

Dear 1st Year,

I hope this letter finds you alive and kicking. I remember at your stage being really nervous about measuring up to my classmates, finding friends, and learning to be a doctor. I can say that all these things have happened; I've done well in school, made some great friends, and learned some stuff about doctoring. I hoped that at this stage I would feel super confident, but the truth is that I'm really nervous about residency, in spite of all that I've accomplished. I think that may be a more or less permanent fixture of life in medicine. There is always going to be another test or challenging patient. At the start of med school I promised myself that I would do my best, and now I'm reexamining that promise as I look toward residency. It worked for me, and so my only piece of advice for you is to trust the process. It probably won't be perfect, and you'll have plenty of rough days and uncertainty. Nevertheless, you'll become a doctor, and the best thing you can do is think about how you can take care of patients as best as possible. The rest will fall into place. Best of luck!

Salv

Dear young MI,

Let me first introduce myself - My name is Kendall. I'm going to be a pediatrician and I'm hoping to find myself staying in the Midwest for residency. It's been almost 4 years since I've been in your position but ~~it~~ it feels like just a month ago. When I was an MI, I had no clue what I wanted to do or what I wanted to build my career on. Almost 4 years later, I now know (and applied to) pediatrics is my specialty. However, there are still so many unknowns, decisions to be made, worries to worry, and uncertainty to ponder over. That is life. Whether in medicine or not. So, my best advice - swim fiercely through that uncertainty. Maybe float sometimes. The water may get icy at times. But you have the ability, the skills, and the dreams to stay afloat. If a kayaker paddles by, hitch a ride. If you need to rest on a dock for the night, please do. But know, each cove has its highlights, you just need to uncover the one for you. Find joy in the beauty of the surroundings, stare at the stars, and befriend the fish around you. You will find your cove.

♡ Kendall

DEAR MI:

MED SCHOOL WILL BE A TIME OF GREAT UNCERTAINTY. THERE WILL BE MORE THINGS OUT OF YOUR CONTROL THAN YOU WOULD LIKE. LEARNING TO COPE WITH THIS ASPECT OF YOUR JOURNEY IS WHAT I BELIEVE WILL BE THE STRONGEST PREDICTOR OF YOUR WELL-BEING. I AM JUST SOME GUY IN HIS 20S WHO IS STILL ON HIS WAY SO I CAN'T SAY WHAT WILL WORK FOR EVERYONE. HOWEVER, OVER THE LAST 4 YEARS I FOUND WHAT HELPED ME FEEL MOST STABLE DURING UNCERTAINTY WAS FINDING MEANING IN ALL I DO + EXPERIENCE. TO FIND THAT MEANING I WOULD REFLECT ON YOUR VALUES. THE ONES THAT ARE CORE TO YOU + NOT WHAT HAS BEEN CONDITIONED INTO YOU. THEN HAVE YOUR ACTIONS ALIGN WITH THOSE VALUES. WHEN THOSE ~~ARE~~ ^{WERE} IN CONTRAST, THAT'S WHEN I SUFFERED.

-SAHIL

Letter to an M1,

Congratulations! You have made it to medical school! I can still remember the excitement that I felt walking the hallways of MERF during orientation week and the subsequent days of med school. There was a sense in my mind that I was finally getting to do what I had dreamed of for so long and had an endless list of exciting possibilities ahead of me. I suspect you can relate to this feeling. My biggest advice is to try your best to hold onto this feeling as you progress through med school. The trials & tribulations you are about to face may at times cause you to lose sight of it. You may wonder "What am I doing here? Is this what its going to be like? Have I made a mistake?" Trust that there is a reason for you to be here that is profound & meaningful & exciting even if its not obvious to you in the moment. Good luck!

-Ashray

Dear 1st yr,

I am a current 4th yr, with rank lists to FM submitted & playing the waiting game. I entered med school with a 3.94 gpa, a 516 MCAT, feeling high & mighty about myself. Wow, no idea med school would be so hard. Although I never actually failed any exams/classes (thank god), I was always worried about it & my grades were below average. If this describes you know you're not alone, & if it doesn't you can stop reading lol.

