**

"Get organized! If you're not organized, you will have a really hard time getting through all the content. I used GoodNotes to organize the slideshows and my own personal notes for a lecture."

**"Download the Chrome extension to allow you to speed up videos! It really increases efficiency to watch videos and lectures at a higher speed and saves time in the end. During block exams, every bit of time you have counts!"**

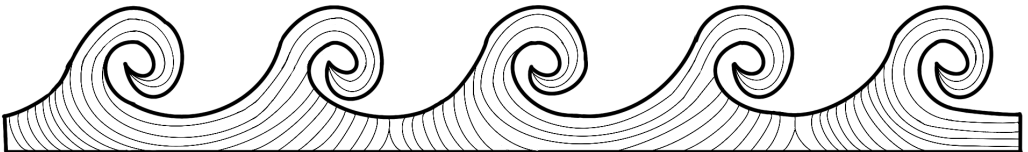


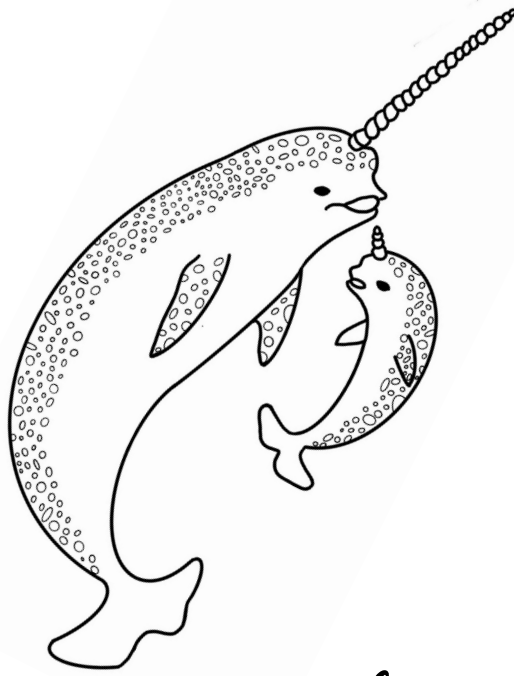




# Assignments and Research

- Besides block exams, there are a lot of assignments, papers and a research project.
- FOLLOW THE RUBRICS for each assignment.
- Pay attention to the % weight of each assignment in the assessment plans. Spend more time on papers that are worth more.
- Sometimes the assessment schedule can be hectic with papers and exams around the same time. Try to get some easier papers done and out of the way early.
- Research project:
  - The research project can be daunting for students who do not have a lot of research experience.
  - Keep an open mind and try to learn the research process. This will help you in the future.
  - Take your time choosing a supervisor and always ask for help when you need it!





## *Advice from Research supervisors*

Every student is required to complete a research project during medical school. I chose mine in an area that I was interested in and a supervisor who was excited to collaborate with me. We asked our research supervisors for some advice about choosing a project and supervisor.

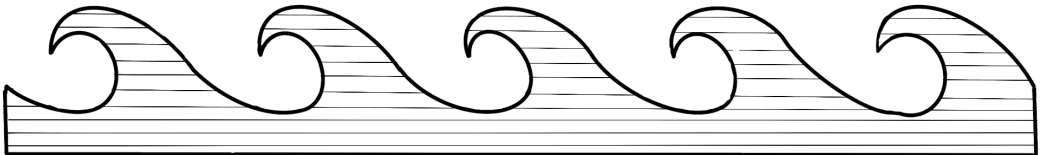
# *Choosing a Research Supervisor and Project:*

"Attend lectures/seminars workshops given by a range of faculty members. Challenge yourself to do something new; to learn a new approach to research; a new area of interest; a different study population. Stretch yourself."

**"Choose a project you're interested in, not just some project that somebody else wants done but can't be bothered to do themselves. Choose a supervisor who is engaged and responsive. If you find it difficult to connect with your supervisor or to get them to do things that you need done for the project, then you probably need a different supervisor."**

"Be bold. Talk to any faculty. We are here to guide and facilitate your success."

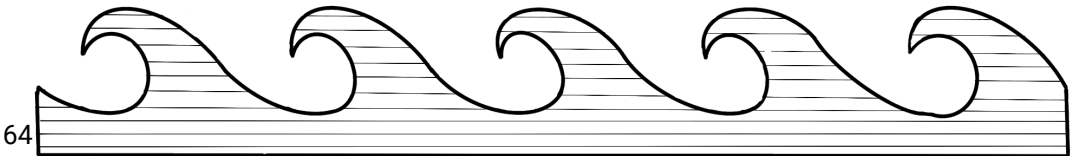
**"Start early, a research project takes a lot of time and cannot be done just before the deadline."**



# *Choosing a Research Supervisor and Project:*

"Think back on your personal knowledge and strengths. Whatever they may be, there might be a place for it in research. Your strength might be art, music, engineering, volunteering, communication, writing .... the research project can be whatever you wish it to be. Without the passion for the project, it will just seem like more work. Be prepared for a LOT of work with any project, no matter how small it is."

