

Be it Resolved.....

Striving For A (Realistic) Work/Life Balance in



Presented by:
Brian S. Quinn, Esquire
Education and Outreach Coordinator
Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers of PA, Inc.

What Is A LAP ?

Our mission:

To provide a caring peer assistance program to save the lives and restore the health and professional competence of lawyers and judges, members of their families, and law students who are at risk as a result of alcohol and drug use, gambling, depression or other serious mental illness. We carry out this mission through a combination of confidential helpline services, volunteer support and education.

California Lawyer Assistance Program

- The State Bar's Lawyer Assistance Program (LAP) helps attorneys (active, inactive, or disbarred), State Bar applicants, and law students who are struggling with stress, anxiety, depression, substance use issues, or personal and career concerns.
- We strive to support legal professionals in achieving their optimum level of practice while enhancing public protection and helping to maintain the integrity of the profession.
- The program provides both voluntary confidential services and monitored services as needed.

Call the
Lawyers
Assistance
Program
in YOUR State

Directory of Lawyers Assistance Programs by State

- https://www.americanbar.org/groups/lawyer_assistance/resources/lap_programs_by_state.html

California State Bar Lawyers Assistance Program

- <https://www.calbar.ca.gov/Portals/0/documents/ConsumerInformation/Lawyer-Assistance-Program-Pamphlet.pdf>

TOLL FREE:

877-LAP-4-HELP 877-527-4435 213-765-1190

LAP@calbar.ca.gov www.calbar.ca.gov/LAP

California State Bar Lawyers Assistance Program

LOCATIONS:

- **180 Howard Street San Francisco, CA 94105**
- 865 South Figueroa Street Los Angeles, CA 90017

RESOURCES:

- <https://calawyers.org/health-and-wellness/>
- <https://otherbar.org/> Confidential Peer Support
- https://www.americanbar.org/groups/lawyer_assistance/resources/covid-19--mental-health-resources/

Duty to Report Misconduct

8.3(a) A lawyer shall, without undue delay, inform the State Bar, or a tribunal* with jurisdiction to investigate or act upon such misconduct, when the lawyer knows* of credible evidence that another lawyer has committed a criminal act or has engaged in conduct involving dishonesty, fraud,* deceit, or reckless or intentional misrepresentation or misappropriation of funds or property that raises a substantial* question as to that lawyer's honesty, trustworthiness, or fitness as a lawyer in other respects.

Guidance From the Court

(d) This rule does not require or authorize disclosure of information gained by a lawyer while participating in a substance use or mental health program, or require disclosure of information protected by Business and Professions Code section 6068, subdivision (e) and rules 1.6 and 1.8.2; mediation confidentiality; the lawyer-client privilege; other applicable privileges; or by other rules or laws, including information that is confidential under Business and Professions Code section 6234.

About Confidentiality

CALIFORNIA

We know that it is often difficult to reach out for help during the hard times, especially if it's about a private matter. Rest assured, we promise confidentiality—we release no information about your participation in the program without your knowledge or consent. Participation is confidential as mandated by Business and Professions Code section 6234.

Per Business & Professions Code section 6234, any information obtained by the LAP is confidential and cannot be disclosed as part of a civil proceeding, a *disciplinary proceeding*, or a public records request.

R' E' S' O' L' U' T' I' O' N' S'

res·o·lu·tion /rezə'looSH(ə)n/

noun

1. a firm decision to do or not to do something.
2. the quality of being determined or resolute.

Unfortunately, within weeks less than 10% of all resolvers accomplish their resolutions – and that's pretty.....

What makes
them
so difficult to
keep?



THE
PROBLEMS



Lawyers have been at an increased risk to develop alcohol, substance use and mental health disorders for many years.