I eventually learned to be happy with my best, after all I ~~worked~~ ^{worked} so hard I deserve some credit. I applied to FM not because I had to but because I loved it. You don't have to be top of the class to be a great doctor, as long as you're trying your best. Prioritize being happy, whether that means not studying tomorrow or not.

I'm rooting for you, I wish you all the best

- 4th yr

Dear MI,

You're currently in the thick of it, but you're almost done with your first year of medical school! Take the time to slow down and reflect and be proud of yourself along the way! I know it's hard, and right now you can't see past the exam you have every Friday, but you've got this! The best parts of medical school are still ahead. I know it feels slow right now, but soon you'll be an M4 like me, about to match, and you won't believe how fast the time went. Remember to take time for yourself - it's so important. The studying will always be there. Spend time every day or every week doing things you enjoy and talking to those who love you. Yes, you're a medical student, but you're a human first. Don't lose sight of what's important to you and who you are at your core. It is such an honor and a privilege to be able to practice medicine - never forget that. You're smart. You matter. You belong. Don't ever let a test or a person make you feel otherwise. You've got this! I know it's hard, but it's so worth it!

Sincerely,



An M4 ☺

Dear First year,



welcome to the journey. So you think MERF is yours now? well don't forget that before you it was mine, and before that it was numerous others' play to be, study, exist, live in. I'm glad you enjoy it. A sense of belonging is one of the greatest achievements you can have. I hope you acknowledge how cool it is that you are in medical school and checked all the boxes to be allowed to learn a really intense and meaningful profession. Do NOT ever think that you are better than anyone else because you are here. You followed a certain path that got you here and others have followed other paths, even if they didn't mean to. No path is better than another. I hope you never think you are above other people because of your profession, accomplishments, status, etc. The best part of medicine is getting to be part of other people's lives, in a way that can be make-or-break. I hope the power of that shines through in the ways you interact with all people. We are taught how to be with patients but don't forget the hundreds of other people we interact with everyday. Your empathy will be your most valuable tool, and the ever increasing medical knowledge just allows you to use that empathy in ways that benefit your patients. Over these next few years, be happy, have hobbies, form relationships, and continue to be a human being who engages with the world. School is about learning but it's also about creating a better you. Use your time wisely.

▲ Dear M1,

First of all, congrats on being here! I know the work you must have put in to get to this place. Although it may seem daunting, continue to remember your worth as you go through ~~school~~ school and why you both chose & were chosen for this path.

Medical School may be one of the hardest endeavors you endure. Yes, there is a lot of content, and the work is challenging, but the real difficulty is the emotional impact of all you will feel, and the tremendous personal growth you will endure. You will question the medical field as a whole, yourself, your worth & wonder if you made the right choice doing this. I believe, if you had the wherewithal to make it here that you do. I highly recommend taking the time & energy to build a community around yourself to help you through these difficult times. Whether that is family, friends, people outside of medicine or your fellow students, having a support network around you to remind you of your why and your values will be incredibly helpful on those dark days. I know that I have met some of my lifetime support people while here & will continue to rely on them as I go through my next chapter. My final piece of advice is to become comfortable asking for help one day, you will be lost (whether it's on a difficult topic, in your personal life, or in the hospital) and need to rely on others. We are taught to be self-sufficient & learn how to problem solve on our own, but in reality you cannot do everything in isolation. People will show up for you in ways you have never imagined if you have the vulnerability to show your imperfections & ask for the support of those around you. Good luck, enjoy your time, it goes quick. Don't lose that sense of awe & excitement you had on your first day.

Yours, an M1

Dear M1

My name is Jack, and I am an M4 going into internal medicine who just submitted his rank list. when I was in your shoes it was almost incomprehensible to think about.

For me, I was just worried about passing each test. However, you do learn a lot, and get ready for the next steps. Med school was definitely hard, but it is such a rewarding experience.