**"What are your interests? Don't be too narrow and think about WHY you chose medicine as a career. For me, as an example, I was very interested in Cancer - research and treatment - I worked in the Terry Fox lab when I applied so Oncology was my main interest."**



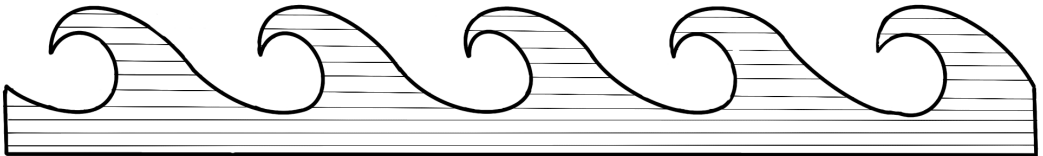
## *Other research opportunities*

"There are lots of opportunities for research in areas such as curriculum development and evaluation, public health, quality assurance etc. Excellent research opportunities can also be found in collaboration with other disciplines such as pharmacy or social work. Keep an open mind and explore a variety of possibilities - ask lots of faculty what their interests are and what projects are available, and you will identify more and more opportunities."

**"There are many opportunities, you just have to ask around to discipline chairs about who is doing work in areas that you're interested in but do it early in the academic year."**

Speak to anyone working in an area in which you are interested. Showing an interest in a researcher's area opens doors."

**"Round out your education. Go beyond clinical research to find out what faculty in the bench sciences, public health, epidemiology, arts therapy, community-based research are doing."**



# Reminders for Practicing Mindfulness

We need to remember to be mindful – for most adults, it does not come naturally until practiced.

- Set an alarm to take a mindful pause several times throughout the day.

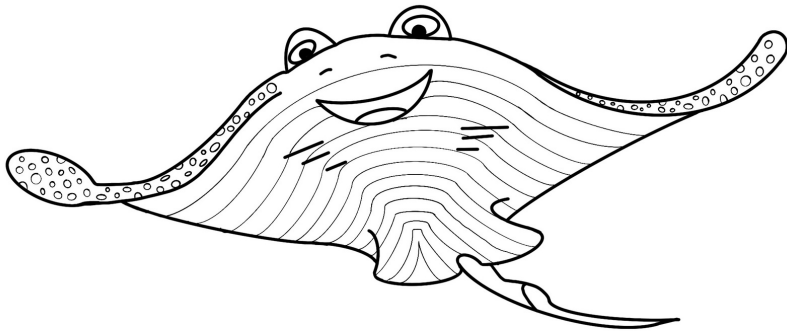
- Place a sticky note in your car as a reminder to pause.

- Write/type how you would like your day to be on your phone / in your journal / on your nightstand and read it every morning upon waking. Repeat in your mind as you take your first few awake breaths for the day.

- Attach a note on your fridge to remind you to eat mindfully.

- Write 'SMILE' on your phone and smile when you see it.

- Draw a dot on your hand with a pen/marker or put an elastic band on your wrist. Each time you see it, remember to pause and/or smile.



## *Advice from Clinical skills Instructors*

When I was little, I used to dress up and play "Doctor". My version of "Doctor" included listening to all of my teddy bears hearts, looking in their ears and giving them bandaids if they had an ouchie. Clinical skills is the adult version of "Doctor". You get the opportunity to learn how to interview a patient and complete a physical exam in a low stakes, low pressure environment.

Our clinical skills instructors were happy to share their wisdom with us:

- What advice would you give to new students starting clinical skills?
- What is your favourite part about teaching clinical skills to medical students?

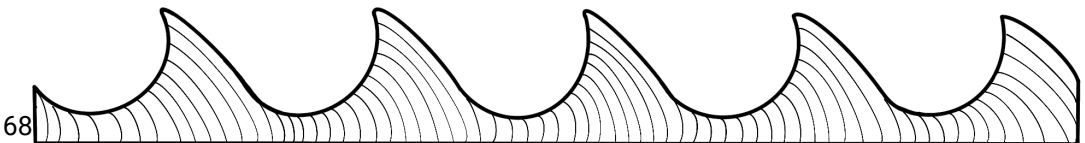
# *What advice would you give to new students starting clinical skills?*

"Read the details, ask questions. Ask "why I am doing this test," don't just learn the tests by memory, learn why you are doing the tests and what you are looking for. Do the work to learn the "why." Lots of YouTube videos to help. Challenge your clinical skills preceptors."

**"Balance. Feel blessed to have this opportunity to learn, ask questions and come prepared."**

"Try hard but realize that you are inexperienced and don't expect to perform at a resident or staff level."

**"This is where you start to learn how to practice medicine. The most important skill in medicine is listening. Listen to your patient, make sure they feel heard and that you have an understanding of their problem. It will help you establish a great rapport with them, and will serve you very well in the rest of your career."**





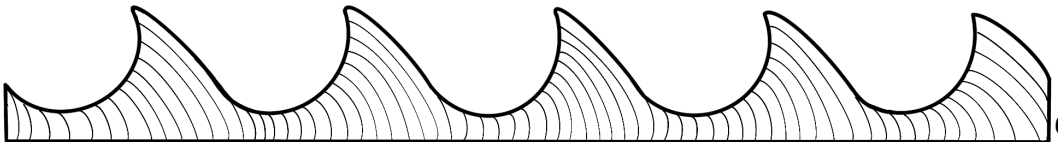
# *What advice would you give to new students starting clinical skills?*

"Reading the material beforehand and getting a chance to practice before the sessions really makes a difference in your learning. Be open to learning from people with differing teaching styles."

**"Use every opportunity to practice getting comfortable talking to people. Apart from the medical questions/answers, we need to establish a rapport and understand our patient- including the psychosocial which has such a huge impact on our patients lives."**

"Don't say you hear it or feel it, if you don't hear it or feel it."