ABA / Hazelden- Betty Ford Study

(Published February, 2016 *Journal of Addiction Medicine*)

Problematic Drinking*

- 6.4% of entire U.S. population
- 21% of all licensed attorneys
- 32% of all attorneys under 30 yrs. old

* Problematic drinking defined as hazardous, possible dependence





ABA / Hazelden- Betty Ford Study

(Published February, 2016 *Journal of Addiction Medicine*)

Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale

- Depression – **28%** of all attorneys
- Stress – **23%** of all attorneys
- Anxiety – **19%** of all attorneys
- Higher rates among younger lawyers

Mental Health By The Numbers

A recent survey conducted by ALM Intelligence and Law.Com revealed:

- **74%** feel the profession has had *a negative impact* on their mental health.
- 44% use alcohol to deal with *stress*.
- **64%** feel they suffer from *anxiety*.
- 31% feel they are *depressed*.
- **44% report issues with isolation**
- **74%** feel their *work environment* contributes negatively to their well being.
- **19%** have contemplated *suicide* at some point in their careers.



Mental Health By The Numbers

A recent survey conducted by ALM Intelligence and Law,Com revealed:

- 65% feel they could NOT take an extended leave from employment to tend to mental health issues.
- 78% felt an extended leave would hurt career trajectory.
- 77% were fearful of what the firm would think.
- 56% felt they had too much work to take a extended leave.



“AM I DEPRESSED ?”

Flat, apathetic, sad,
and/or irritable mood
most days

Decreased pleasure
and/or loss of interest

Feelings of
worthlessness,
excessive/inappropriate
guilt

Feelings of helplessness,
hopelessness

Recurrent thoughts of
death or suicide

Increased use of
substances to cope (i.e.,
alcohol,

marijuana, opiates,
stimulants,
etc.) Insomnia or
hypersomnia

**Social or occupational
distress/isolation**

Aloneness

Solitude vs. Loneliness

Solitude

- The *physical* state of being alone
- Need not be a permanent experience
- Balance between solitude & togetherness
- Develop an “I’m not alone” mentality

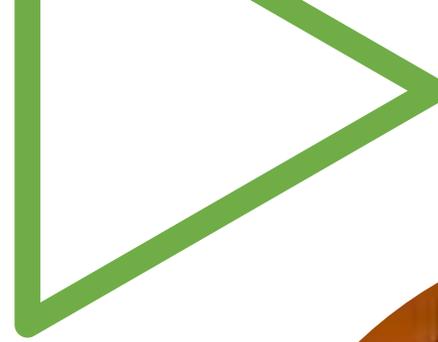


Aloneness

Solitude vs. Loneliness

Loneliness

- The *emotional* state of being alone
- Response to perceived isolation
- Belief that no one understands our circumstances, thoughts or emotions
- More importantly, a belief that no one cares



Social Isolation

Social isolation is the combination of solitude and loneliness, experienced by an individual for an extended period. Both the emotional and physical state feed off of one another and can create an inability to reengage with society in a meaningful way.



Are You Technolonly ?



THE VIRTUAL WORLD

“Workers today are ‘never turned off.’ Like our mobile phones, we only go on standby at the end of the day as we crawl into bed, exhausted. Technology was supposed to liberate us from much daily slog...in 2002 fewer than 10% checked work email outside of work, today it is 50% often before we get out of bed...”

www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle2018/jan/15

I'm leaving work to go home and check work email.



someecards

WHAT IS STRESS ?

Psychological stress is composed of the following sequence of elements:

STIMULUS

THOUGHT

EMOTION

BEHAVIOR

- The thoughts and emotions are internal and subjective – part of the way we habitually respond to things – and are changeable, otherwise everyone would react in the same manner to a situation.
- If we cannot interrupt or change the stimulus which produces the stress, then we must interrupt or change our appraisal of it.



HOW STRESSED ARE YOU ?

- My work requires me to do too much in too little time.
- I don't have enough time to spend with my family and friends.
- The people at my law firm or department are cold, unfriendly or rude.
- The physical environment is unpleasant.
- I deal with too many unreasonable and difficult people.



HOW STRESSED ARE YOU ?