(and you get a ton of time off 4th year). I am excited for you and the experiences you'll have. Hopefully your residency rotation isn't too terrible.

Best,
Jack

DEAR FIRST YEAR MEDICAL STUDENT,

ALMOST ALL OF YOUR PROFESSORS
IN THE FIRST SEMESTER ARE
GOING TO TELL YOU THAT MEDICAL
SCHOOL IS LIKE DRINKING FROM
A FIRE HOSE. ALTHOUGH THEY MAY
BE RIGHT, DO NOT LET THAT
INTIMIDATE YOU. YOU HAVE MADE
IT THIS FAR AND YOU BELONG
HERE. DO NOT LET MEDICINE
GET IN THE WAY OF DOING
STUFF THAT YOU LOVE. DO NOT
LET MEDICINE GET IN THE WAY
OF SPENDING TIME WITH THE
ONES YOU LOVE. MEDICAL SCHOOL
IS A DAUNTING TASK AND YOU
WILL NEED SUPPORT FROM FRIENDS
AND FAMILY, AS WELL AS SOME SORT

OF OUTLET FOR STRESS RELIEF.
ENJOY THE NEXT FOUR YEARS
OF YOUR LIFE AND TAKE
MANY CHANCES WITH YOUR
LEARNING. I HAVE FAITH
THAT YOU WILL ACHIEVE
GREAT THINGS.

SINCERELY,

AN OLD M4

Dear M1,

I hope that the first year of your medical training is going well. I am positive you have overcome many challenges this year, and for that, I commend you. You will come across many more challenges over the next three years, so I will provide a list of advice which you may find helpful.

1. Ask for help early. You can be like me and break down in the middle of core year, but it would be better to avoid it.
2. Learn every day and keep an open mind. I switched from urology to internal med to radiology. You will find where you belong, but all your previous experience will help you.
3. Don't forget what keeps you grounded. During medical school, having old friends not in med school to fall back on was helpful when times got tough.

Medical school is hard, but it is also a journey filled with many wonderful experiences. Live life to its fullest, and you will get through it just fine.

Sincerely,

An M4

March 6, 2025

Hello,

Welcome to your first year of medical school, from a friendly local M4 who was in your shoes not too long ago (Really! It goes by fast). How are you doing? Is medical school all that you imagined, and more? Is it that, but also the hardest, worst time of your life? I felt that way too. And maybe what I did to get through it will work for you – I told myself two things. One, “I am not dumb, I’m just learning”! And two, that the “me” from last year (or 3-4 years ago) would have *loved* to be where I am now. You’re doing great! And you *will* be great.

Sincerely,

Your friendly local M4

Dear M1,

If you haven't realized it yet, medical school has many highs + lows, but just remember it's not that deep. Everyone, regardless of what they're saying or how they're acting, is struggling. Some are just better fakers... until they aren't. The important thing to focus on is this is a hard 4 years, but it can be much more tolerable, maybe even more fun than I think possible, if you work with your class as a whole. Not just in your friend group, but everyone in your class - this will show you that yes medical school is hard + can suck at times, but you have 150 other people going through the same thing, all of which can help you - even if it's just a listening ear while someone vents. Also, don't bog yourself down with the tests + evaluations ~~as~~, they might seem like life or death right now, but in the end they don't matter. You will become a doctor at the end of the day, but it'll be much easier to do it together rather than alone! + ^{more} enjoyable

- graduating M4

To ML's,

It's not that serious.

Relax.

Do what you can and know when it's time to stop.

You're not going to be the best, and that's ok.

Be true to yourself.

Play the stupid game put in front of you and

Smile.

Failure is a part of learning. Many others fail but will never say it. Know that you're not alone.

Put in effort but don't kill yourself.

