

MS: I'm so sad about Mr. P. You're my senior, please help me understand what to do.

Resident: Who is Mr.P?

MS: The patient we just saw.

Resident: Do you mean Bed 12?

MS: Yes. Whenever I think about him, I feel sad.

Resident: Do you mean you are concerned? Did his lab values tank?

MS: No his lab values are fine. I mean I'm sad, I think about him sometimes and I start to cry.

Resident: What do you mean, cry?

MS: I mean like tears.

Resident: That is not very professional. You are only a medical student, so you can still get away with crying, but it won't help you get into a good residency.

MS: But I'm sad. When I'm sad, I cry.

Resident: To be a professional doctor, you must learn to stuff your feelings. Ignore them and they will go away.

MS: Where do they go?

Resident: I do not know.

MS: I am still sad.

Resident: If the lab values for Bed 12 are fine, why are you sad?

MS: It's his social situation.

Resident: I do not understand what you mean. He does not smoke or drink.

MS: I mean his life. He has no friends, no family, and now he is going to lose his leg to diabetes.

Resident: You are correct that he will undergo an AKA tomorrow morning. That should solve his problem.

MS: No it will make his problem worse. He doesn't want to lose his leg. He doesn't want the surgery.

Resident: If he doesn't have the surgery, the attending will be upset. The whole hospitalization will have been wasted. Get a psych consult.

MS: Maybe you could talk to Mr. P.

Resident: Who?

MS: The patient in Bed 12.

Resident: I did talk to him. I told him he would have an AKA tomorrow morning.

MS: Whenever I think about Mr. P, I cry.

Resident: Maybe you need a psych consult yourself.