- My firm or department is too focused on profit.
- The physical environment is unpleasant.
- My work bores me.
- Billable hour quotas are a source of stress for me.
- I'm not good at what I do.
- I'm not making a positive contribution to society or the lives of others.
- What I am doing doesn't deserve respect /get enough respect.





HOW STRESSED ARE YOU ?

- I feel overly responsible for everything and everyone.
- I overanalyze things and am too cautious.
- I often feel depressed, defeated or hopeless.
- I often rely on alcohol or drugs to help me feel good.
- I think about quitting at least once a month.
- Occasionally, I think about suicide.

STRESS or DISTRESS ?

- Some stress is healthy. Positive stressors can energize and motivate us to be productive and creative problem solvers.
- A totally stress free life is not only unrealistic, it can actually be a harmful form of denial.
- We need to eliminate distress. Distress is harmful both physically and psychologically.



STRESS or DISTRESS ?

- Gradual, incremental increases in responsibilities, duties, pressures and demands at home and work combined with long workdays and weeks is risky.
 - We stay busy and “stuff” our feelings.
 - Even relaxing can cause us to feel distress.
 - We become unaware that we have lost balance in our lives.
-
- **REMEMBER, DISTRESSED LAWYERS
EVENTUALLY LOSE THEIR EFFICIENCY AND
EFFECTIVENESS !!**

Distress Assessment Quiz

Do any of the following attributes apply to you? Check the ones that apply:

- Do you sleep less than 7-8 hours per night?
- Is your sleep restless or do you wake up a lot?
- Is it difficult to get out of bed in the morning?
- Do you exercise less than 5 hours a week (including walks)?
- Do you eat a lot of fast foods or junk foods?
- Do you skip breakfast or lunch?
- Do you drink more than 2-3 cups of coffee a day?
- Do you drink more than 2-3 alcoholic beverages a day?

Distress Assessment Quiz

Do any of the following attributes apply to you? Check the ones that apply:

- Do you take sedatives or sleep aids with/without a drink to relax or sleep?
- Are you more impatient and irritable than you would like to be?
- Do you feel that you are not in control of your life?
- Are you feeling worn out at the end of most days?
- Do you wish for more time to spend with family or yourself?

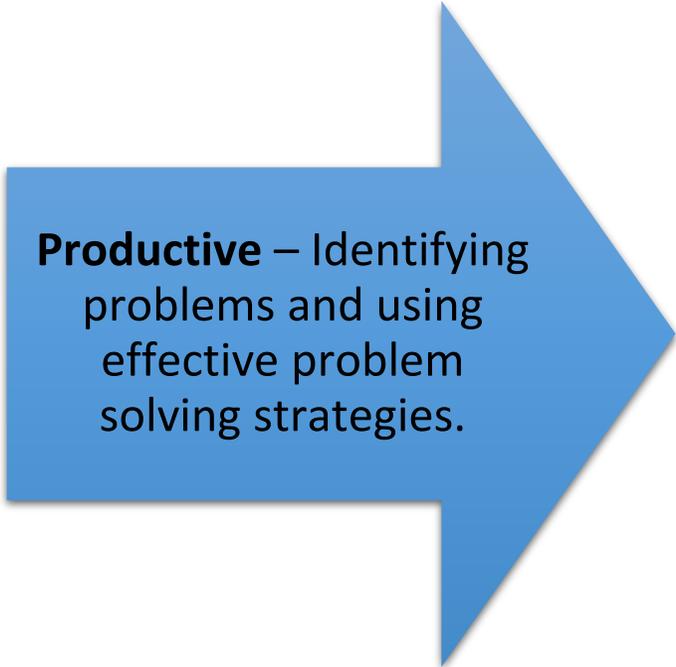
Distress Assessment Quiz

Do any of the following attributes apply to you? Check the ones that apply:

