A Structured Approach to Medical Problem-solving

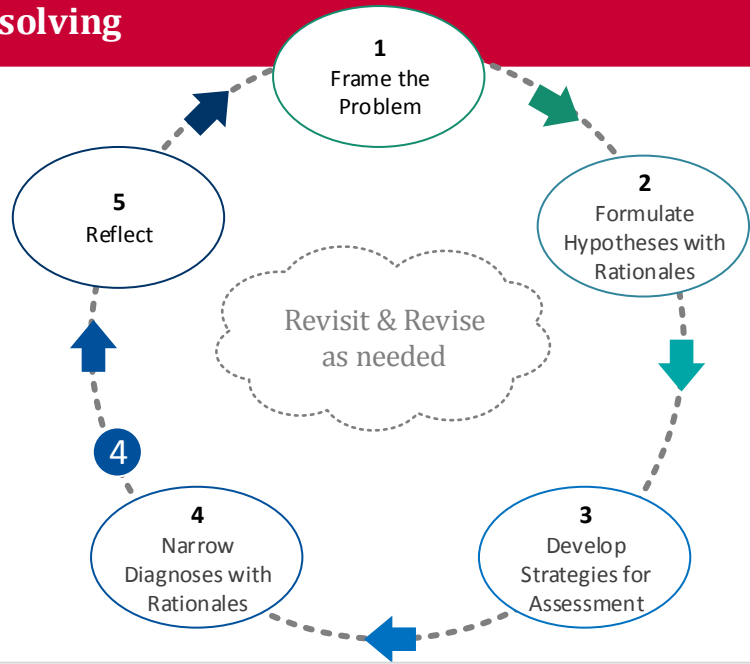
(1) What problems or questions do I need to address for/with this patient?

(2) Given these problems or questions, what are the possible conditions that could be causing the patient's symptoms? Why would I include these or not?

(3) What do I need to know and how should I go about finding out? Are there other things about the patient's situation I should consider?

(4) Given what I know now, how does this new knowledge help me differentiate from among the possible diagnoses? What can I rule in or rule out? Why or why not? What else do I need to know?

(5) Now that I have concluded this encounter or clinical situation, what did I do well and why? What could I have done better? How? What should I do next time to improve my approach to this process or clinical encounters in general?



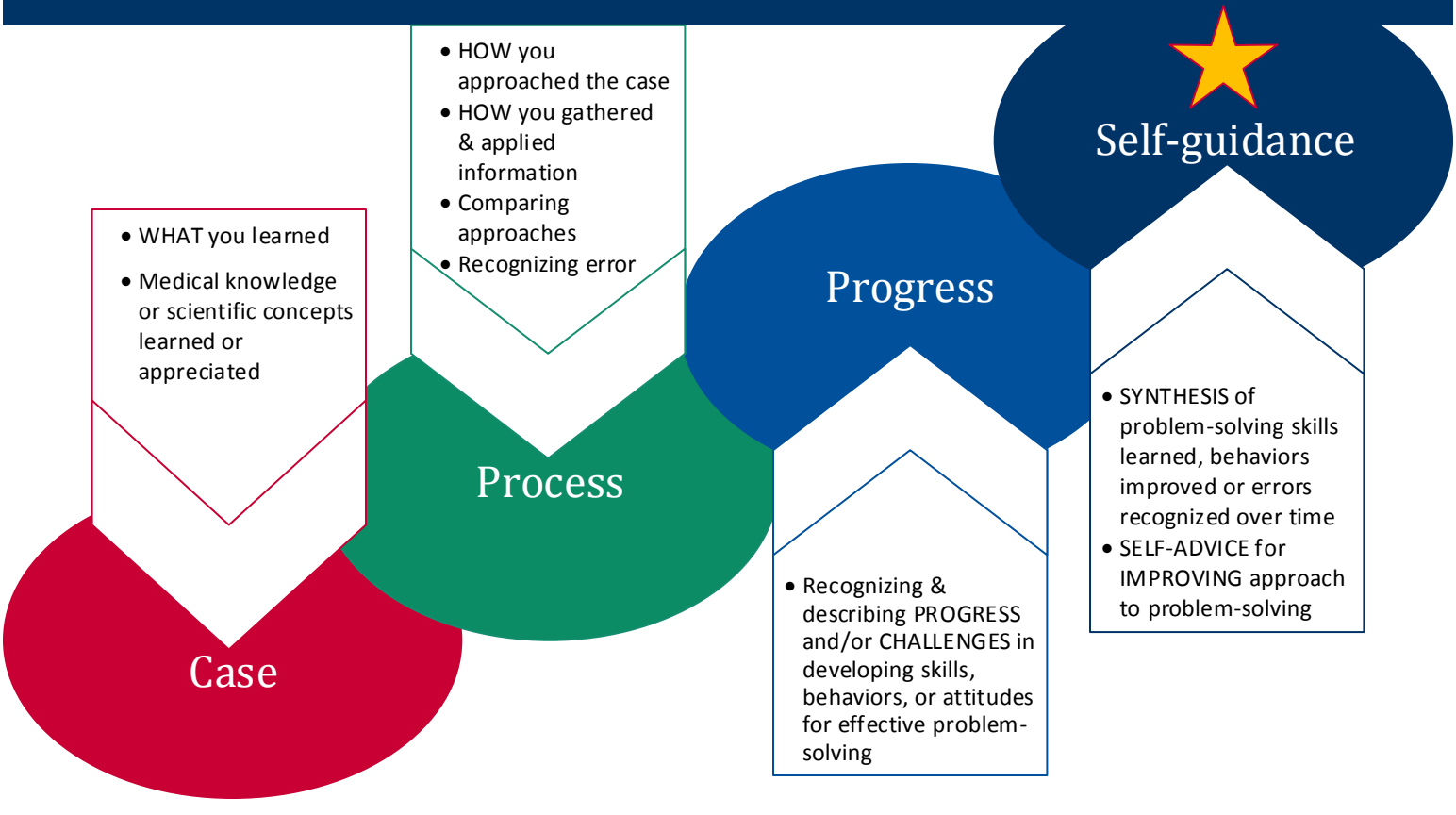
The purpose of this structured approach is to help you:

- Systematically apply reasoning to clinical problems
- Re-evaluate evidence, inferences and assumptions
- Identify and acknowledge cognitive errors
- Develop strategies for avoiding error in future cases.

College of Medicine
Tucson

FID.medicine.arizona.edu
Karen Spear Ellinwood, PhD, JD, Director, Faculty Instructional Development
Office of Medical Student Education, University of Arizona College of Medicine.

Post-case Reflections



Karen Spear Ellinwood, PhD, JD, Director, Faculty Instructional Development | Office of Medical Student Education, University of Arizona College of Medicine