Dear M1,

Congrats on getting here! Getting here itself is already a huge accomplishment so pat yourself on the back for that. I'm sure you've figured out by now, med school honestly sucks. But I can say at the end of it that it was all worth it. It's so easy to get caught up in the grades, the

scores, the publications - believe me I get it. But at the end of the day, that is not what is going to get you to that MD. You have to learn to lean on people, to trust your friends, to trust yourself, and to be vulnerable with the ones who love you most. After all, that is what we expect from our patients when they are at their lowest points, but how can they open up to you when you can't do it yourself? That is what is ultimately going to help you succeed in med school - when things get tough, it's the relationships that you form with patients that will get you thru. Not your step 2 score.

stay true to yourself. And also take care of
yourself. You've got this, I promise, and you will
come out of this stronger and more resilient
than you could have imagined. Good luck out
there - I promise you'll be so happy when you

get to the end and can call yourself
a doctor;)

All the best,

Kelsey Blocklinger

Dear M1 Friend,

First off, congrats! You've almost finished your first year of medical school, and that's a huge achievement. The next 3 may seem daunting ~~and~~ like a lifetime, but they will go by impossibly fast. Before you know it you'll be matching into the program of your dreams and becoming a doctor.

Here's some general advice from someone who's been on the same harrowing journey and has come out on the other side feeling happy, excited, and fulfilled:

- Remember that you're human. Taking time for self-care and doing things you enjoy is critical for minimizing burnout. Medical school is stressful, but don't be too hard on yourself.
- It's okay to make mistakes, everybody does. You're here to learn, and that means not always having the right answer right off the bat.
- Hold on to your compassion and empathy. It's easy to become jaded in this line of work, but remaining positive and caring creates a safe, healing environment for the patient, the team, and yourself.
- Support each other. Your fellow medical students are a great resource ~~is~~ and enjoyable for everyone. Supporting and up-lifting each other makes classes and rotations more enjoyable.
- Be present. The best way to learn on rotations is to be present. You don't have to know all the answers. If you show up ready and willing to learn and pay attention, the medical teams will be welcoming and thrilled to teach you.

There are a thousand other things I could say, but these are the key lessons I've learned. It's going to be hard, but you can do it! You've got this!

Sincerely,
Your friendly neighborhood M4

Congratulations on entering medical school! Be proud of yourself and all that you have accomplished so far, you will do many more great things.

Some advice as you go through medical school:

1. There will be days/weeks/months when it feels like a grind. Study, hospital rotations, sleep, then rinse + repeat. ~~During~~ During this time, don't forget why you wanted to be a doctor. Print your personal statement and tape it to the wall, read it when you feel lost/purposeless.
2. Make connections with your cohort, make friends, and keep these friendships. You guys are going through a tough journey together. It's better to ~~have~~ have friends and help each other through (if you need proof, watch/read Lord of the Rings).
3. Be collaborative. Share resources, study advice, dumb acronyms to remember stupid embryology shit.
4. BALANCE! There is life outside of medicine and studying. Your test score will not improve significantly if you fuck around for half a day at a tailgate vs studying, trust me been there, done that. It's important to have fun.
5. Keep a diary/journal of patient experiences and personal reflections. This will be helpful writing your residency application and the interview behavioral questions.

6. Learn how to be resilient. The word "resilient" gets thrown around frequently but I don't think COM teaches us how to be resilient. Some advice on how to get started: don't take everything personally (especially mean comments from attendings), ~~have~~ have good intentions and assume others also have good intentions.

7. Be PRESENT! It's easy to say, "I'll be happier when I start clinicals/residency/attendinghood, etc etc when I start making \$250k etc etc." No — enjoy what you have now, be present throughout the suffering and the highs and lows.

8. Do UWorld and Amboss — especially for Step 2 ethics and the Step 2 200 Questions high yield concepts.

You can do hard things and you will do great things.
All my best,

M4.

To a M1:

Good job on almost making it through your 1st year! I'm sure it was hard—and it'll only get harder. But more fun, too. Remember to rely on your friends, and if you don't have any (I didn't), make some. You'll need their support for the next 3 years, through clinicals, board exams, and residency apps. They'll be there for you through the highs and the many, many lows, and you'll be there for them too. Remember to have empathy for yourself as well as your patients, and prioritize self-care, especially during the moments when you think you have the least time for it. There might be times where you second-guess yourself & consider alternative career paths and that's okay too. But at the end of the day, you're doing the damn thing that's so hard to do, and you should be proud of yourself.