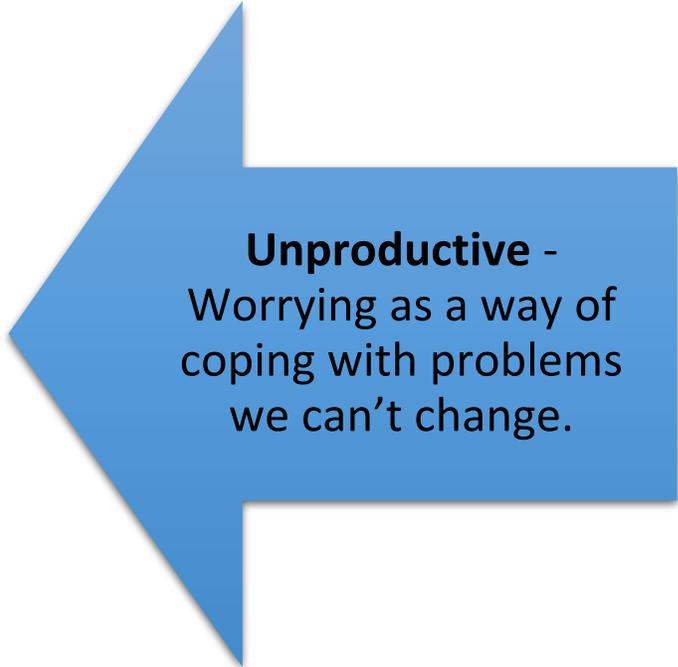
- Are you worried about your marriage, children or parents?
- Are you struggling to make (financial) ends meet?
- Do you work a lot of nights, weekends or holidays?
- Do you skip vacations?
- Do you feel that you don't have anybody to confide in?
- Are you feeling stressed over how many "yes" answers you just gave?

The more marks, the greater the likelihood that you are in distress. Change is possible !!!

Productive worry vs. Unproductive worry



Productive – Identifying problems and using effective problem solving strategies.



Unproductive - Worrying as a way of coping with problems we can't change.

BURNOUT



WHAT IS BURNOUT ?

- ***Fatigue***, no matter how much someone rests or sleeps. An **exhaustion that runs deeper than sleep deprivation.**
- ***Cynicism*** about life or a feeling that **nothing a person does really matters.** Burned out people are generally **disengaged**
- A sense of ***inefficacy***. Burned out people feel like they are **exerting significant effort, but are not making any progress** or gaining any recognition.
- Burnout syndrome is **not a medically recognized condition**, thus there is no clear diagnosis or treatment.

EFFECTS OF BURNOUT

- Less efficient
- Waste more time
- Self destructive tendencies
- Doing the bare minimum becomes a challenge
- Work quantity and quality declines
- Negative attitude towards those around you
- The feeling no one cares
- Unrelieved, may harden into a fixed element of your outlook
- Left unattended, can contribute to challenges to ethical duties, particularly communication and diligence

Why are Lawyers Burning Out ?

While most people experience stress in their lives, lawyers and people in the legal profession face a unique conundrum : For many, the drive and dedication that make them successful as a lawyer is also what's causing stress and burning them out !



“What’s Wrong With Him/Her?”

You notice a change from baseline.

- Unreliability
- Change in behavior and reactivity
- Decreased quality or quantity of work product
- Disheveled appearance or looking ‘ill’
- Frequent somatic complaints (headaches, back or stomach pain, etc.)





“What’s Wrong With Him/Her?”

- Missing deadlines and filings
- Absenteeism
- Erratic, irritable and moody
- Withdrawn and uncooperative
- Abrupt weight gain or loss
- Client complaints; trust irregularities

In other words.....

Our personalities and
Our Profession Put at
High Risk



So....what are we going to do ?



Strategies (that work)





impossible

Set *REALISTIC*
Goals for Yourself

Set Realistic Goals

Focus on things you CAN control

Lawyers already have control issues. As long as we're focusing on questions with unknowable answers and circumstances outside of our personal control, this strategy will get us nowhere other than **drained, anxious and overwhelmed !**





WOOP it up in 2026!!

