

Introduction

I will try to be brief. But I'd like to keep my message to the following topics: The P1-P3 years, P4 year, graduation, passing boards & becoming a licensed pharmacist.

Pharmacy School (P1, P2, P3)

P1, P2, and P3 years. O' how I do not miss thee. For student pharmacists in this room trying to navigate through these years; please stay firm and grounded in the process. You're literally learning a new language. You're memorizing until 3am in the morning and attempting to live by the motto "C=PharmD". I know that you think you're super busy, and that there's nothing more important in life than "Pharm Sci", but once again stay firm and appreciate the fact that this is truly the start of your journey to being of service to your community by one day becoming a practicing pharmacist.

Pharmacy School (P4)

If you make it, and I hope you make it to your P4 year. Remember a few things. First, take the knowledge that you've accumulated in your first 3 years of school, and try your best to refine those topics that you've memorized into practical ways that will serve your patients.

For example, how can you reasonably take a complex drug like Coumadin and distill that information into usable and practical information that a mother with an 8th grade education can use so that she can effectively take care of her 3 year old child whose been put on a regimen of 1mg and 5mg tablets that need to be alternated based upon INR. Could you teach this mom? **Can you make a complex topic simple?**

There are many other things I can say about fourth year. But the final point, I'll make about this defining year of pharmacy school is that, this year is meant to get you ready to begin to become efficient in a pharmacy, so that you can take care of people. Please don't waste your time or your money in your fourth year. You're literally becoming my peer in less than one year. And if you're really smart, you'll realize that you should utilize your P4 year as one long job application. Remember, that you have 5 weeks to show future employers what you have to offer.

Graduation

Congratulations. You just graduated. And guess what, you still have the stress of preparing for your board exams ahead of you. Be thankful that you crossed one finished line, but understand that you're not finished yet. Prior to graduation, it's time to get real with yourself. Take time to

check your financial scorecard, begin making to do lists and setting goals, create healthy habits like working out regularly or attending church weekly. In a gist, realize that the structure of being a Samford student is done. To make it out here in these mean pharmacy streets you're going to have to begin navigating the waters on your own. And to effectively do this, you must be persistent and consistent with healthy habits and doable goals.

Passing board exams & Becoming a Pharmacist

This is an expensive process. Save at least a few thousand dollars to make sure you have the money to pay for the books you need to study, and the money that you'll need to get licensed in your home state. By the time I graduated, and became a licensed Pharmacist, with my first job at Children's of Alabama I had around \$20 left in my bank account. I'm not telling you this because I want you to have it that hard. I'm telling you this, because I hope my story helps you plan better.

Once you're licensed, just realize that you still have a lot to learn. Find a mentor that will invest in your future. Jeb Mitchell became a mentor and friend to me after I met him on my fourth year rotations. He's helped me create a pharmacy, and we still meet weekly for breakfast almost 10 years later.

Being a pharmacist is a daily grind. Try and do two things to help yourself stay sane. First, try and become a better pharmacist everyday. That could mean you learn something new about the operations of a pharmacy or it could be learning new drug information that is pertinent to your pharmacy practice. Second, realize that you're not just a pharmacist to your community... you're also a counselor, a friend, and a trusted adviser to many many people. Pharmacies have a vital impact on ensuring the health of a community. Pharmacies bring in on average 3 to 5 million dollars annually in revenue, and this revenue is a source for people to have jobs in the community.

Be proud that you're a Pharmacist. Be proud that you will have an impact on thousands of lives!

Questions

- Question 1
- Question 2
- Question 3
- Question 4