The Developmental Stage Model of Internship
(adapted from Sweitzer & King, 2004, The Successful Internship)

Stage 1: Anticipation
The “What if….? Stage
Common feelings: anxiety, imposter fear, overwhelmed

Tasks:
- Define your goals clearly and specifically
- Consider the skills you need to achieve goals
- Explore your assumptions and expectations and explicitly examine them
- Form relationships with supervisor, clients and colleagues

Stage 2: Disillusionment
The “What’s wrong?” Stage
Common emotions: frustration, anger, confusion, panic, discouragement

Tasks:
- Acknowledge gap between expectations and reality
- Normalize feelings and behaviors
- Acknowledge and clarify specific issues and feelings

Stage 3: Confrontation
“The only way around is through”….address problems directly

Tasks:
- Reassess goals and expectations
- Reassess support systems
- Develop specific strategies

Stage 4: Competence
Common feelings: confidence, self-trust, excitement

Tasks:
- Share concerns openly
- Develop coping strategies

Stage 5: Culmination
Common feelings: pride, sadness, guilt, fear

Tasks:
- Focus on your feelings
- Have a safe place to express them
- Find ways to say good-byes
- Recognize unfinished business
- Reflect on experience