Also, drink more water. ☺ — from a soon-to-be
MD

Dear M1,

Congrats on surviving your first semester (and almost the second) of medical school. Looking back at where you are now, it feels like its been decades since I've been there but also just yesterday. I remember the thrill of starting med school. I'm saddened to say though that much of that thrill had disappeared by February of that first year. The workload grows heavy (and will continue to do so) and I felt that I forgot why I wanted to go to med school in the first place. I want to let you know, that it will get better. Maybe not at first. Maybe you won't notice it getting better at all. But I promise you that you should keep trying. As each month, each rotation goes by, I found more and more meaning. I found ways to improve someone's day (whether ^{it was} a team member or patient). Even if these actions feel small, they can make such an impact on someone's life, someone's hospital course. I advise you try to strive for this even when you don't love the job you're doing. Or love the rotation you're on. Because eventually, you'll find the specialty where enjoying your day and helping people comes so naturally. And while it may seem far away now, you'll be there practicing sooner than you think.

Sincerely,

A happily matched M4

Dear M |

Congrats on getting into med school! You should be proud of all you've accomplished. Here's some advice I wish somebody would've told me when I was in your shoes.

First, the pre-clinical grades don't matter. Just do your best to learn and pass, that's it. Ignore this advice if you're doing something competitive like Derm or Ortho. If that's the case, I wish you the best luck. Otherwise, the grades don't matter, just learn. And don't worry about remembering everything, if it's important you will learn it again like five more times. ~~Don't~~ Don't forget to take care of yourself. Do your hobbies & maintain relaxation steps. Get exercise & sleep. When you get to clinicals, understand that the grading system is complete bullshit. Be nice to your fellow students & help them out. Understand that these grades are almost entirely out of your hands & are completely arbitrary. Don't stress about them, just do your best & you will become a great doctor. People might mistreat you, & if they do then advocate for yourself & your peers by reporting mistreatment. You're a person & you deserve to be treated like one. Also you've things like \$80k/yr to be here. At the end of the day the stress isn't worth it. Sign up for therapy at the counseling center. It's free & it has changed my life for the better. Even if you think you don't need it, trust me, you will be better for it. Trust yourself during this process. You already got here. You can get anywhere you want to be.

Good luck,

Jon Sikora

Dear M1,

First of all, congratulations for starting a new phase of life, one that you have probably been working towards for years. I am an M4 and when I was in your shoes, I remember feeling scared. I had heard so many scary things about losing all your free time ~~becoming a workaholic~~ and hating your life. I wasn't sure if I had what it took to meet new people and try to start a life while keeping up with classes. Knowing what I know now, I can say a few things about that. First, if you are feeling scared or overwhelmed, that is 100% percent normal. I remember asking an older student after my first week if the pace will slow down. He told me, "No. But you get used to it." Despite how scary that sounds, it is true. You will be amazed at how much you will grow over the next 4 years and be able to handle so much. There will be harder times and easier times and trust me - you have what it takes.

The most valuable advice I can give is reflect on what is meaningful to you and actively pursue that. You can spend all your free time studying if you let that happen, so you need to set firm expectations with yourself. For example, I told myself I would never study past 8 pm and (after a 2 semester adjustment period M1) stuck to that. I also made sure to call my parents at least every week, and take time to put into my relationship and friends. ~~At~~ There were many times I stopped studying to do some of my hobbies. I may have not been in the top of my class, but I still got to be myself and that is invaluable. So think about what are the most important priorities for you, and stick to those. Never lose sight of the fact that you are a human and it is OK and healthy to not do school all the time. I also highly recommend the counseling center. This may be the only time in your life that therapy is free and accessible so use it!! The people there are incredible. I wish you the best of luck over the next 4 years - trust me it will absolutely fly by. You have made it this far, you got this!