- **Wish** – identifying a wish or goal you want to achieve
- **Outcome** – mentally imagine one positive outcome and one
- **Obstacle** that stands in the way
- **Plan** for how you can get around that obstacle

Remember.....

'A goal without a plan is just a wish.'

--Antoine de Saint-Exupery--



“The key is not to prioritize what's on your schedule, **but to schedule your priorities.**”

- Stephen Covey



Prioritize your day

- Step back and look at your “to-do” list.
- How many are critical and **MUST** be done that day.
- What are you working to achieve ?
- Create a plan that will work toward your objective.
- THEN schedule your priorities
- DON'T have 10 things on your list – focus on 3 or 4 !

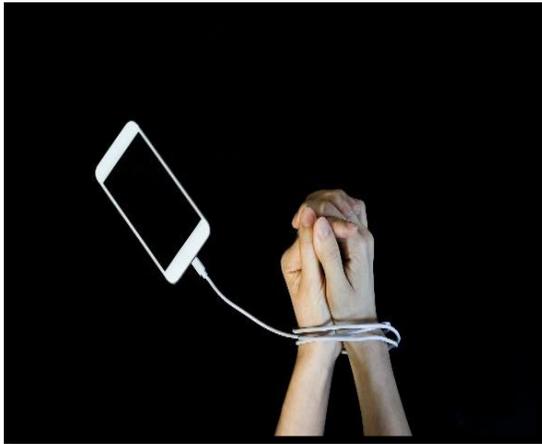


USE QUICK STRESS-BUSTERS

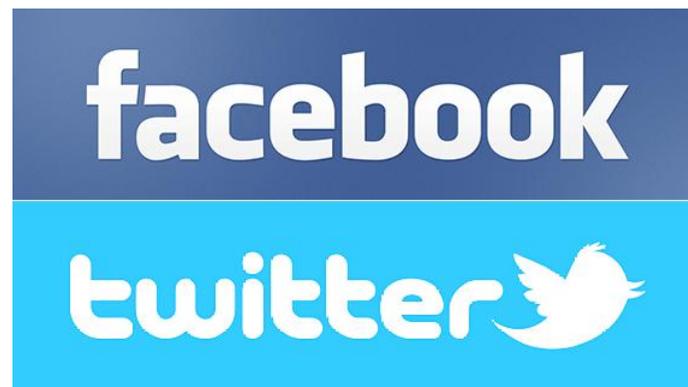
- Pause – lean back- give your eyes a rest for a couple minutes.
- Take three deep breaths and imagine your muscles relaxing from head to toe.
- Be mindful. Focus on the immediate present. Enjoy the moment.
- Maintain a sense of humor about yourself.
- *Healthy* routines are good- don't get trapped in a rut
- Prioritize at work and home and manage your time effectively.
- **ASK FOR HELP.** Talk it out with someone you trust.



SET BOUNDARIES



Disconnect



Boundaries: Disconnect

- Turn off notifications.
- Do not charge your phone beside bed.
- Do not keep phone with you during meals, exercise, or social activities.
- Read a book or magazine rather than your phone or tablet.
- Get away from your PC to do some work, take healthy breaks from the screen, and don't take the laptop with you on weekends or vacations.



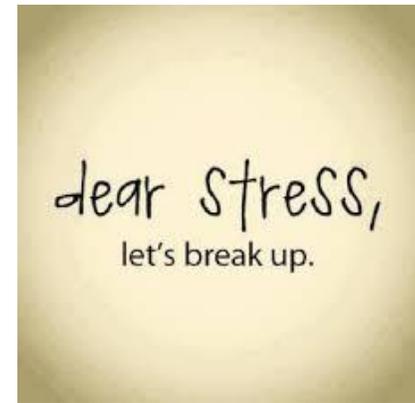
Boundaries: Set Limits

- Check email x times per day at designated times (and let clients and colleagues know/expect that).
- Limit Social Media to 10 minutes per platform per day, Use a timer (Hunt et. al, 2018).
- Monitor your use (use monitoring apps, check Screen Time on iPhone, etc.).
- Use Do Not Disturb.