**"Read Bates before each block. Come prepared to ask questions and take advantage of the time with the preceptor. Practice your skills on family, friends, yourself. Watch web videos."**



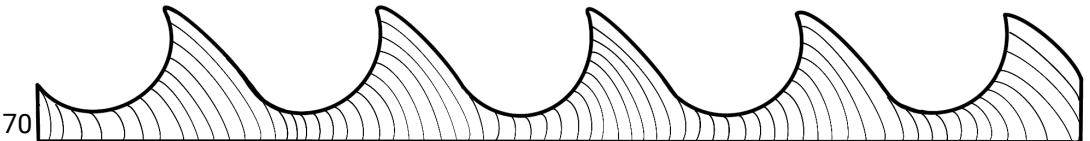
# *What advice would you give to new students starting clinical skills?*

"It's important to do some preparation but it's more important to be honest when you cannot appreciate a physical exam finding or piece of anatomy. If you can't see the JVP or feel the apex beat or see the optic disc and everyone else can, there is a 100% chance that you are not the only one so don't fake it, ask for help and we will be happy to walk you through it."

**"Be yourself, there are no dumb questions."**

"Don't be afraid of giving a wrong answer or not doing something perfectly right off the bat. That's why you're there - to learn and develop your skills. The more you practice and the more questions you ask, the more you will learn and the stronger your skills will be."

**"It is OK to not have it all figured out. Keep practicing and asking questions."**



*Our clinical skills instructors truly enjoy teaching.  
Here's what they had to say:*

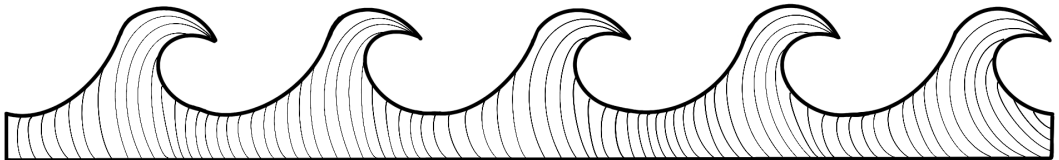
"The eagerness in the students and helping them think outside of the box."

**"Watching them interact with "patients" and advising on rapport. Technique is easily learned but "ease" and "skills" with regards to kindness, empathy and communication skills should be "practiced" and used here - just as or more important!"**

"My routine work becomes fascinating to someone."

**"Being part of a learner's learning experience, sharing the skills I learned through the same process they are currently going through. Paying it forward to the next generation of physicians. Being a physician also means you get to teach, if you want."**

"Sharing stories about patients to interested students"



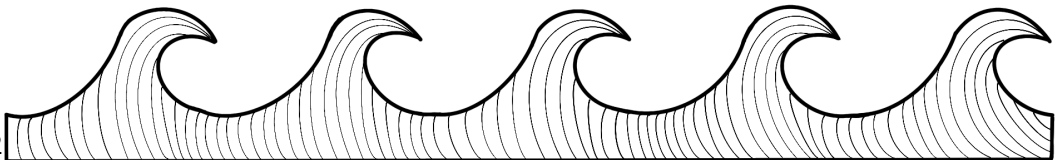
*Our clinical skills instructors truly enjoy teaching.  
Here's what they had to say:*

"While I only get to teach a limited number of sessions - I get to see the evolution of interview skills. That is a critical piece of medicine - asking the right questions to get the right story. Helping students learn how to do that really helps set them on the right course."

**"The "ah ha!" moments students have when they can elicit a finding or put it all together to understand a concept as it applies to a real person. I love watching students learn in real time."**

"Imparting tips I have learned over the years (mostly history-taking)."

**"I love watching those moments when students really grasp a new concept or skill for the first time. They are so (justifiably) proud of their achievements, and it is an honour to facilitate that process."**



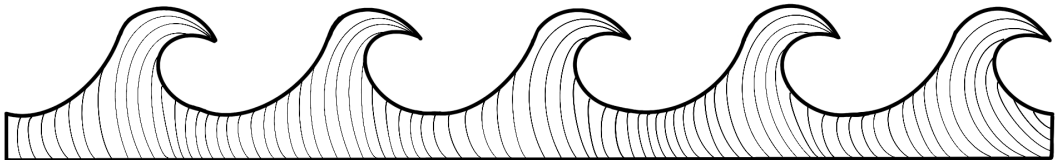
*Our clinical skills instructors truly enjoy teaching.  
Here's what they had to say:*

"To help them understand why they are being taught to learn these skills. Especially helping them understand the most effective way to take a history and how to think while taking the history."

**"Meeting the learners. Feeling a sense of satisfaction when I feel I have taught them something new. Seeing them "get it" and feel excited when they successfully implement a technique."**

"Teaching them how to hone their skills to elicit signs on the exam."

**"I enjoy giving students the opportunity to practice talking to patient with no pressure and then giving them feedback."**



# *Journaling Prompts*

**What have I done that I'm proud of?**

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**What things do I do that make my life easier?**

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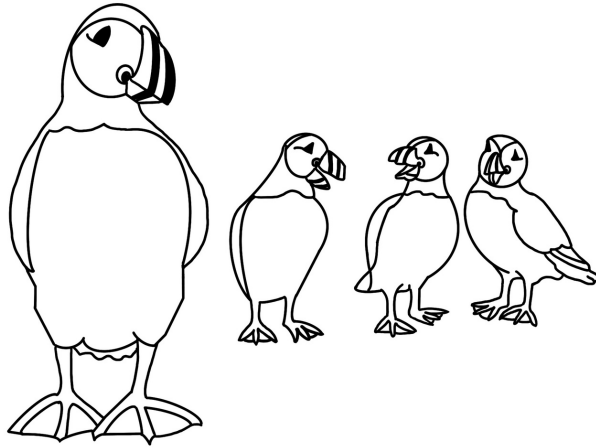
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**What's changed in the past year which I'm grateful for?**

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## *Advice from Residents*

After graduating from medical school with a degree you reach your residency. You are officially a doctor! They have a unique perspective because they've recently been medical students and are now fine tuning their skills to become exceptional physicians.

