



Kate Farthing

Knowing Yourself

On meeting Kate you will quickly conclude that she is a person who is passionate about learning. She also is passionate about her role as a preceptor and training pharmacy residents in drug information and drug policy skills. Finally, you will find that Kate is a person of high integrity, possesses vast clinical knowledge, and maximizes that knowledge in drug and practice policy decisions. These are all characteristics that have contributed to her success in clinical practice and drug policy development.

Currently, Kate practices as a clinical pharmacy specialist with responsibilities for quality and patient safety at Legacy Health in Portland, Oregon. Previously, she practiced at Oregon Health and Sciences University Hospitals and Clinics in drug information and drug policy and as the Director of the Drug Information Specialty Residency Program and PGY1 residency program director. She is also active in state and national pharmacy organizations.

Kate received her doctor of pharmacy degree from the University of Kansas and completed a specialty residency in drug information at the University of Kansas Medical Center. In the spirit of life-long learning, she completed the American Society of Health-System Pharmacists Foundation Pharmacy Leadership Academy Program and now serves as one of its faculty members. Among her passions are training and mentoring pharmacy residents and others at the early stages of their career. Thus it is not surprising that her message in the following letter reflects on wisdom gained during her residency training: *Knowing yourself and how you need to prepare are critical to your performance especially in anxiety creating situations.*



Dear Young Pharmacist,

This is a moment in time (well, several moments) that we really do need to explore. The event haunts you, and we have learned much about ourselves moving forward. Through a series of conflicts and scheduling problems, the first Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee meeting of your drug information specialty residency was five months into the program. The agenda was packed, and you worked hard to verify the accuracy of the meeting packets—each of the eight formulary requests were printed on a different color of paper, the reports were ready, and the other residents presenting items were prepared for the meeting. The director of pharmacy and drug information service director were on edge that afternoon; there was too much material to reasonably cover in the 90-minute meeting and two of the items were controversial, with strong-willed physicians in attendance. You presented the third formulary request, a unique antipsychotic drug with solid clinical trials and a relatively clean safety profile, according to the monograph prepared by a student you precepted in the drug information service three months ago. The agenda pace was brisk, and it was your turn to introduce the next formulary request. No words emerged from your mouth, your mind was completely blank as you felt all eyes in the room rise up from the monograph printed on goldenrod-colored paper and stare at you.

There was still nothing from you and the silence became uncomfortable as you felt the heat in the room and your blood pressure rise. The drug information director stated your name as a second introduction, and still your mind was blank. The tension was palpable, and the director prompted, “Tell us about the new antipsychotic drug Dr. Wilson requested.” Luckily, this jarred you back to the present moment, and words began tumbling from your mouth. To this day, you cannot recall what exactly was said by you or about the drug, but the meeting finally ended, and the discussion around the awkward start began (and remains forever etched in your mind).

Being nervous is expected and managing nervousness becomes easier over time with a few strategies that will serve you well—be organized, be on time, and be prepared. Over the next 20 years,