MORE QUICK STRESS-BUSTERS

- Meditate and/or pray. CONSISTENT stress reduction occurs with only 10 minutes of daily meditation.
- Unplug from social media when acutely stressed.
- Exercise.
- Eat a healthy diet.
- Cultivate a positive attitude.
- Sleep 8 hours/ night when possible.
- Avoid overuse of alcohol or prescription drugs. These short term “fixes” just mask the problem and can lead to negative health and social consequences.



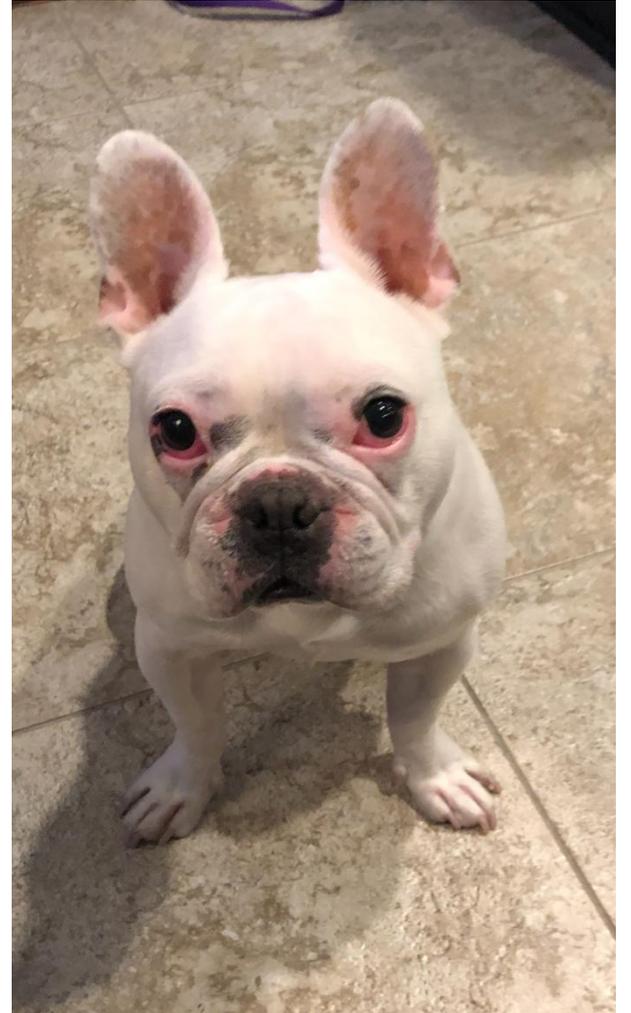
Meditation/Mindfulness

- Key to being truly present/not projecting
- Key to identifying our TRUE feelings
- Acknowledge feelings but don't attach (mountain/clouds)
- Breathing meditation
- Reduces "mental chatter"
- Helps eliminate the "what if's"
- Normal for us all to feel WAVES of emotion now



Gratitude

- Improves sleep
- We become more centered on others/humility
- Reduces depression
- Memorialize for reflection
- Gratitude journal
- Positive state of mind
- Directly correlated with Happiness and Peace
- Builds resiliency
- Boost productivity



Activate the Parasympathetic Nervous System

- Running/Hiking/Walking
- Swimming
- Dancing
- Playing a Musical Instrument
- Yoga
- Painting / Creating Art
- Gardening / Working with Hands
- Golfing
- Cooking



Benefits of Activating the Parasympathetic Nervous System

- Cardiovascular Health
 - Reduces stress that causes constricted blood vessels
- Blood Circulation and Hydration
 - Valve system keeps pumping
- Pain Relief
 - Improved information processing to brain
- Respiration
 - Improved oxygenation
- Digestion & Food Allergies
 - Fight or flight vs. rest and digest
- Aging process
 - Improved memory, posture



Give Yourself a Chance for Success

1. Do not isolate
2. Share your goals
3. Declutter !
4. Connect to a greater life purpose
5. Be kinder to yourself
5. Leave time for compassion
6. Understand perfectionism vs. excellence
7. Make this a year dedicated to growth and resiliency.
8. **REMEMBER – DON'T OVERDO IT !! BE REALISTIC !!**



Why Are Legal Professionals at High Risk of Mental Health & Substance Use Disorders?