We asked our residents to share some advice by answering the following questions:

- What advice would you give to first year medical students?
- What residency program are you completing? How did you decide which specialty was right for you? When did you know?

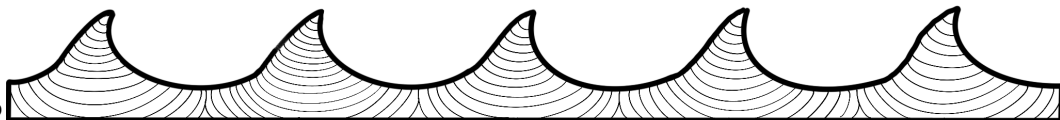
# *What advice would you give to first year medical students?*

"Try to maintain friendships and family connections outside of medical school. Remember, these people were there for you and supported you before you got into medical school!"

**"There is nothing wrong with failing or making mistakes. Make sure to get back up and try again right away!!"**

"The days are long but the years are short. These will be four of the best years of your lives. You will make lifelong friends and you will make memories you won't forget. School is important, but don't forget to take the time to take in the whole medical school experience. You won't regret it."

**"Keep an open mind about what speciality you may pursue. Take advantage of the shadowing program to see multiple specialities and chat with residents about their experiences."**





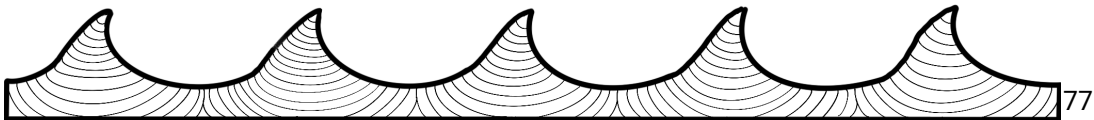
# *What advice would you give to first year medical students?*

"Every lecture matters."

**"Don't feel bad if you don't know things, we're all on that learning curve somewhere."**

"Be open to learning and exploring different interests! Don't feel the need to commit to a speciality from the beginning."

**"Don't sweat the small stuff. Think bigger picture and the social determinants of health, sometimes much more important than the medical aspects. Keep an open mind re: specialties and have a back-up plan. Find mentors and friends in the years above you or a resident who can give you advice. Save all of your notes/slides and organize them. You need to learn the stuff for your job, not just to memorize things for a test. Pick placements in rural areas, you really do get a better experience because there are fewer learners so you get more hands-on work and procedures."**

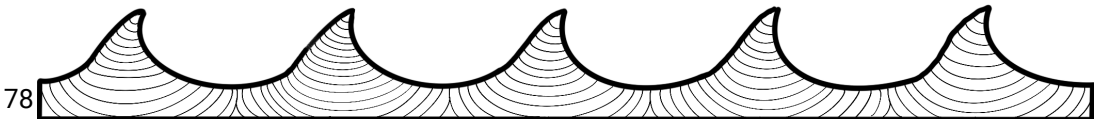


# *What advice would you give to first year medical students?*

"Read human physiology over and over every chance you get. This will help you understand the basis and treatment of disease long after the brief didactic portion of your training is over."

**"Med school seems daunting and everyone deals with it differently. Some people plan every detail of the next 4 years and some take it day by day. Either is great, don't worry if others seem way more prepared or on the ball than you. You're doing great!"**

"Remember to enjoy it along the way! Medical school is difficult; countless exams and rotations and sometimes it seems endless. But it is one of the most rewarding career paths you can choose. The friends you meet in med school will be with you through thick and thin - lean on them, learn from them and spend time outside of school with them!"



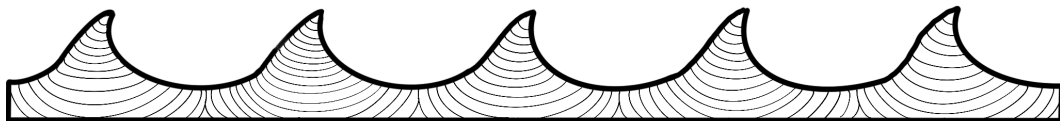
# *What advice would you give to first year medical students?*

"As hard as it may be, try not to compare yourself to others and instead focus that energy on paving your own path. Find what study strategies work for you early on, as what worked for you previously might not work for the high volume block exams."

**"Find out what study method worked best for you in undergrad and try your best to keep that method! There is going to be a ton of information thrown at you at first. Stay organized early, pay attention in lectures, but also remember to have fun! Life isn't all about just medicine."**

"Don't let it consume your life - continue to enjoy your activities outside of school as well!"

**"Spend time with people outside of medical school. Make time for exercise."**



*What residency program are you completing? How did you decide which specialty was right for you? When did you know?*

"Obstetrics and Gynecology. This interest solidified in my third year after enjoying the combination of surgery and clinics and deliveries. Not wanting to give up surgeries was a major player in my decision making process."

