

CAREER RESOURCE

Psychiatry residency interview prep

Common questions applicants encounter on the psychiatry residency interview trail, with brief guidance. Prepare your own honest answers; do not memorize a script.

Educational example only. This is not legal, medical, or compliance advice, and it is not a ready-to-use legal document. Requirements vary by state, payer, and setting. Adapt anything like this to your own situation and have it reviewed by qualified legal and compliance counsel licensed in your jurisdiction before using it in a practice. You are responsible for compliance with all applicable federal and state laws, including HIPAA. shrinkiatry publishes professional commentary and education, not legal or medical advice.

Current as of July 7, 2026. Laws, payer rules, and billing codes change. Confirm the current requirements for your jurisdiction and setting before you rely on anything here.

About you and the field

- Why psychiatry, and why now
- Tell me about yourself, in two minutes
- A patient or experience that shaped you
- A time you handled conflict or a mistake
- Your strengths, and an area you are actively working on

Fit and the future

- Why this program, and what you are looking for in training
- Where do you see your career, including any subspecialty interest
- How do you handle stress and protect your own wellbeing
- What would your co-residents say about you

Clinical and ethical thinking

- Walk me through how you approach a new patient
- A brief ethical scenario, such as confidentiality with limits
- What interests you about the science, from neuroscience to psychotherapy

Your questions for them

- How do residents get support when a case is hard
- How has the program changed recently, and why
- What do graduates go on to do
- Ask what you actually want to know; thoughtful questions land well

Simple guidance

Answer honestly and specifically, use real examples, and connect each answer back to psychiatry. Know your own application. Be kind to everyone you meet that day.

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