

A-Z Resource Guide for Sustaining Well Being in Public Defense

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A-Z Resource Guide for Sustaining Well Being in Public Defense

by Jenny P. Andrews¹

Notes about this resource: This is an ongoing work in progress that will be continually updated and improved. Humbling as it is to put unfinished, unpolished work out into the world, it feels more important to get information to public defenders if it might help us stay well and stay in this work. Please send feedback, corrections, additions, wisecracks, links that have gone dead, margin doodles (because I love those), and creative improvement ideas to besustained@gmail.com. This is a compilation of ideas and materials gathered and developed for presentations and workshops on various topics related to sustaining well-being in public defense. It has two parts: a chapter on Sustaining Well-Being in Public Defense and an A-Z Resource Guide for Sustaining Well-Being in Public Defense. Some topics are more fully developed than others, and this project is likely to progress completely irregularly, in fits and starts, between trials. Updates will be posted to besustained.org. The A-Z categories are a bit idiosyncratic. There are questions and worksheets that invite introspection and reflection; be sensitive to your own triggers, mental health concerns and comfort in everything you choose to do and not to do. I'm not a doctor or mental health provider, and you should consult one with any questions you have about breathing exercises or yoga practice--or taking up trapeze, ax throwing, or parachuting as your third thing-- or anything at all, and let your own judgement guide anything you do to support your well-being. I just want you to take care of yourself and be a kick ass public defender.

¹ A child of counterculture, raised off the grid by back-to-the-land hippies on the Lost Coast in Northern California, Jenny Andrews is a graduate of Cornell University and Harvard Law School. She started her career as a public defender in Oakland, California in 1996, but left after seven years, after experiencing burnout and moral injury, and didn't practice law for three years. She returned to public defense work in 2007, and has continued working as a public defender in Sonoma County and Santa Barbara County, in a wide variety of positions, including: Forensic Resource Counsel, Felony Team Leader, Director of Training and Senior Deputy. Since 1996, she has worked on the front lines of criminal trial courts and has consistently litigated cases, including misdemeanor, felony, juvenile, civil commitment (mentally disordered offender and sexually violent predator), mental competency, homicide and multi-jurisdiction (and multi-jury) trials. She has carried specialized caseloads of complex, forensic and capital litigation. She teaches on the faculty of Gideon's Promise, the National Association for Public Defense, the National Criminal Defense College, the Trial Advocacy Workshop at Harvard Law School, the California Public Defenders Association, and the NAPD Online Academy. She has taught in public defense training programs in New York, New Jersey, Montana, Mississippi, Louisiana, Kentucky, Kansas, Tennessee, and Georgia, and in public defense offices throughout California. She has designed and presented training for public defenders working at all levels, from intern to leadership and from basic trial skills to capital litigation, as well as in specialized areas such as challenging forensic evidence and sustaining well-being. She has conceptualized and launched a Felony Team Unit, a Pre-Arrestment Unit, and Be Well Wednesday, a weekly wellness meet-up with experiential practices for public defenders. She thrives in collaborative settings and has worked in teams and work groups to: design a structured public defense mentorship program; plan local, state and national training curricula; and develop ongoing strategy for public defense training, sustaining well-being, and challenging forensic evidence. In 2018, she launched BeSustained.org, a training and resource hub to support the well-being of public defenders. She has been a certified yoga teacher since 2004, previously worked in the education department of Yoga Journal magazine, and is a longtime student of yoga and mindfulness practices. She believes in advocating for systemic support of public defenders, building spaces for public defenders to support each other, and prioritizing personal practices that support our well-being. Her personal wellness practices include sailing, hiking, yoga, and tending a rural apple farm. Her systemic wellness practices include Be Well Wednesdays, creating and teaching NAPD's online courses Sustaining and Supporting Well-Being in Public Defense, and speaking/engaging/tweeting/writing often on the topic of supporting well-being for public defenders.

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3 Spheres of Public Defense Well-Being

3 Spheres of Public Defense Well-Being:

A Framework for Understanding Impacts and Obstacles, and for Responding with Appropriate Tools and Strategies

There are three spheres relevant to our well-being in public defense work: self, service and system. These three spheres provide a useful framework for understanding impacts, obstacles and challenges to sustaining well-being, and also guide us in responding with appropriate tools and strategies

The Self sphere refers to the personal experiences we bring to this work and the personal practices we rely on to sustain us—things like mindfulness or gratitude journals. This circle also includes the ways we approach our work, like struggles with boundaries or work addiction. And it includes the basic self-maintenance like proper sleep, nutrition and exercise.

The Service sphere contains the impacts of this work. Public defense work has undeniable traumatic impacts that we must mitigate and process in order to stay in this work. It also includes public defense culture—the leadership, training, mentorship and support that impacts well-being.

The System sphere contains the larger systemic obstacles discourage us and wear us down when they get in the way of us providing the high quality and client centered representation that motivated us to do this work in the first place. System obstacles are things like high caseloads, racist systems, under resourced offices, and hostility toward the defense function from other system actors.

What public defenders need to sustain well-being are strategies in all three spheres.

(1) Individual strategies and practices to promote wellness and to mitigate inevitable impacts of trauma.

(2) Colleagues and leaders that build a culture that supports well-being.

(3) Systemic strategies to reduce obstacles to providing highest levels of representation.



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Self	Service	System
Individual Well Being Tools/Strategies	Public Defense Culture Tools/Strategies	Criminal Legal System Tools/Strategies
Maintain sleep, nutrition, exercise Engage in self-assessment and building supportive self-care Set and Maintain Boundaries Manage Chronic Stress and Stress Response Self-care and self-worth practices-Yoga, Movement, Recreation, Getting Outside, Meditation, Gratitude, Journaling, Creative Arts, Have a Third Thing Connect to Community Moderation of substance use Mental Health Care	Unify around purpose of client centered representation Engage in assessment and strategic planning to support well-being Practice trauma-informed public defense in casework, training and supervision Understand and reduce moral injury by actively reducing obstacles to providing high quality and client centered representation Manage caseload and workload Provide sufficient and effective coverage to support time off Support autonomy Provide and support mental health care access and substance use treatment Create spaces to process pain, trauma, difficulty Support and model boundaries and time off Create practices of celebration, appreciation, gratitude and recognition Recognize and reduce moral injury.	Provide sufficient resources to reduce caseload, workload Reduce moral injury Unite with community power through collaboration, media, participatory defense, and outreach

It is essential to match the appropriate response and strategy to the obstacle or impact. It is common to shift the responsibility to the individual to fix everything with self-care. But systemic obstacles need systemic responses.

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Checklist: Individual Strategies to Support and Sustain Well-Being

Maintain Connection to Purpose

- ☐ Engage in reflection, assessment, conversation, training or other activities to remind you why you chose this work and why you continue doing this work.

Health Maintenance

- ☐ Get sufficient sleep.
- ☐ Maintain nutrition.
- ☐ Engage in regular exercise.
- ☐ Maintain preventative health care appointments and care.

Mental Health Maintenance

- ☐ Be informed and mindful of the high rates of depression, stress, anxiety and suicide in our profession.
- ☐ Consider professional support through therapy, counseling, and other mental health services.
- ☐ Normalize conversation about mental health care and services, keeping resources available and destigmatized for yourself and others.
- ☐ If you are in crisis, call the [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](https://www.nationalsuicideline.org/) at 1-800-273-TALK (8255), or contact the Crisis Text Line by texting TALK to 741741.

