

Remember The Professionalism APGAR During Times Of Stress

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What does it mean to be a professional? And how do we maintain our professionalism at a time when things such as stress, burnout, and caregiver fatigue threaten our motivation? As an anesthesiologist, the ability to remain professional in many scenarios is something I constantly strive for. Aside from how it affects my relationships with the interdisciplinary OR team, professionalism is an important attribute given that my job requires patients in vulnerable positions to almost instantly trust me with their lives.

In medical school, we learn early that one of the best ways to remember important information is to attach an acronym or a catchy phrase to complex concepts. One example is the APGAR scoring system for assessment of infant well-being. I learned to remember the constituents of the score by applying descriptive terms to the name: Appearance, Pulse, Grimace, Activity, and Respirations. These same five letters can also be used to remember important components of professionalism.

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