Communicating Science and Medicine with Purpose:
A Reflection & Communication Tool

The big picture: Why does this matter?

Imagine you are explaining your work or field to someone with no background in your discipline.
- What problem are you trying to solve? What is at stake if this isn't addressed?
- In one sentence, why does this work matter to the world?

Audiences who care (or could care)

Think about the people your work could impact, directly or indirectly.
- Who might benefit from what you learn (e.g., communities, patients, providers, policymakers)?
- How might your work affect their lives, health, or decisions?
- What would make this audience care about your work?

If your research/specialty/education focus vanished…

Imagine your work didn't exist – no funding, no findings, no follow-up.
- What would the field be missing? What gap would remain?
- What voices, questions, or perspectives might go unheard?

Your 'Why': Personal values behind the work

Think about what motivates you to do this work.
- What excites or energizes you about this work?
- What personal experiences, values, or commitments inform your focus?
- How does what you do reflect what you care most about?

Words matter

The language we use shapes understanding and reflects our values.
- Identify and replace jargon or overly technical terms
- Remove or reframe any language that could be stigmatizing or exclusionary
- Use analogies or metaphors to create connections

Practice the pitch

Bring it all together. In 1–2 sentences, explain what your work is and why it matters.
Imagine you're speaking to a community audience or someone you just met:

"In my work, I ___, which matters because ____."

Bonus - Want feedback?
Share your pitch with a colleague, neighbor, friend, or community partner and ask:
What stands out? What is still unclear? Would you care about this? Why or why not?