Moderate Substance Use

- ☐ Be informed and mindful of the high rates of alcohol substance use impacts in public defense.
- ☐ Be attentive to your own patterns and changes in substance use.
- ☐ Consider seeking support and/or treatment through [American Bar Association Lawyer Assistance Programs](#), [The Other Bar](#), or other organizations.

Assessment and Goal Setting

- ☐ Engage in regular self-assessment to assess work engagement, burnout, job satisfaction, turnover intentions, psychological well-being, or other indicators of well-being and to take action on the results.
- ☐ Engage in regular structured goal-setting for the purposes of building supportive self-care

Engage in Supportive and Resilience Building Activities

- ☐ Find a movement practice that you enjoy, such as yoga, running, or walking
- ☐ Get outside
- ☐ Engage in gratitude practices
- ☐ Have a Third Thing
- ☐ Use journaling or writing to process emotions and experience
- ☐ Use mindfulness and/or meditation
- ☐ Engage in creative arts

Set and Maintain Boundaries

- ☐ Schedule regular time away from work each day, week and year.
- ☐ As much as possible, adjust your workload around your pre-planned vacations; leave sufficient notes/memo/coverage information for another person to provide high quality advocacy.
- ☐ Offer time and care to clients of colleagues when you are providing case coverage.

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- ☐ Commit to off hours. Don't remain available 24/7. Don't check messages during your off hours. Create an emergency notification for true emergencies only.
- ☐ Use out of office auto-reply features to communicate when you are unavailable.
- ☐ Set routines and rituals to end the work day. Clear your desk, update your prioritized task list and leave.
- ☐ Give honest timeframes--to managers for projects, to clients for motions. Be honest about your available time and what you are capable of completing, while maintaining your rest time.
- ☐ Don't send non-emergency email or text messages, or make calls, during non-work hours. Use delayed deliver feature if you are working non-work hours and wish to complete tasks without disturbing colleagues.
- ☐ Continually assess and edit your projects and commitments; conclude and transition off of projects regularly.

Engage in Trauma-Informed Public Defense and Intentional Resilience Building

- ☐ Learn about primary and secondary trauma, compassion fatigue, burnout and moral injury.
- ☐ Prepare for traumatic events (review of alleged child pornography, emotional victim impact statements at sentencing): use teams and tools to divide the task, debrief the process, and decompress and transition into other activities.
- ☐ Develop strategies and tools to process impactful material (physical activity, therapy, debriefing).
- ☐ Recognize that structural obstacles and under resourcing of public defense are not personal failure, personal defect or shortcoming.

Address Chronic Stress and Stress Response

- ☐ Learn about the physiology of stress response, be attentive about your own stress response patterns, and develop stress management strategies.
- ☐ Learn about long term health impacts of chronic stress.

Engage in Productive and Supportive Communication

- ☐ Be clear and kind.
- ☐ Choose direct communication when possible.
- ☐ Apologize when you've done something wrong.
- ☐ Communicate your preferred methods of communication and ask others for their preferences.
- ☐ Offer and accept appreciation and positive feedback.
- ☐ Offer and accept constructive suggestions that are clear, kind and direct.

Build Connect to Community

- ☐ Develop mentors and a supportive network that believes in you and your work, and that makes you feel supported and appreciated.

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Checklist: Building Supportive Public Defense Offices and Culture

Department Head

- ☐ Unify all staff and actions around purpose of client centered representation, with the knowledge that well-being is foundational to competence and access to justice.
- ☐ Create and sign an office pledge to support well-being. Post it prominently.
- ☐ With the input of staff in all job categories, incorporate well-being goals and principles into statements of department mission, values, objectives, and strategic plans.
- ☐ Provide team members with an opportunity to share input on procedural or policy changes.*
- ☐ Model well-being practices and priorities, such as taking vacation, having boundaries on workday, and prioritizing all aspects of well-being.²
- ☐ Work toward manageable caseloads and workloads.
- ☐ Engage with outside stakeholders on issues important to clients and staff.*

Human Resources

- ☐ Regarding promotion and compensation, create and follow standards of distributive (fair outcome), procedural (fair process), interpersonal (treating people with dignity and respect), and informational (transparency) fairness.
- ☐ Clearly communicate whether flexible time and/or working from home are available and how to use them. Be attentive to fairness across job categories and assignments. Maximize autonomy and flexibility for all staff.
- ☐ Communicate to all employees the confidential ways to seek support or assistance with substance abuse, mental health or other supportive services.³
- ☐ Create a leave policy that would realistically support time off for treatment relating to mental health, substance abuse or other impairment.
- ☐ Ensure that health plans offered to employees include coverage for mental health and substance use disorder treatment.
- ☐ Offer individual ergonomic fittings for desk, computer, screen and chair set-up.

Management and Supervision

- ☐ Ask what obstacles are preventing people from providing high quality, client centered representation—then try to reduce them.
- ☐ Be transparent about obstacles that are forcing ineffectiveness—identify these obstacles as systemic, not things to be taken on as personal weakness or failure.
- ☐ Be mindful of ways your position insulates you from direct client service and/or forced ineffectiveness—stand with your people.

² “Leader behavior has a substantial impact on followers’ well-being. Additionally, people monitor leaders closely for indicators of cultural norms. If leaders don’t walk the talk of lawyer well-being, followers are not likely to either--and are likely to become cynical.” Well-Being Toolkit for Lawyers and Legal Employers, ABA, 2018, p. 14

³ “A 2016 study of nearly 13,000 currently practicing lawyers found that between 21 and 36 percent qualify as problem drinkers, approximately 28 percent experienced some level of depressive symptoms, and 18 percent experienced elevated anxiety.” Well-Being Toolkit for Lawyers and Legal Employers, ABA, 2018, p. 4

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- ☐ Train leaders and supervisors to model well-being practices and priorities, such as taking vacation, having boundaries on work expectations, and prioritizing all aspects of well-being.⁴
- ☐ Learn more about wellness and workplace wellness dynamics.*

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

- ☐ Create diversity and inclusion practices that enhance well-being.
- ☐ Take action to dismantle oppressive systems both inside and outside of the department.

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

- ☐ Train evaluators to give regular, timely, fair and empathetic performance appraisals.
- ☐ Give team members positive feedback when the work is done well.*⁵
- ☐ Set high expectations for your team members, but acknowledge when things are hard and offer understanding and support when production may be low.*

WORK ASSIGNMENT

- ☐ Promote and support flexibility for and autonomy of all staff to the extent possible, so that people can manage their own time and workflow.
- ☐ Building in systems with sufficient time for reasonable response-time expectations.
- ☐ Giving sufficient time for assignments to be completed during work hours. If you are unable to do this, acknowledge the toll that it takes and be transparent about the steps being taken to address this.

COVERAGE AND TIME OFF

- ☐ Create a clear vacation policy, including encouragement of taking vacation, ease of requesting vacation time, ease of securing case coverage, and discouragement of work-related communication during vacation.⁶
- ☐ Create programs to accommodate life and career fluctuation and change (such as caregiving and other family and life impacts), such as part time programs and sabbatical programs.
- ☐ Have robust coverage systems so that people can take leave and vacation.
- ☐ Pause new assignments during leave, so it feels less punishing to return and “already be behind.”