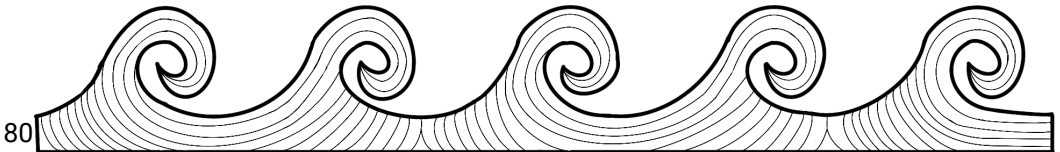
**"Rural family medicine. I love it because you can do anything with family medicine, especially rural. That, and the continuity of care and being able to help fill a huge gap in our healthcare system are all so fulfilling."**

"Family medicine. I knew family medicine was right for me because I enjoyed every specialty I was exposed to and because I love talking to a diverse set of people."

**"Psych. I was lucky; I knew it was for me after about two days of my core psych rotation."**

"Anesthesia - Academic interest, work life balance."

**"Cardiac surgery. I didn't know until the 2nd year of my general surgery residency."**

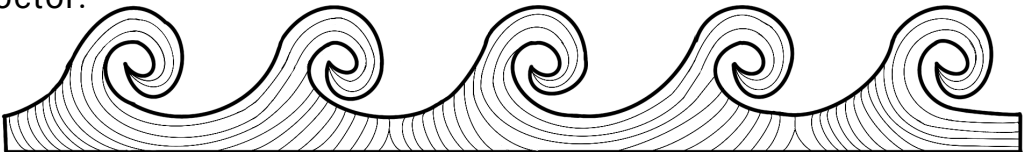


*What residency program are you completing? How did you decide which specialty was right for you? When did you know?*

"Anatomical Pathology. I went through most of medical school planning to do family medicine, but did some pathology electives at the beginning of my 4th year to see if I had any interest in it (I had also shadowed pathology in first/second year)."

**"I am an orthopedics resident. I did not realize I wanted to do ortho until the end of third year. Choosing a specialty is very difficult and everybody; residents and staff alike, knows that. I chose orthopedics because I looked forward to going in every day of my rotation and had fun at work!"**

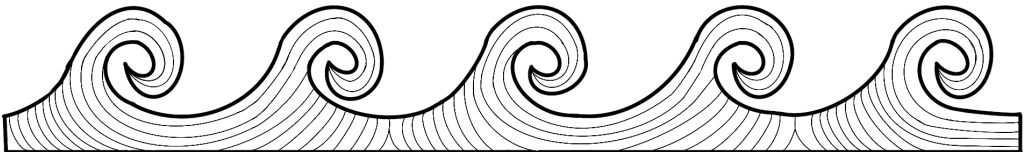
"Family medicine. I don't know even now what specialty is right for me. I loved physiology but didn't make it into anesthesia. FM was my second choice, and I do have a genuine personal connection with the field of FM regardless of my interest in anesthesia. FM is so broad, and one part of residency is further exploring my interests, so I feel I will ultimately find my niche as a family doctor."