From, Hannah Sullivan

Hello random M1!

First and foremost, congrats on making it this far! I'm not sure if you're just starting M1 year or already almost done with your first years, but anyways, you should be so proud of all you've accomplished so far. As a (very chill) M4, I'm here to offer some advice + words of encouragement for the rest of your med school time. First, regarding academics, I don't remember much from pre-clinicals, but for clinicals, I think that the amount of effort + interest you show is so much more important than what you know. Show up on time every day with a good + helpful attitude and you'll find it much easier to be liked by the team. Regarding extracurriculs, it's good to start early! Get involved in a club, research, volunteering, etc. now so that you can talk about these longitudinal experiences meaningfully during residency interviews. Regarding boards, you may not know this, but you can take step 2 before step 1! That's what I did (since our dedicated isn't until after core year) so depending on how you feel after core year, that may be a good option for you as well! Finally, take the time in med school to make lifelong friends! These are the people who will help you make it through the tough times so definitely take the time to nurture these relationships! Also, try and foster a collaborative spirit within your class! This is so important in enabling things like sharing resources, asking what residents/attendings give good evals, residency questions, etc. Good luck, and I know you will do great! - Random M4

To M1's;

FROM M4

Sleep. Take naps. Guard your sleep cycle. Don't pull all nighters. Yes, it works, but there are too many exams, assignments, presentations to make this sustainable.

START EARLY. START EARLY. START EARLY.

You literally cannot start early enough. Start early on what?

EVERYTHING! START STUDYING FOR STEP EARLY! Your dedicated period is not a time to learn everything, it's a time to review everything you have already learned. I made this mistake. start early.

It's a lot of work. There are no shortcuts. You have to put in the time. If you aren't thinking "this is ridiculous" then you probably aren't putting in enough time. Consistency over time. Start early. stay consistent. Suffering is only the first 3 years and 4th year you ~~can~~ CAN bring your head back above water.

Love your CLASSMATES. IF EVERYONE ISN'T HELPING EACH OTHER, LIFE WILL BE HARDER THAN IT NEEDS TO BE. DON'T COMPETE. THESE ARE YOUR →

TEAMMATES. MEDICINE IS A TEAM SPORT. MAKE YOUR CLASSMATES LOOK GOOD. IF YOU DON'T LOVE YOUR CLASSMATES, THEN YOU NEED TO LEARN HOW TO.

YOU MAY FACE SCARY OBSTACLES, KEEP PUSHING. YOU'RE STRONGER THAN YOU THINK. FAILURE IS INEVITABLE. IF YOU DON'T FAIL, PUSH YOURSELF OUT OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE.

TUTORING IS NOT SHAMEFUL. WHAT'S SHAMEFUL IS NOT GETTING HELP DUE TO YOUR PRIDE AND EGO.


YOUR FUTURE WILL THANK YOU FOR GOING TO TUTORING AND GETTING HELP. EVEN IF YOU'RE THE BEST, #1, MOST GENIUS STUDENT, MORE REPS AND SETS NEVER HURT ANYONE.

FIND MENTORS. ASK ASK ASK ASK ASK ASK ASK ASK. IF YOUR MENTOR IS ANNOYED, FIND A NEW ONE. THEY ARE PROBABLY MAD THEY DIDN'T ASK ASK ASK ASK ASK AND HAD TO FIGURE OUT EVERYTHING THE HARD WAY.


YOU GOT THIS !!!!!