COMMUNICATION

- ☐ Ask your team members their preferred method of communication.*
- ☐ Make communication expectations explicit: availability, response time, platform.
- ☐ Communicate with your team members in a clear and timely manner.*
- ☐ Email smartly: think before replying all, think before copying more people than necessary, start new email threads with clear subject lines when appropriate, put your “ask” up front, be clear, concise, and kind.*

MEETINGS

⁴ “Leader behavior has a substantial impact on followers’ well-being. Additionally, people monitor leaders closely for indicators of cultural norms. If leaders don’t walk the talk of lawyer well-being, followers are not likely to either--and are likely to become cynical.” Well-Being Toolkit for Lawyers and Legal Employers, ABA, 2018, p. 14

⁵ Strategies marked with an *asterisk are from “Things Leaders Can Attempt To Do To Promote Wellness And Sustainability Within Their Own Teams, By: Marilena David-Martin | May 2021.

⁶ “[T]he number of vacation days taken was a significant predictor of lawyer wellbeing-- and was stronger even than income level in predicting well-being.” Well-Being Toolkit for Lawyers and Legal Employers, ABA, 2018, p. 13

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- ☐ Try to schedule all meetings and events within Monday-Friday regular working hours, preserving and respecting off hours (early morning, evenings, weekends) and work breaks (lunch hours).
- ☐ Give 48-72 hours (minimum) notice of all non-emergency meetings and requests, so that people can, to the maximum extent possible, retain autonomy and control of their own schedules.⁷
- ☐ Set “no meeting days” when people know they can plan other tasks and meetings will not be scheduled.
- ☐ Be attentive to using the best tool for the task: email, zoom meeting, live meeting, phone call.
- ☐ Schedule 45 minute meetings instead of 1 hour so that people have time to refocus and take a break before the next meeting.*
- ☐ Regularly hold meaningful 1-on-1 meetings with team members.*
- ☐ Offer phone calls over online meetings when appropriate.*

BOUNDARIES

- ☐ Clearly communicate expectations regarding what specific hours people are expected to be physically in the office.
- ☐ Clearly communication expectations regarding when people are expected to be available for work communications, and expected response times.
- ☐ Minimize expectation of 24/7 availability by actively encouraging and protecting time for staff to recover from work demands.
- ☐ Minimize expectation of 24/7 availability by discouraging (or prohibiting) non-emergency work-related calls and emails during evenings, weekends, and vacations.
- ☐ Send “end of the workday” emails to your team members to encourage them to step away from the computer.*
- ☐ Encourage team members to set boundaries with supervisors, colleagues, clients, and others.*
- ☐ Support caregiving and sufficient time for meeting responsibilities outside work.

TRAUMA INFORMED LEADERSHIP

- ☐ Acknowledge traumatic impacts and practice trauma-informed public defense in casework, training and supervision.
- ☐ Create spaces to process difficult work experiences, such as debriefings.
- ☐ Check in with team members who are going through hard times.*

REDUCE MORAL INJURY

- ☐ Continually assess obstacles to providing high quality client centered representation, and take steps to reduce those obstacles.
- ☐ Transparently acknowledge these obstacles, the steps the department is taking to address them, and the impacts of the obstacles.

Training

- ☐ Establish orientation practices that set new staff members up for success, engagement, and well-being. Design orientation programs to include well-being-related topics. This will signal that

⁷ “[R]esearch reflects that, much more than individual employee traits and qualities, situational factors like workload, a sense of control and autonomy, adequate rewards, a sense of community, fairness, and alignment of values with our organizations influence whether people experience burnout or work engagement.” Well-Being Toolkit for Lawyers and Legal Employers, ABA, 2018, p. 4

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the organization prioritizes the issue and will help prepare newcomers for the challenges and opportunities of their new roles.

- ☐ Provide supportive training that is sufficient for all staff to feel equipped and supported to complete assigned work.
- ☐ Develop a structured mentorship program.
- ☐ Engage in diversity, equity, and inclusion trainings and discussions in and out of the office.*
- ☐ Provide education about traumatic impacts, primary trauma, secondary trauma, compassion fatigue, burnout and moral injury.
- ☐ Acknowledge traumatic impacts and practice trauma-informed public defense in casework, training and supervision
- ☐ Present regular trainings on self-care practices (without suggesting that self-care is the solution to systemic obstacles to wellness): such as yoga, meditation, mindfulness, stress management, nutrition.
- ☐ Include stretch breaks in any training over two hours.
- ☐ Create incentive systems that reward well-being activities.
- ☐ Create a well-being knowledge hub to provide lawyers with ongoing, practical information and updates.
- ☐ Establish a regular practice established to assess work engagement, burnout, job satisfaction, turnover intentions, psychological well-being, or other indicators of well-being and to take action on the results.
- ☐ Include wellbeing in skills development. *Ex: How are you supporting yourself to sustain his work? How well are you developing boundaries to protect your personal time? How are you doing on finding time for relaxation and recreation activities? What more can we do to support you?*

All Levels/All Departments/Office Culture--“Well-being is a team sport.”⁸

- ☐ Create events of celebration, recognition, appreciation and gratitude.
- ☐ Create supportive spaces for mitigating traumatic impacts of this work, such as debriefing sessions.
- ☐ Normalize conversations about difficulty, traumatic impacts, stress management, self-forgiveness.
- ☐ Support trauma-informed practice.
- ☐ Regularly express sincere appreciation for the specific efforts others have made and the specific impacts of those efforts.
- ☐ Select healthy food for events when food is provided.
- ☐ Plan events that do not focus on alcohol and have alternate recreational activities.
- ☐ Take vacations and let your colleagues know about them in advance.*
- ☐ Use “out of office” email replies so your colleagues know you are on vacation or taking time off.
- ☐ Be brave and engage in crucial conversations.*
- ☐ Create a space where you and others can comfort and support each other when debriefing or grieving about the work.*
- ☐ Apologize when you’ve done something wrong.*

⁸ Well-Being Toolkit for Lawyers and Legal Employers, ABA, 2018, p. 4.

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- ☐ Address the situation when other members of the team or office are negatively impacting the wellbeing of other team members.*
- ☐ Pay attention to changes in mood or behavior in your team members and kindly and genuinely check in with them about it.*
- ☐ Keep any personal negative opinions or beliefs about other colleagues to yourself.

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Checklist: Systemic Strategies to Support and Sustain Well-Being in Public Defense

- ☐ Advocate for sufficient resources to address caseload and workload—make well-being as competence part of the narrative in budget/resource advocacy.
- ☐ Use surveys and assessments to understand the obstacles that are forcing ineffectiveness.
- ☐ Advocate to stakeholders to reduce moral injury by reducing systemic obstacles to providing high quality client-centered representation.
- ☐ Unite with community power through collaboration, media, participatory defense, and outreach.
- ☐ Join with transformational community organizers. Center and amplify the voices of impacted community members.

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Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE)

Working in public defense requires us to become trauma informed.
Being trauma informed means learning about trauma. Trauma is relative to the person who has experienced it. Trauma can be one single event or repetitive and long term.

The ACE study and framework provides a particular lens for viewing childhood experience, risk and resilience. It is invaluable for some stories of mitigation and contextualization of public defense narratives.