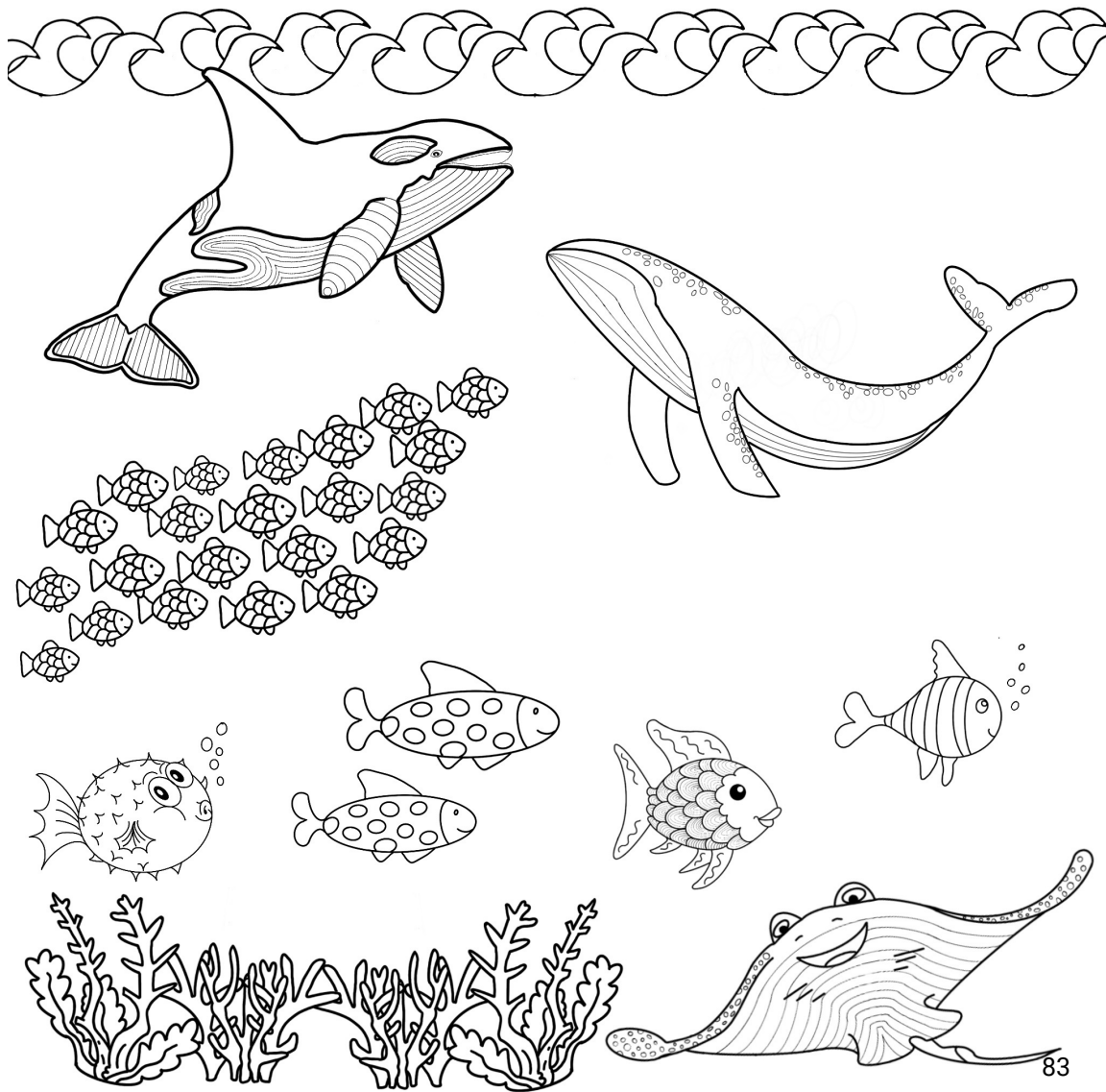


*What residency program are you completing? How did you decide which specialty was right for you? When did you know?*

**"ObsGyne: decided in core clerkship in third year! It's okay if you don't know what you want to do right away, opinions often change when you get to clerkship. I chose the specialty that I enjoyed the most at 3am after a sleepless night on call! Because it's at these times you'll find out what you really don't like and what you really do!"**

"Psychiatry. I realized that Psychiatry was right for me when I did a rural selective in the discipline during 4th year clerkship and recognized that I actually enjoyed getting up to go to work (on many rotations I did not), I had enough spare time to maintain some of my old hobbies and friendships, and feedback from my preceptors informed me I had a knack for the specialty. In short, I realized one day I could do this for the rest of my life, and still maintain my own mental health."







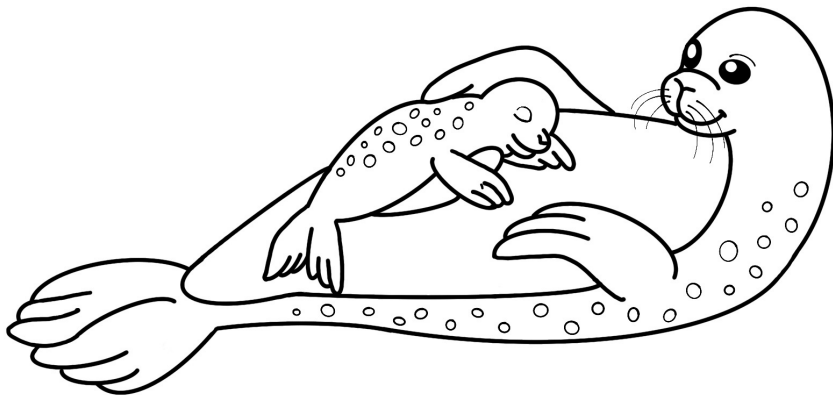
# Mentorship Program

The Faculty of Medicine has a mentorship program where medical students can connect with a faculty mentor to help support them through their medical studies.

- Mentors can provide support to students in both their personal and professional lives.
- Mentors can share their experience in a variety of areas such as:
  - Professionalism, work-life balance, research, problem solving, networking, leadership, career planning, skill development, time management and clinical care
- Mentorship is valuable for the mentor and the mentee.
- Students who are looking for a mentor can search for one using the faculty mentorship database on the mentorship website.







## *Advice from Mentors*

The mentorship program is a great opportunity to connect with physicians with similar interests or areas you'd like to learn more about. I'm grateful to have a mentor to learn more about my specialty of interest and leadership opportunities.

We asked our magnificent mentors about the mentorship program and here's what they had to say:

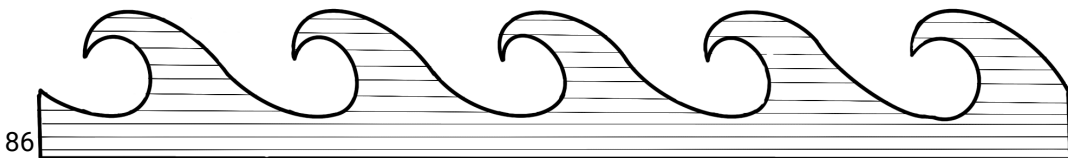
- Why should students get involved in the mentorship program?
- Why do you participate as a mentor in the mentorship program?

# *Why should students get involved in the mentorship program?*

"If you can identify a mentor who has similar priorities to you, they can be a very valuable resource! You don't need to have only one mentor. In fact, you should have more than one mentor! One person might be a good career mentor, and another might be a good mentor for maintaining your personal life."

**"To seek guidance from someone who has survived the med school roller coaster and is now on the other side of the tunnel with a different perspective."**

"I was mentored and it was invaluable. I've maintained a strong and supportive relationship with my former mentor for over 20 years since graduation. The relationship dynamic has changed but we both benefit from this bond."

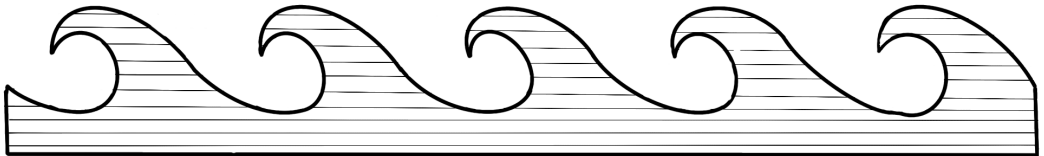


# *Why should students get involved in the mentorship program?*

"Normalization of the stresses and life changes of a career in medicine. Support. A view on what life can look like when you are done. Passing on the hard learned lessons."