- Conflict driven and adversarial profession
- Emotional detachment
- Win-lose, black-white, often rigid thinking
- Perfectionism
- Excessive self-reliance



These traits are great for a successful career but not so great for mental health.

Why Can Law Professionals Be Challenging to Approach?

- Highly educated; the '**paralysis of analysis**' effect (adept at rationalization and comparison)
- Excel at debate
- Accustomed to being in control
- Excessive dependence on self-reliance
- Pressure to appear invincible



Why Are Legal Professionals at High Risk of Mental Health & Substance Use Disorders?

- High expectations and accountability
- Lack of work-life balance
- Always on call to solve others problems
- High stress level are consistent predictors of SUD's and their severity.
- 67% of attorneys work more than 40 hours/week.
- Inherent pessimism





What keeps many professionals from seeking or accepting the help they so desperately need ?

1. Shame and Embarrassment- STIGMA

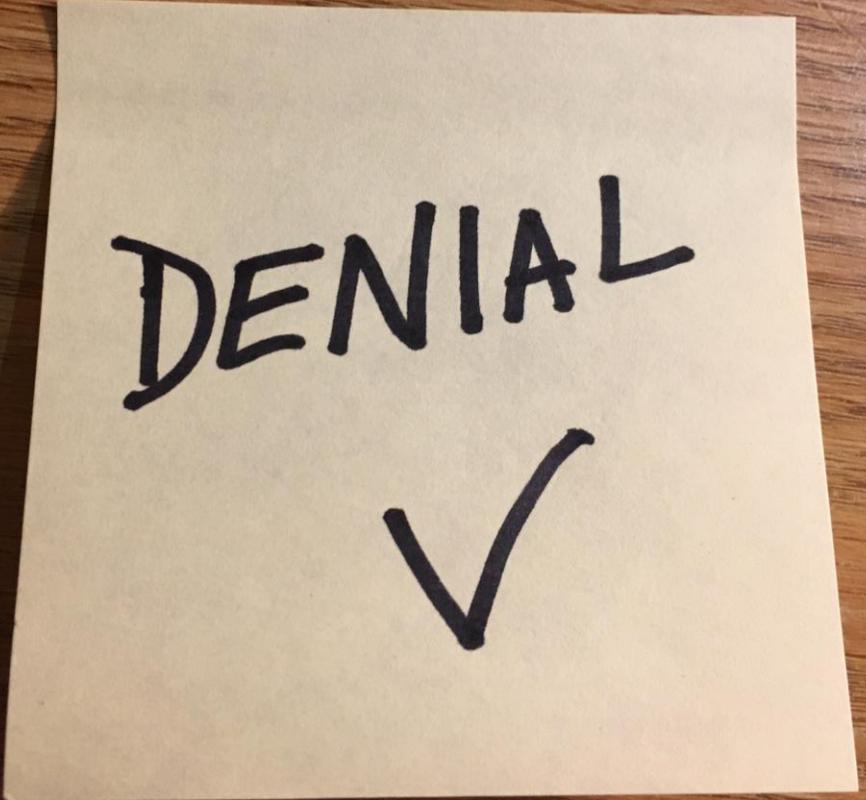
1. Denial

2. Cunning ,insidious diseases

3. Enabling

Dealing with *Denial*

- The most potent barrier
- Psychological defense mechanism
- Rationalize and minimize behavior
- Honestly believe they are under control
- I'm not one of "them" mentality



DENIAL
✓



THE CONSPIRACY OF SILENCE

- Lawyers are trained to deal with and solve problems. Thus, it is most difficult for the attorney to seek help since by doing so he feels he is admitting failure.
- Complicating this problem further is the tendency of the attorney's or judge's peers to indulge in a conspiracy of silence (enabling), and lighten the normal stresses of our profession.