The ACE framework can be a useful lens to turn on ourselves to developing awareness about adverse experiences, and risk and resilience within our own lives. While NOT its clinical application, the questionnaires can be useful tools for reflecting on the types of historical trauma we each bring into the work of public defense. No one enters this work without prior life history, and the history we each have shapes how we approach work (boundaries, relationships within hierarchical management structures, stress management), how we respond to the content of certain cases, and how we develop trusting relationships for mentorship, training and support.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE)
The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study is one of the largest investigations ever conducted to assess associations between childhood maltreatment and later-life health and well-being. The study is a collaboration between the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Kaiser Permanente's Health Appraisal Clinic in San Diego.
As your ACE score increases, so does the risk of disease, social and emotional problems. The ACE Study uncovered a stunning link between childhood trauma and the chronic diseases people develop as adults, as well as social and emotional problems. This includes heart disease, lung cancer, diabetes and many autoimmune diseases, as well as depression, violence, being a victim of violence, and suicide.
ACE Study results: -childhood trauma was very common. -people usually experience more than one type of trauma. -two thirds of the 17,000 people in the ACE Study had an ACE score of at least one. -87 percent of those had more than one.
What ACE captures: There are 10 types of childhood trauma measured in the ACE Study. Five are personal — physical abuse, verbal abuse, sexual abuse, physical neglect, and emotional neglect. Five are related to other family members: a parent who's an alcoholic, a mother who's a victim of domestic violence, a family member in jail, a family member diagnosed with a mental illness, and the disappearance of a parent through divorce, death or abandonment. Each type of trauma counts as one.
What ACE does not capture: There are, of course, many other types of childhood trauma — watching a sibling being abused, losing a caregiver, homelessness, surviving and recovering from a severe

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accident, witnessing a father being abused by a mother, witnessing a grandmother abusing a father, etc. The ACE Study included only those 10 childhood traumas because those were mentioned as most common by a group of about 300 Kaiser members; those traumas were also well studied individually in the research literature. If you experienced other types of toxic stress over months or years, then those would likely increase your risk of health consequences.

What's Your Resilience Score?⁹

This questionnaire was developed by the early childhood service providers, pediatricians, psychologists, and health advocates of Southern Kennebec Healthy Start, Augusta, Maine, in 2006, and updated in February 2013. Two psychologists in the group, Mark Rains and Kate McClinn, came up with the 14 statements with editing suggestions by the other members of the group. The scoring system was modeled after the ACE Study questions. The content of the questions was based on a number of research studies from the literature over the past 40 years including that of Dr. Emmy Werner and others.

Its purpose is limited to parenting education. It was not developed for research.

The resilience questions are only meant to prompt reflection and conversation on experiences that may help protect most people (about three out of four) with four or more ACEs from developing negative outcomes. A secure early childhood is helpful, but not necessary. A higher number of positive experiences is not necessarily more protective.

Resources:

Nadine Burke Harris M.D., [The Deepest Well: Healing the Long-Term Effects of Childhood Adversity](#) Hardcover, January 23, 2018.

Nadine Burke Harris M.D., [How childhood trauma affects health across a lifetime](#), TED talk, 2014.

⁹ [Got Your ACE, Resilience Scores?](#) By Jane Stevens, 1/1/17

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Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Questionnaire: What is Your ACE Score?

Prior to your 18th birthday:

Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often... Swear at you, insult you, put you down, or humiliate you? or Act in a way that made you afraid that you might be physically hurt?

No ___ If Yes, enter 1 ___

Did a parent or other adult in the household often or very often... Push, grab, slap, or throw something at you? or Ever hit you so hard that you had marks or were injured?

No ___ If Yes, enter 1 ___

Did an adult or person at least 5 years older than you ever... Touch or fondle you or have you touch their body in a sexual way? or Attempt or actually have oral, anal, or vaginal intercourse with you?

No ___ If Yes, enter 1 ___

Did you often or very often feel that ... No one in your family loved you or thought you were important or special? or Your family didn't look out for each other, feel close to each other, or support each other?

No ___ If Yes, enter 1 ___

Did you often or very often feel that ... You didn't have enough to eat, had to wear dirty clothes, and had no one to protect you? or Your parents were too drunk or high to take care of you or take you to the doctor if you needed it?

No ___ If Yes, enter 1 ___

Was a biological parent ever lost to you through divorce, abandonment, or other reason?

No ___ If Yes, enter 1 ___

Was your mother or stepmother: Often or very often pushed, grabbed, slapped, or had something thrown at her? or Sometimes, often, or very often kicked, bitten, hit with a fist, or hit with something hard? or Ever repeatedly hit over at least a few minutes or threatened with a gun or knife?

No ___ If Yes, enter 1 ___

Did you live with anyone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic, or who used street drugs?

No ___ If Yes, enter 1 ___

Was a household member depressed or mentally ill, or did a household member attempt suicide?

No ___ If Yes, enter 1 ___

Did a household member go to prison?

No ___ If Yes, enter 1 ___

Now add up your "Yes" answers: ___ This is your ACE Score.

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Resilience Questionnaire

Please circle the most accurate answer under each statement:

1. I believe that my mother loved me when I was little.

Definitely true Probably true Not sure Probably Not True Definitely Not True

2. I believe that my father loved me when I was little.

Definitely true Probably true Not sure Probably Not True Definitely Not True

3. When I was little, other people helped my mother and father take care of me and they seemed to love me.

Definitely true Probably true Not sure Probably Not True Definitely Not True

4. I've heard that when I was an infant someone in my family enjoyed playing with me, and I enjoyed it, too.

Definitely true Probably true Not sure Probably Not True Definitely Not True

5. When I was a child, there were relatives in my family who made me feel better if I was sad or worried.

Definitely true Probably true Not sure Probably Not True Definitely Not True

6. When I was a child, neighbors or my friends' parents seemed to like me.

Definitely true Probably true Not sure Probably Not True Definitely Not True

7. When I was a child, teachers, coaches, youth leaders or ministers were there to help me.

Definitely true Probably true Not sure Probably Not True Definitely Not True

8. Someone in my family cared about how I was doing in school.

Definitely true Probably true Not sure Probably Not True Definitely Not True

9. My family, neighbors and friends talked often about making our lives better.

Definitely true Probably true Not sure Probably Not True Definitely Not True

10. We had rules in our house and were expected to keep them.

Definitely true Probably true Not sure Probably Not True Definitely Not True

11. When I felt really bad, I could almost always find someone I trusted to talk to.

Definitely true Probably true Not sure Probably Not True Definitely Not True

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12. As a youth, people noticed that I was capable and could get things done.

Definitely true Probably true Not sure Probably Not True Definitely Not True

13. I was independent and a go-getter.

Definitely true Probably true Not sure Probably Not True Definitely Not True

14. I believed that life is what you make it.

Definitely true Probably true Not sure Probably Not True Definitely Not True

How many of these 14 protective factors did I have as a child and youth? (How many of the 14 were circled "Definitely True" or "Probably True"?) _____

Of these circled, how many are still true for me? _____

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Affirmations

Affirmations are meant to be repeated to increase purposeful living, challenge or interrupt negative or unhelpful thoughts, motivate positive changes, or boost self-esteem.

Benefits of Daily Affirmations ¹⁰
Studies on benefits show: Decrease health deteriorating stress. Lower stress and rumination. Improve intention (to eat more fruits and vegetables). Mitigate GPA decline in students who felt left out in college. Respond in less defensive and resistant way. More resilience to difficulties. Encourage optimistic mindset.
To have any kind of impact on your self-esteem, your self-affirmations should be positively focused and targeted at actions you can take to reinforce your sense of self-identity. Use your real strengths, or strengths that you consider important, to guide your affirmations.
Examples: I believe in myself, and trust my own wisdom I am confident and capable at what I do I am resilient, strong, and brave, and I can't be destroyed I opt to rise above negative feelings When I lie down to sleep, everything is as it should be, and I rest content I am cool, calm, and collected I am resilient and can handle problems with expertise

Affirmations make great passwords, especially if you're required to change them frequently, which can be frustrating and annoying.