**"It is an opportunity to see what the future looks like. You have someone at your disposal who can answer the questions that most people in your life are unable to. Take advantage of that!"**

"It is important to hear from others who have gone before you, you can learn from their mistakes and their wisdom that only comes from experience. You also get to understand that you are not alone in your experience or in your distress, it makes the journey less lonely and a bit more hopeful."



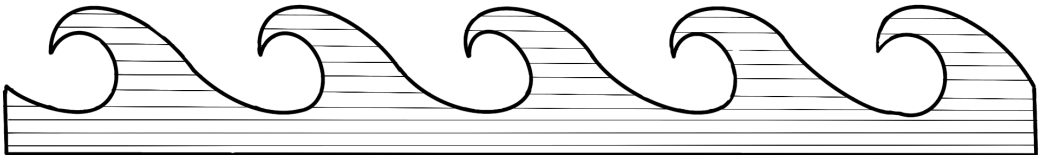
# *Why do you participate as a mentor in the mentorship program?*

"I enjoy meeting young, bright, eager people, and trying to help them as they embark on this lifelong journey."

**"I had a few mentors going through medical school and residency and they helped me in ways they didn't even know. I want to offer whatever help I can in this busy stage of your education where experiences can be so formative."**

"Satisfaction in helping students grow and find their path for their future career."

**"Medical training is hard. Most of our supports before medical school have no idea the different stressors you face and the emotional weight of what you see in clerkship. Having a safe place to unload is crucial for survival."**



# *Why do you participate as a mentor in the mentorship program?*

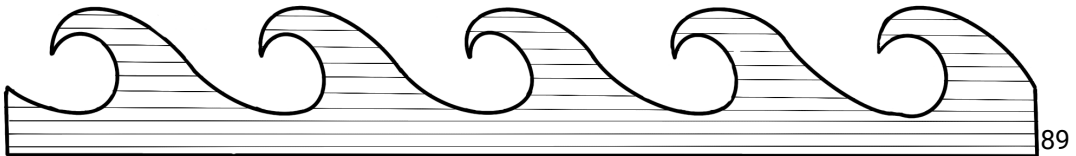
"I participate as I deprived myself of therapeutic leisure during my time in medical school and residency, and I want to ensure that learners who are coming after me do not repeat my mistakes! It takes a toll on your health."

**"The opportunity to help trainees at an early stage, particularly with identifying goals and priorities."**

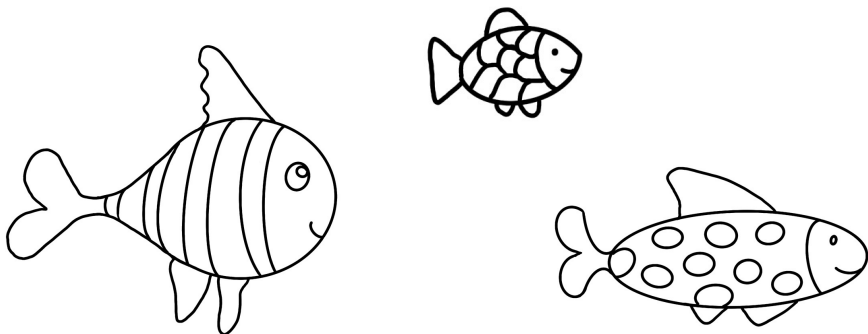
"I try to give back to students and MUN. Also enjoy working with young people - love their enthusiasm - keeps me from getting too cynical!"

**"I want to be the mentor that I needed."**

"It is wonderful to be able to help and guide medical students in any way possible. There is value in passing on the knowledge we have spent years learning. And hopefully allowing them to avoid some of the mistakes we have made along the way."



Med school isn't just about studying and exams. You'll soon see that we have a lot of fun too.



*What are you looking forward to about med school?*

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*What has been your favourite part or most memorable moment about med school so far?*

"The first year dance at Monte Carlo."

**"Study group sushi before block exams."**

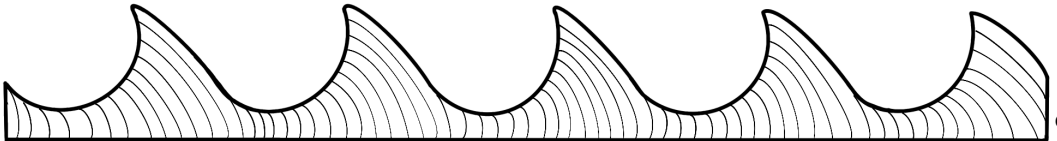
"Meeting the most wonderful group of friends who share this experience with you."

**"Getting to first assist in the OR as a first year med student."**

"The fun times I have had with my classmates :)"

**"Getting to know so many incredibly amazing students and socializing with them."**

"Probably just taking time to hike and explore with classmates in the midst of the ebbs and flows of the program. It's busy, but there are times of rest and it's empowering to spend the highs and lows with your classmates."



*What has been your favourite part or most memorable moment about med school so far?*

"O-Week! Enjoy it while it lasts! I'd do anything to feel the level of happiness and excitement that I had during that week again. Then it was pretty brutal until clerkship LOL!!!! But clerkship is SO good so keep on grinding - it gets better!"

**"Shadowing honestly. Had a great experience shadowing infectious disease and radiology."**

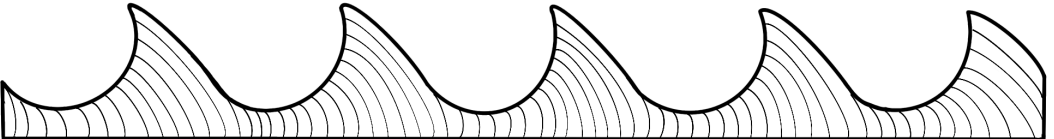
"Classmates! And my amazing senior, who barely knew me and helped me move across the country!"