Dear M1,

Please believe in yourself. Remember that comparison is the thief of joy. Remember your "why" and why you chose to pursue the path of medicine. It is easy to get lost in the numbers and grades. It is also easy to lose what makes you human during medical school. I urge you to stay true to yourself, whatever that means. Don't judge yourself if your path looks different from others. This is coming from someone who failed a clerkship and took a leave of absence, and I was able to match and I will be graduating in May. You do not have to be perfect. You do not have to pretend that you have it all together. I promise you, it is okay to make mistakes. It won't feel like it in the moment, but I promise that mistakes will only make you grow more resilient. Remember that you are human, not a robot. There is so much learning and growing that you'll go through these next few years. Welcome these experiences with gratitude and open arms. It is okay to cry, to get angry, or feel defeated. But you can do this - take it day by day, and before you know it you'll be at the finish line. Please continue to do things you enjoy and keep contact with the people you love - keep doing things that make you feel like your best self. And lastly, remember to stay humble and kind. Be open-minded and non-judgmental to those around you - just as you have your own individual experience and story, they do as well. Know that you all are humans having human experiences together. You can do this, I believe in you, and I am so proud of you.

With love,
an M4 

Dear MI -

Hi how's it going? ~~How are you doing?~~ I hope you are doing ok, but if not, just know you aren't alone! Med school can be really really fun and interesting and rewarding, but it is not easy that is for sure. For me it was a roller coaster  with lots of ups and downs. And truthfully, nothing I say can actually make it ~~so~~ much easier - it is what it is and you just have to do certain things. BUT - I can say some things I have learned along the way. First - just do the best you can, because that is seriously all you can do. You might fail something or you might ace something, but at the end of the day ~~if~~ if you do the best you can, then you did what you could. Also, help others around you, because they will help you back. And I can tell you, med school will be either easier or more enjoyable when you have help. And finally, ~~if~~ everything will be okay. Seriously, what's meant to be will be, so remember that when you are down. I personally have failed many times (tests but also a lot more), I have cried a lot, I have wondered what I'm doing, I have looked stupid a million times in front of peers, doctors, nurses, etc. Remember that all these things help you learn and grow, even if it can feel like punishment at times. Try to remember why you

you wanted to be here, and thime of
something you are grateful of each day when things
get tough. If you want to be a doctor, you
can be one, and the time it takes to get there will
actually fly by. Also, things are always scary.
I remember looking at the M4's when I was an M1
thinking they had it all together, they made it
through, they know so much. I can tell you as
an M4 now, its not true. Things are hard at
all stages, so do your best, enjoy the journey,
help those around you, and everything will be
okay!!

Sincerely,

An M4 that is busy 😊

Dear M1,

The next 4 years may harden you, make you lose sight of why you chose this path, and make you wish you never did. You are here, now, though. Your mind may be consumed with calculating your final grades to honors points to see if you'll be competitive enough to get the specialty you want in the place you want. Let me tell you, it doesn't matter that much. It doesn't matter more than going home to visit your family or asking your crush out on a date. Find your people (they're here) and get through your exams together. Take time to give love to yourself and others. The rest will fall into place. What really matters about the work we do will come soon. Remember that you have something to learn from every patient you meet. This is the last time you ~~may~~ may have the time, energy, or opportunity to sit a little longer with your patients and help them feel seen. You might be the only one who cares enough to make sure they get access to the resources they need or believes that their pain is real. The system will try to take from you - but you get to decide whether it takes away your compassion, your patience, and your love for your patients. Be kind to yourself and lean on your community so that you have enough left to give to your patients - because the work you do will never be enough if you don't find meaning in it. Stay humble. Be extraordinary.

✓ an M4

M1,

I Hope your 1st year's going well! I'm trying to think if I can give any helpful advice or words of encouragement... I matched at my #1 program in my favorite specialty (pathology) this month.

Send me an email if you need anything: ~~ccaron~~ ccaron.mcloneghey@gmail.com

... I guess here are my thoughts:

- During Preclinical rotations —

- Find out what Anki is. Get together w/ other students who use it so you can see what it's like & see if it'll work for your study style

- ~~Remember~~ Some students just skipped all lectures & did the corresponding decks in AnKing. That's an option too. I wish I'd looked into this in my 1st semester.

- Clinical rotations (starts half-way thro M2 year) —

- I cried & wanted to quit^{med school} the first week of clinicals (first week of Obgyn/Surg). If this happens, know you're not alone.

- Be nice & collaborative with your classmates. Competition is dumb.

Best,

M4