Instead, choose an affirmation. Add the year, or an exclamation point if needed for emphasis (or to satisfy password rules).

Affirmations as passwords
IamClientCentered PurposeFreedom InhaleExhale CultivateJoy2021! GrowingAbundance UsingMyOneWildandPreciousLife IamMovingForward

¹⁰ [Positive Daily Affirmations: Is There Science Behind It?](#) By Catherine Moore, positivepsychology.com, Dec. 16, 2020.

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ILearnGrowImprove IHaveCourageOverDoubt GrowthMindset ShowingUpFully FreeThemAll
--

Affirmation lists:

[20 Calming & Positive Affirmations For When An Anxiety Attack Strikes](#), By Alexa Erickson November 12, 2016.

[30 Short Daily Affirmations for Living Your Best Life](#), by Jennifer Williamson, healingbrave.com, Jan. 15, 2015.

[102 Positive Affirmations for Depression and Anxiety](#)

[119 Of The Most Positive, Uplifting Affirmations For Women](#), by Barrie Davenport. September 11, 2020

Apps for Affirmations:

[ThinkUp](#)

[Shine](#) Receive daily text affirmations.

[Unique Daily Affirmations](#) record your own or add your own photos.

Articles:

[Positive Daily Affirmations: Is There Science Behind It?](#) By Catherine Moore, positivepsychology.com, Dec. 16, 2020.

Books:

[Affirmations: The Power of Affirmations](#) & The Secret to Their Success - Plus 1,000 Positive Affirmations to Transform Any Area of Your Life, by Louise Stapely

[You Can Do All Things](#): Drawings, Affirmations and Mindfulness to Help with Anxiety and Depression, by Kate Allan.

[You Can Heal Your Life](#), Louise Hay.

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Alcohol and Substance Use

“High rates of substance abuse and addiction among lawyers are the symptoms of deeper problems, precipitated by long hours, tight deadlines, and devastating consequences for failure. The statistics on substance abuse by lawyers are grim.”

--[Addiction in the Legal Profession](#), by H Scott Leviant, Dec. 28, 2014

THE EVIDENCE IS IN ON LAWYER WELL-BEING

We can no longer ignore our profession's well-being problem.

(Source: Krill et al., 2016; Mental Health Daily report of suicide by occupation)



Particular Challenges of Alcohol and Substance Use in Public Defense

- People who work more than 50 hours per week are three times more likely to abuse alcohol.¹¹
- Legal associations have a reputation for hosting alcohol-fueled events in a “work-hard, play-hard” culture.¹²
- 70% of addicted lawyers think they can manage their problem on their own (the ultimate “Type A” personality at work),¹³ and have the skill to remain high functioning and hide their addictions.
- Our work requires communication, together with persuasion, creativity and consistency; we learn to exhibit a professional demeanor and to hide our own alarm, fear, disgust, and abhorrence, as we conduct our professional lives. We develop a tough exterior and we repress our own weaknesses.¹⁴
- 40% of lawyers fear that seeking treatment for an abuse problem would hurt their reputation in the legal profession.¹⁵

¹¹ [Addiction in the Legal Profession](#), by H Scott Leviant, Dec. 28, 2014.

¹² [Combatting Substance Abuse in the Legal Profession, Part One](#), by Alex Cook, Thompson Reuters.

¹³ [Addiction in the Legal Profession](#), by H Scott Leviant, Dec. 28, 2014.

¹⁴ [Drug and Alcohol Abuse & Addiction in the Legal Profession](#), Legal Profession Assistance Conference

¹⁵ [Addiction in the Legal Profession](#), by H Scott Leviant, Dec. 28, 2014.

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•Celebration of successes, regardless of cost to mental health and well-being, can perpetuate the illusion there is no problem.¹⁶

•Many jurisdictions have discovered that there is a correlation between alcoholism and drug addiction and malpractice and discipline.¹⁷

In 2016 the Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation and the American Bar Association conducted a study, "[The Prevalence of Substance Use and Other Mental Health Concerns Among American Attorneys](#)," and the results were alarming:

•36 percent of responding attorneys were deemed hazardous drinkers (in comparison, only 15 percent of doctors could be characterized this way).

•85 percent reported alcohol use in the past year, while the rate among the population is 65 percent.

•6 percent used cocaine, crack, stimulants and opioids.

•2 percent used marijuana and hash.

•16 percent used sedatives.

Alcoholism

Alcoholism is a chronic progressive incurable disease characterized by the loss of control over alcohol.

Drug dependence and abuse ([ABA Definitions](#))

Drug dependence, also known as addiction, is a chronic disease. It is progressive, and occurs when the body becomes physically dependent upon a drug. Drug addiction in any form – from cocaine to methamphetamine to prescription pain relievers and stimulants -changes the brain. Individuals who are dependent upon drugs may not be able to control how much they use and continue to use drugs despite serious consequences.

Drug abuse occurs when a person is not physically dependent upon a drug, but does exhibit problems with a particular drug. Someone who abuses drugs may use too frequently and experience problems due to drug use.

Treatment resources:

[American Bar Association Lawyer Assistance Programs](#) The ABA's Commission on Lawyer Assistance Programs (CoLAP) provides support to people in the legal profession who are confronting alcoholism, substance use disorders, or mental health issues.

[In the Rooms](#): Global online recovery community.

[Lionrock](#): online aa meetings and drug and alcohol support groups.

¹⁶ [Combatting Substance Abuse in the Legal Profession, Part One](#), by Alex Cook, Thompson Reuters.

¹⁷ [Drug and Alcohol Abuse & Addiction in the Legal Profession](#), Legal Profession Assistance Conference

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[The Other Bar](#): network of recovering lawyers, law students and judges throughout the state, dedicated to assisting others within the legal profession who are suffering from alcohol and substance abuse problems.

[The Recovery Village](#): online recovery meetings.

[Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#) National Helpline: 1-800-662-HELP (4357)

Reference resources:

[Addiction in the Legal Profession](#), by H Scott Leviant, Dec. 28, 2014

[The Addicted Lawyer: Tales of the Bar, Booze, Blow and Redemption](#), by Brian Cuban. With a famous last name and a successful career as a lawyer, Brian was able to hide his clinical depression and alcohol and cocaine addictions—for a while. Brian also takes an in-depth look at why there is such a high percentage of problematic alcohol use and other mental health issues in the legal profession.

[Combatting Substance Abuse in the Legal Profession, Part One](#), Thompson Reuters.

[Drug and Alcohol Abuse & Addiction in the Legal Profession](#), Legal Profession Assistance Conference

[Investigative Report: Mental Health and Substance Abuse threaten the Legal Profession](#), by Kristin Johnson, March 12, 2018.

[Midyear 2018: Panel to examine lawyer substance abuse, mental health – and solutions](#), ABA, February 1, 2018.

[The Lawyer, the Addict](#), by Eilene Zimmerman, New York Times, July 15, 2017. A harrowing story, written by the ex-wife of a lawyer who overdosed.

[Uncovering Addiction in the Legal Profession](#) Includes signs to watch for if you suspect that an attorney you know may be suffering from addiction.

[When it Comes to Mental Health and Substance Abuse Support in Legal, What About the Staff](#), by Erin Hichman, law.com, Oct. 11, 2018.