**"Friends that became family!"**

"Orientation week in first and second year."

**"Too many wonderful people and experiences to name just one!"**

"Black Bag Placement."





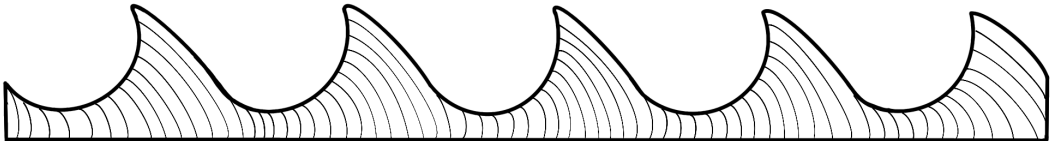
*What has been your favourite part or most memorable moment about med school so far?*

"Most memorable is fainting at the sight of blood on an ER shadowing experience. It happens to everyone eventually!"

**"Being in class with all of your peers - enjoy it! Orientation week, the Gander Golf Trip, And Marble Mountain Ski trip are also some of the best times of the year!"**

"The black bag visit in second year. It allows you to take everything you've learned in the first two years and get started with applying it for the first time! It's very rewarding when you can help a patient based on the information you've worked so hard to learn."

**"The people! Your fellow students and the staff are all awesome people. I can guarantee it."**



# *Study Space Suggestions:*

**"Coffee Matters (Military Rd) and Jumping Bean (Atlantic Place)."**

"Anywhere with coffee and cookies."

**"Element (Coffee Bar and Lounge.) Coffee and alcohol and open until midnight. Also the kindest staff!"**

"Health Science Library (the security guards are so nice)."

**"Starbucks Galway, Hebron Way, Kenmount."**

"Study rooms at school."

**"Terre Cafe (Alt Hotel)."**

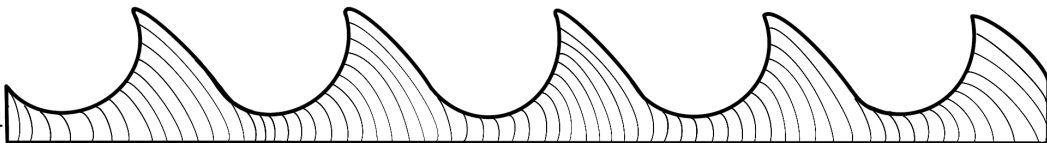
"Atlantic Place and the Battery Cafe have a great view!"

**"MUN Med study rooms. The Rooms Cafe is also nice!"**

"Library - need somewhere to get away from distractions."

**"Bannerman Brewery - coffee and beer - both ends of the spectrum."**

"Grounds Cafe in Portugal Cove is my favourite place ever and I can't recommend it enough."



# *Suggestions for places to get active:*

## **"Long Pond."**

"Walk - Bowring Park, Run - Octagon Pond (Paradise), Hike - Gros Morne."

## **"Cobbler's Path East Coast Trail (ECT)."**

"T'Railway - Seal Cove to downtown St. John's."

## **"Chance Cove."**

"Quidi Vidi."

## **"Sugar Loaf (ECT)."**

"The Spout is a showstopper, but best as an overnight."

## **"Rennies River Trail."**

"Virginia River Trail."

## **"Father Troy (ECT)."**

"South Brook Trail."

## **"Maddox Cove ECT."**

"White Hills is a nice spot with a great view."

## **"Signal Hill."**

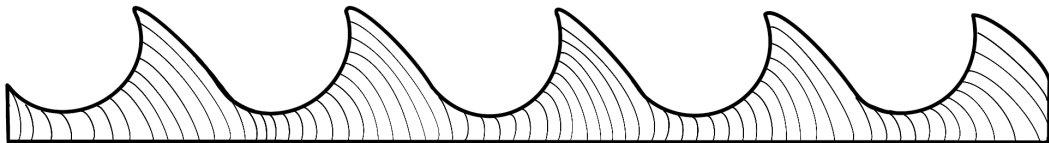
"Mickeleen's Path in Bay Bulls (ECT)."

## **"Fort Amherst to Cape Spear."**

"Pippy Park and Three Pond Barrens."

## **"Manuel's River Walking Trails in CBS."**

"Topsail Pond area in Paradise."





# Mindfulness Resources

## Self-Compassion Resources:

- Kristin Neff - <https://self-compassion.org>
- Tara Brach - <https://www.tarabrach.com/>
- Sharon Salzberg - <https://www.sharonsalzberg.com/>

## Beginner Mindfulness Resources:

- Mindful - <https://www.mindful.org/>
- Women in Mindfulness - <https://www.mindful.org/10-powerful-women-of-the-mindfulness-movement/>
- The Free Mindfulness Project - <http://www.freemindfulness.org>
- Jon Kabat Zinn App - <https://mindfulnessapps.com/>
- The Mindful Medical Learner - <https://themindfulmedicallearner.ca/>

## Learner Well-being and Success Office:

- Weekly meditations
- Mindfulness program
- Contact [LWSwellbeing@mun.ca](mailto:LWSwellbeing@mun.ca)



# *Wave Over Wave*

Written and Illustrated by Melissa Tobin with many contribution's from students, residents, instructors, preceptors, research supervisors and faculty from Memorial University of Newfoundland.

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