ENABLING

Removes motivation to change

Provides evidence that fuels denial

Allows cons of treatment to outweigh pros

PREVENTS treatment of a progressive disease

Greater harm to career, family and well being

Not good for YOU either !!

THE CONSPIRACY OF SILENCE ENABLING

Are YOU an enabler ??

1. **RATIONALIZE** your colleague's behavior by blaming other situations ?
2. **CLEANUP** your colleague's messes ?
3. **IGNORE** new bad behaviors ?
4. **HIDE** your thoughts or feelings to avoid angering a colleague ?
5. **LIE & MAKE EXCUSES** for behavior to colleague's clients or coworkers ?

THE CONSPIRACY OF SILENCE ENABLING

Are YOU an enabler ??

6. **RESENT** your colleague because they don't seem to care ?
7. **HELP** your colleague by loaning money ?
8. **RESCUE** your colleague when impairment gets them into trouble ?
9. **BACKDOWN** from ultimatums that you know you can't meet ?
10. **GIVE A MILLION "LAST CHANCES"** to colleague for change ?

What can YOU do ??



Although it is difficult, remember that your end goal is to help motivate the impaired lawyer to seek professional help they so desperately need.

To Call LAP...or Not to Call



- I'm ok. I can work this out for myself.
- I'm not like a "real" alcoholic anyway.
- I want help but I don't want anyone to know.
- Will I be reported to Discipline?
- I already tried to get help and it didn't work.
- I don't have the money to pay for treatment.
- What will people say about me if I ask for help ?
- It's no use – nobody will understand – I give up!

To Call LAP...or Not to Call

- Is this really any of my business?
- I want to help but I don't want to get involved.
- Will I harm his/her or the firm's reputation?
- Must I report him or her to Discipline?
- I already tried to help and it didn't work.
- Let's wait and see. Maybe it will get better.
- I really don't have time for someone else's problems.



Brian's Big Five



- Express Gratitude for what you have
- Create 1 hour a day to think and relax
- Do one thing you love to do every day
- Set clear and realistic goals
- Let go of Fear



Remember, every month, every day, every *moment* is the opportunity to live a new cycle— we don't have to wait until a new year to start a cycle! Being a healthy lawyer is *part* of being a good lawyer.

2026



Be it Resolved.....

Striving For a (Realistic) Work/Life Balance in 2026

Thank you all for attending today's Continuing Legal Education program. If you have any questions that were not answered or would like to contact me for any reason, please call or email me at the following:

Brian S. Quinn, Esq., Education and Outreach Coordinator

LAWYERS CONCERNED FOR LAWYERS of PA, INC.

(717) 460-3385

brian@lclpa.org

Call the Lawyers Assistance Program in **YOUR** State

Directory of Lawyers Assistance Programs by State

- https://www.americanbar.org/groups/lawyer_assistance/resources/lap_programs_by_state.html

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- **2017 CoLAP National Conference for Lawyers Assistance Programs, [Well Being Tool Kit](#)**
- https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/lawyer_assistance/ls_colap_Brafford_Tool%20Kit.authcheckdam.pdf

National Task Force on Lawyer Well Being, [The Path to Lawyer Well Being](#)

- <https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/images/abanews/ThePathToLawyerWellBeingReportRevFINAL.pdf>
- **Directory of Lawyers Assistance Programs by State**
- https://www.americanbar.org/groups/lawyer_assistance/resources/lap_programs_by_state.html

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- “Need a helping hand? Here’s what a lawyers assistance program can do for you” http://www.abajournal.com/news/article/podcast_monthly_episode_97
- 1-800-273-TALK www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

“What Are Partners’ Duties When a Colleague is Impaired? Draft Opinion Calls for These Steps” http://www.abajournal.com/news/article/what_are_partners_duties_when_a_colleague_is_impaired_draft_opinion_calls_for_these_steps