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Assessments

Benefits of self-assessment
-increases empowerment and autonomy -clarifies intentions -increases growth mindset -builds problem solving skills and strategies -increases self-awareness

Support for Assessments
Research-based suggestions for increasing life satisfaction and mitigating Compassion Fatigue¹⁸ Work on self-awareness every day Take an inventory of how balanced your life is--be intentional about balancing it out
Management practices impacting well-being¹⁹ Assessment of Well-Being: Is there a regular practice established to assess work engagement, burnout, job satisfaction, turnover intentions, psychological well-being, or other indicators of well-being and to take action on the results?

Potential Well Being Survey Questions:

Do you think conducting wellness programs during office hours is helpful?

Have you participated in wellness programs? Which have benefited you?

What would you like to see included in wellness offerings? (stress management, health screenings, experimental practices such as yoga or mindfulness, information about trauma and secondary trauma)

How can we better support your well-being?

Potential questions/topic for a weekly check in:

We also do a weekly written check-in with our director where we go over what we did for the week and what cases/projects we are working on our “achievement of the week”, goals for the next week and any other issues/concerns we have.²⁰

We have a self-care check-in with a visual scale “sad face to small happy face to big happy face” and where we can list what is working well, what is not working well and what actions can help improve/when/by whom those actions be taken.

Potential questions for an annual review or development plan:

Describe the goals you had set out to accomplish for 2020:

Which goals did you accomplish?

Which goals did you not accomplish, and why not?

What other objectives did you meet, beyond your stated goals?

¹⁸ [Keeping Legal Minds Intact](#): Mitigating Compassion Fatigue Among Legal Professionals, ABA 2014

¹⁹ ABA 2018 [Well Being Toolkit](#) for Lawyers and Legal Employers

²⁰ From Leigh Ann Carroll,

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Which achievement(s) are you most proud of?
What kinds of risks did you take during the time span for this evaluation?
Were the risks worthwhile? Why or why not?
What can your manager do to help you achieve your future goals?
What are your goals for 2021?
What are your expectations for 2021?

Self-Assessment Tools:

[Burnout Self-Test](#)

[Perfectionism assessment](#)

[Professional Quality of Life Measure](#) (ProQOL)

[Satisfaction With Life Scale](#) (SWLS)

[Secondary Traumatic Stress Scale](#)

[Stress and Burnout Questionnaire](#)

[Stress assessments](#)

[Work and Meaning Inventory](#) (WAMI)

[ABA Well-Being Toolkit](#) at pages 26-28 has links to many assessment tools and lengthy research articles.

Additional resources about self-assessment:

Teresa Amabile (2012). [Track Your Small Wins to Motivate Big Accomplishments](#). TEDx Talk, 21:09 mins. Amabile shares key insights from her research about staying motivated at work, including the importance of measuring progress, documenting challenges, and taking time to reflect. Amabile is the author of the book [The Progress Principle](#) and Harvard Business Review article [The Power of Small Wins](#). Her website offers a helpful checklist: [Progress Principle Daily Progress Checklist](#).

Resources about performance assessment:

[Pygmalion in Management](#). By J Sterling Livingston, Harvard Business Review, 2003. The power of a leaders' expectation for followers' performance and well-being.

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PUBLIC DEFENDER WELL BEING SELF-ASSESSMENT
GENERAL WELL BEING²¹
Average hours of sleep each night
Average hours of exercise each week
Typical nutrition is <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Very good <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know/not sure
Overall physical health is <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Very good <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know/not sure
Approximate number of alcoholic drinks per week
Largest number of drinks on one occasion in past 30 days
Number of times fast food eaten in last 30 days
Number of times fruit eaten in last week
Number of times vegetables eaten in last week
Over the last two weeks, number of times with trouble falling or staying asleep
Number of times per week of getting enough sleep to function well in job and personal life
Number of times per week with stress at work that exceeds ability to cope
How often do you get the emotional and social support that you need?
In the last two weeks, how many days have you felt down, depressed or hopeless?
Number of minutes during your typical work day that you are able to dedicate to wellness activities
Number of days you have energy for leisure activities after work
On balance, do you speak of your work in a positive way or a negative way?
In the past 30 days, number of days you've had a hard time doing your work because of your health
In the past 30 days, number of times missed part or all of a work day due to physical or mental health
WORK ENGAGEMENT²²
Place a check next to each statement you agree with more than half the time: <input type="checkbox"/> At my work, I feel bursting with energy. <input type="checkbox"/> At my job, I feel strong and vigorous. <input type="checkbox"/> I am enthusiastic about my job. <input type="checkbox"/> My job inspires me and gives me a sense of meaning and purpose. <input type="checkbox"/> When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work. <input type="checkbox"/> I feel happy when I am working intensely. <input type="checkbox"/> I am proud on the work that I do.
BURNOUT²³
Choose the one that is most accurate right now: <input type="checkbox"/> I enjoy my work. I have no symptoms of burnout. <input type="checkbox"/> I am under stress, and I don't always have as much energy as I once did, but I don't feel burned out. <input type="checkbox"/> I am definitely burning out and have symptoms of burnout, such as physical and emotional exhaustion. <input type="checkbox"/> The symptoms of burnout that I'm experiencing won't go away. I think about frustration at work a lot. <input type="checkbox"/> I feel completely burned out and often wonder if I can go on. I am at the point where I may need some changes or may need to seek some sort of help.

²¹ Drawn largely from: <https://www.cdc.gov/workplacehealthpromotion/tools-resources/pdfs/nhwp-capture-health-assessment-update.pdf>

²² Based on Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES).

²³ Based on Non-Proprietary Single-Item Burnout Measure.

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Public Defense Skills and Growth Assessment

Think of a recent work event (trial, hearing, sentencing, bail argument, client meeting).

1. First, write at least 2 things you did well.
2. Write at least 2 skills you have gained.
3. Write something you didn't do as well as you hoped, or something you will do differently next time.
4. Only add in this order, positive must be added first, and must outnumber improvement.

Things I did well:	Things I didn't do as well as I hoped to do:
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	
5.	

What I will do differently next time:	Skills I have gained:
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
	4.
	5.

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Weekly Check-In²⁴

Name:

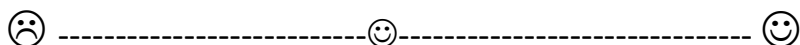
Date:

Position:

Supervisor:

Self-Care Check In

How am I doing on self-care this week?



What's working well?

What's not working?

What actions can improve this?

When and by whom will those actions be taken?

Achievement of the week:

Goals for next week:

Current Projects/Cases:

- Total # of projects/cases on docket:
- # active this week:

Please List All Projects, With Updates/Questions/Progress

²⁴ This sample form was shared by Leigh Ann Carroll and is used at the Midwest Innocence Project.

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Staff Self Review²⁵

Name _____

Date _____

Describe the goals you had set out to accomplish for 2020:

Which goals did you accomplish?

Which goals did you not accomplish, and why not?

What other objectives did you meet, beyond your stated goals?

Which achievement(s) are you most proud of?

What kinds of risks did you take during the time span for this evaluation?

Were the risks worthwhile? Why or why not?

What are your expectations for 2021?

²⁵ This sample form was shared by Leigh Ann Carroll and is used at the Midwest Innocence Project.

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What can your manager do to help you achieve your future goals?

What are your goals for 2021?

Additional Comments/Thoughts?

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Be Well Wednesdays



Everyone working in public defense is invited to Be Well Wednesdays.

WHEN: Wednesdays at 12:10-1:00 pm Pacific/3:10-4:00 pm Eastern.
Drop in for any session. Stay for all or part of the session. Always free.

WHERE: On zoom.



