Responsible AI Use for Writing Your Personal Statement

A Quick Guide for Medical Students Applying to Residency or USMLE Applicants.
This checklist was created to ensure your personal statement reflects your voice and experiences. Even when using AI, it is important to ensure your voice is dominant in the writing.

Before You Begin

- Understand that your personal statement reflects your story, not a generic response.
- Do not copy and paste a fully AI-generated statement without revision or reflection.
- Use AI as a support tool, not as a replacement for your writing.

Brainstorming with AI (The Smart Way)

- Use AI to generate topic ideas or help with outlining structure, not to write entire paragraphs.
- Ask prompts like:
  - "What are common traits valued in [specialty]?"
  - "How can I organize this clinical anecdote more clearly?"

Writing and Revising with Integrity

- Add personal details, emotions, and lessons that reflect your lived experience.
- Revise AI-generated text to match your voice, tone, and communication style.
- Focus on real experiences and specific moments—not vague or generalized summaries.
- Remove clichés, exaggerations, or overly polished AI phrasing.

AI Detection Awareness

- Use tools like GPTZero, Turnitin AI Detection, or Originality.ai to check your draft.
- Be aware that many residency programs now use AI detection software.
- Ensure your final version can pass both AI screening and review by a trusted mentor or advisor.

Helpful (but Ethical) Tools

- Grammarly – For grammar and flow corrections
- Hemingway App – For clarity and readability
- ChatGPT or Claude – For brainstorming or rephrasing individual sentences
- Quillbot – For cautious rewording (always revise after)
- ERAS formatting resources – To ensure your final statement meets application standards

Final Review

- Share your draft with a mentor, advisor, or peer for honest feedback.
- Read your statement aloud and ask yourself, "Does this sound like me?"
- Ensure the final version represents your authentic voice, not that of a language model.

Remember: AI can help you shape your ideas, but you are the only one who can shape your story. Use AI wisely, and write with confidence, clarity, and integrity.