Reflection prompts for after a clinical shift, *a lab day, a volunteering morning.*

Pick one. Write two or three honest sentences the same day. Do not aim to write well, aim to be specific. In application season these notes become your AMCAS descriptions, your most meaningful essays and your secondaries.

AFTER A CLINICAL OR VOLUNTEER SHIFT

01 What was the most memorable moment today, in one or two sentences?

02 What did I do that I had not done before?

03 What surprised me about how care actually works here?

01 Was there a moment I felt out of my depth? What did I do?

02 What did a patient, family member or team member say that stuck with me?

03 What did today show me about the kind of physician I want to be, or do not want to be?

AFTER RESEARCH OR LAB WORK

01 What problem did I work on today, and what is still unresolved?

02 What did I get wrong, and what did I learn from it?

03 How does today's work fit into the larger question the lab is asking?

AFTER LEADERSHIP, TEACHING OR SERVICE

01 What decision did I make today, and why?

02 Who did I help, and how do I know it made a difference?

ONCE A MONTH

01 What pattern do I see across my last few reflections?

Two minutes, same day

Details fade in a week. The specific exchange that makes an entry memorable is the first thing you forget.

No patient details

Never write names, dates of birth or anything identifying. Describe the situation, not the person.

Hours next to notes

Keep the hours for the activity and the dated note together. A total without a story is just a number.

Prefolio is a free iPhone app for exactly this: log the activity, add the reflection, see the timeline. prefolioapp.com

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