Thank you NAPD for creating a list for BWW so you can decide when to opt in and opt out. Please join by sending a blank email to BeWellWednesdays+subscribe@NAPD.groups.io to receive zoom link updates, schedule updates, announcements, and shared materials. The list will not send abundant emails, just a weekly link/reminder and occasionally session materials.

WHAT:

BWW is an ongoing series of drop in sessions to support your well-being. Each session includes an experiential practice (meditation, mindfulness, gratitude, journaling, etc.) and/or facilitated discussion about sustaining well-being in public defense. Sometimes there is an introductory overview but these sessions focus more on participatory experience and less on presentation.

BWW is brought to you by this planning team: Jenny Andrews, Gina Pruski, Justin Heim, Tatiana Kline, John Lopez, Marilena David-Martin and Jeff Sherr. Please email besustained@gmail.com with any questions or feedback, or to propose a session.

Past BWW Sessions

5/19/21	Justin Heim: Walking Meditation
5/12/21	Tatiana Kline: How to Give A Wellness Training
5/5/21	Marilena David-Martin: 4 Things You Can Do to Improve Mental Wellness That Have Nothing to Do With Anyone Else

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4/28/21	Sharing Models and Ideas That Are Working: NAPD Principle 6: Coverage and Time Off. Facilitator: Heather Rogers.
4/21/21	Lisa Lunt: Fill Up Your Cup: Brain and Body Boosts for Tumultuous Times
4/14/21	Gina Pruski: Our Feelings in Color: A Mindful Writing Practice
4/7/21	John Lopez: Hope Based Journaling
3/31/21	Marilena David-Martin and Justin Heim: NAPD Principles for Creating Sustainability in Public Defense Offices
3/24/21	Marilena David-Martin and Justin Heim: NAPD Principles for Creating Sustainability in Public Defense Offices (Part 1)
3/17/21	Justin Heim: A Mindful Eye: Meditating with Art
3/10/21	Tatiana Kline (San Diego, CA), Sarah McCarthy (Santa Clara, CA), Erin Biggs (Colorado), Jenee Bowden (Colorado), Jenny Andrews (Santa Barbara, CA): Discussion of Well-Being Committees and Initiatives
3/3/21	Bernadette Rabuy, Ray Ibarra, and Facilitator: David Klaus. Mentorship Part 2: Perspectives of Mentees and Mentors and the Value of Coaching Skills for Supporting Well-Being.
2/24/21	Jenny Andrews, Renate Lunn, Melanie Foote. Mentorship Part 1: The Value of Mentorship and How to Design a Structured Mentorship Program.
2/17/21	Robin Konrad and Edvique Shaver: Meditative Doodling
2/10/21	Kirstyn Wentzel: Poetry
2/3/21	John Lopez: Lovingkindness Practice
1/27/21	Elizabeth Vartkessian and Katherine Atkins: Part 2: Addressing Trauma, Loss, and Resilience in Criminal Defense – Focus on Your Office
1/20/21	Elizabeth Vartkessian and Katherine Atkins: Part 1: Addressing Trauma, Loss, and Resilience in Criminal Defense – Focus on You
1/13/21	Justin Heim: Orderly Chaos: A Meditation on Noise
1/6/21	Tatiana Kline: “New Year, Better You”
12/30/20	Jenny Andrews: Resolutions, Goals, Micro goals, and SMART goals.
12/23/20	Marilena David-Martin and John Lopez: Accepting Gifts of Support and Paying it Forward.
12/16/20	Jeff Sherr: The Public Defender Motivational Triad and Resiliency
12/9/20	Justin Heim: Poison as Medicine: Tonglen for Public Defenders
12/2/20	Dave Klaus: Mediation Introduction Sampler
11/25/20	Tatiana Kline: Giving Thanks Gratitude Practice
11/18/20	Anupama Vishwamitra: EQ>IQ
11/11/20	Jenny Andrews: Dynamic Mindfulness
11/4/20	Caitlin Becker: Connecting to Your Intention
10/28/20	John Lopez: The Tree of Life
10/14/20	Gina Pruski: The Five Senses: Our Gateway to the Present Moment
10/7/20	Tatiana Kline: Gratitude/Journaling Practice
9/30/20	Justin Heim: Investigating our Experience of Self and Identity
9/23/20	Jenny Andrews: Dynamic Mindfulness for Reducing Stress Response
9/16/20	Justin Heim: Wellbeing Happens Here and Now: An Intro to Meditation
9/9/20	Marilena David-Martin: Finding Balance through Boundary Setting

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9/2/20

John Lopez: Self-Care Vision and Creating Space

Many sessions were recorded, and are kept at the Wellness page within mygideon at the [NAPD member site](#).

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Boundaries

Almost everything will work again if you unplug it for a few minutes, including you.

--Anne Lamott

Lawyers in each corner of the profession—prosecutors and public defenders, in-house counsel, government lawyers, solo practitioners, and lawyers at firms large, medium and small—all face some of the same universal pressures.

“It’s kind of like an endurance contest or something. This big reservoir of resentment ... fills up with rage,” said William Meyerhofer, a psychotherapist and former Sullivan & Cromwell lawyer. “It leaks out in all these behaviors where you scream at your girlfriend, or go home and get stoned every night, or spend the whole night playing video games.

--[Constantly On Call, Lawyers Risk Exhaustion](#), By Lizzy McLellan, American Lawyer, May 27, 2019

Maintaining boundaries around work is a constant challenge for many public defenders.

The ABA’s Well-Being Toolkit²⁶ includes in its definition of a healthy workplace that tasks and responsibilities can be accomplished successfully within the time available. In most public defense assignments, this is laughable. We are continually triaging essential tasks like communicating with the people we represent, completing investigation and legal research for their cases, consulting with experts on everything from complex DNA analysis to immigration consequences of a charge or conviction, coordinating with advocates and other county agencies to address housing, mental health and substance use treatment needs. We work long hours into the evening and weekends and still don’t complete important tasks. There is never enough time.

Public defenders do not have “spare time.” When a task is added, something else must give. Two frequent responses are: (1) sacrifice non-work hours in the evening and weekend, instead of spending that time with loved ones and/or engaging in activities of rest, recreation and resilience building; or (2) displace other tasks, which then fill lists to be completed later or not completed at all—such as client communications, motions and investigation. This is a major source of stress, anxiety and feeling inadequate at work. It causes many public defenders to work long hours without sufficient rest, regular time off (like weekends) or vacation.

Boundary: a line that marks the limits of an area.²⁷

²⁶ Well-Being Toolkit For Lawyers and Legal Employers, by Anne Brafford for the American Bar Association, August 2018, at p. 9.

²⁷ Definition from a wonderful presentation by Marilena David-Martin, Deputy Director of the State Appellate Defender Office in Detroit, Michigan.

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Boundary Strategies for Public Defenders
Commit to off hours. Don't remain available 24/7. Don't check messages during your off hours. Create an emergency notification for true emergencies only.
Set work goals around time not task. Set a goal to leave at a designated time—such at 6 pm-- not to complete the entire to do list before leaving. It will never be completed. You will build habits of working more efficiently and being realistic in estimating turnaround time for tasks.
Set routines and rituals to end the work day. Clear your desk, update your prioritized task list and leave.
Set transition markers. Create a transition marker along the way home—an intersection you drive though or train/bus station you pass—to transition from work thoughts to home thoughts. <i>How was my partner's meeting? My child's day at school?</i>
Take vacations. The 2017 ABA Well Being Report lists this as the strongest predictor of wellness.
Give honest timeframes. To managers for projects, to clients for motions. Be honest about your available time and what you are capable of completing, while maintaining your rest time. You can work around the clock for a project or a trial, but not for decades.
Accept structural limitations as structural. One of the hardest parts of public defense is the stress of feeling not doing enough and knowing reality is that some things are not getting done, and that most of us will never reach end of the task list—and the “task list” is urgent needs of people who are suffering. This can be very demoralizing. Recognize that this is structural under resourcing of public defense, not a personal defect or shortcoming.

I cannot say yes to anything else.
I cannot say yes to anything else.
I cannot say yes to anything else.
I cannot say yes to anything else.
I cannot say yes to anything else.
I cannot say yes to anything else.
I cannot say yes to anything else.

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Tweet

Stefanie Mundhenk and 6 others liked



i keep the wolf from the door but he calls me up
@3rdchancellife

Me letting a client know I'll be out for most of next week:
Me: I won't have cell phone service, internet, or anything like that so I won't be reachable
Client:
Me: What?
C: Holy shit, you're going to jail???
Me: ...
Me: Um... I'm going to a cabin in the mountains...

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Strategies for Leaders: Building Reasonable Work Expectations and Respecting Boundaries	
Supportive of well-being.	Not supportive of well-being.
Prioritize giving all employees time for sufficient rejuvenation during non-work and vacation hours. Actively discouraging work-related calls and emails during evenings, weekends, and vacations.	Intrude upon non-work hours with work assignments and communications.
Only sending email, text or other communications during non-work hours in urgent situations, in which immediate notification to or action of the recipient is required.	Sending non-urgent messages during non-work hours.
Building in systems with sufficient time for reasonable response-time expectations.	Sending “drop everything and respond right now” or “drop everything and do this task right now” communications and assignments, particularly if they reflect poor planning or organization on the part of the sender and unnecessarily shift last-minute work to others.
Giving sufficient time for assignments to be completed during work hours.	Giving assignments with insufficient time to complete during work hours, such as late afternoon case assignments for court appearance the following morning.
Supporting flexible time use for everyone, especially to support well being activities (time for gym, yoga, recreation, therapy, medical appointments, etc.).	Inequitable availability of flex time, such as making it available to some employees while others are restricted by court schedules, office hours or other expectations. This is exacerbated if those flexing their time create expectations of responsiveness during times they elect to work in off hours, as it expands the expected workday of others into those hours.
Have robust coverage systems so that people can take leave and vacation.	Require staff to find their own coverage and only to schedule time off if they can “get everything covered.”
Pause new assignments during leave.	Continue to assigned cases and tasks while away—created constantly interrupting emails, returning to feeling behind and legitimately frustrated client who haven’t been seen.

Resources:

Technology: Mindful phone use: Try [this mindfulness practice with your phone](#) in hand to explore exactly what kind of relationship you have with your tech

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[Constantly On Call, Lawyers Risk Exhaustion](#), By Lizzy McLellan, American Lawyer, May 27, 2019

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Boundary Self-Assessment

Boundaries around work/non work time:²⁸

How often do you have a day when you do nothing associated with work? Several in a row?
How often do you turn your work computer off at the end of the day or week? Leave your laptop at the office without bringing it home?
Do you take vacations?
Do you bring your work laptop with you on vacation?
Do you have designated non-work hours?
Do you check your email and voicemail regularly outside work hours?
Do you feel you have to respond to people immediately?
Do you turn off notifications during non-work hours?
How often do you cancel exercise, social plans, family time or other non-work activities due to work demands?

Boundaries at work:

Have you communicated your communication preferences to your colleagues?
Do you close your door when you need to focus?
Do you turn off notifications for uninterrupted work time?
Do you feel you have to go above and beyond for every single client every time?

Boundaries around taking on projects and priorities:

Do you participate when/because you actually want to?
Do you consider whether there will be professional growth?
Will the benefit outweigh the burden?
Do you have the time and capacity?
Will something else get neglected if you add the project?
Can and will someone else do it? Benefit/grow from doing it? Can someone be mentored into taking on the role?

²⁸Many of the questions added to this self-assessment are from a wonderful 2020 Boundaries presentation by Marilena David-Martin, Deputy Director of the State Appellate Defender Office in Detroit, Michigan.

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Burnout

See **Moral Injury**, below, and [this argument for adopting the term moral injury](#) in many circumstances in which we often say “burnout.”

Burnout
World Health Organization definition of burnout: "a syndrome conceptualized as resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed."
WHO Symptoms of burnout: 1. Feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion 2. Increased mental distance from one's job, or feelings of negativism or cynicism related to one's job 3. Reduced professional efficacy

Resources:

May of 2019, the [World Health Organization added burnout](#) as an occupational phenomenon. WHO's definition of burnout: "a syndrome conceptualized as resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed." This definition places all the responsibility on the individual and frames the questions in terms of individual strength or weakness.

[Burnout: The Secret to Unlocking the Stress Cycle](#), by Emily Nagoski PhD and Amelia Nagoski DMA. Useful strategies to end the cycle of feeling overwhelmed and exhausted. Instead of asking us to ignore the very real obstacles and societal pressures that stand between women and well-being. Includes: what you can do to complete the biological stress cycle—and return your body to a state of relaxation; why rest, human connection, and befriending your inner critic are keys to recovering and preventing burnout.

[Burnout Is About Your Workplace, Not Your People](#), by Jennifer Moss, Harvard Business Review, Dec. 11, 2019. While this article doesn't mention moral injury, it's all about shifting responsibility for managing and preventing burnout from the individual to the organization. It lists the top 5 reasons for “burnout” as: Unfair treatment at work, Unmanageable workload, Lack of role clarity, Lack of communication and support from their manager, and Unreasonable time pressure.

[Burnout Isn't Just in Your Head. It's in Your Circumstances](#), by Adam Grant, NY Times, 3/19/20.

[To Prevent Burnout, Hire Better Bosses](#). By Tomas Chamorro-Premuzic, Harvard Business Review, 2019.

Jill Lepore, [Burnout: Modern Affliction or Human Condition?](#) The New Yorker, 5/17/21.

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Caregiving

But there is always another client to defend, story to write or struggling student who just can't wait. Here are things I have missed: my daughter's seventh birthday, my son's 10th birthday party, two family vacations, three Halloweens, every school camping trip. I have never chaperoned, coached or organized a school event.

Sometimes my choices make me sad. My daughter's seventh birthday was the worst. She cried, and I did everything I could not to. I felt sick to my stomach. But I had a trial starting the next day, six hours away. I had picked the date, not the judge, because I knew that the other side wasn't ready. Delaying even a few days would have meant losing a crucial advantage. I wasn't going to risk it knowing what was on the line for my client.

--Lara Bazelon²⁹



Resources:

[Confessions of a Part-Time Mom](#): Divorce and shared custody suits me, and it suits my kids, too, by Lara Bazelon, Slate, June 13, 2017.

[I've Picked My Job Over My Kids](#), by Lara Bazelon, NY Times, June 29, 2019

²⁹ [I've Picked My Job Over My Kids](#), by Lara Bazelon, NY Times, June 29, 2019

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Caseload and Workload

[coming soon—in the meantime, check out the resources on mygideon at NAPD’s website]

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Community Care

Moving Beyond Self-Care to Community Care

"Self-care alone can't solve systemic issues. For that, you need community care."³⁰ Toronto based community organizer Nakita Valerio defines community care as "People committed to leveraging their privilege to be there for one another in various ways."³¹

In the context of public defense, community care can be building practices and rituals to support each other. Part of this may be incorporating practices like debriefings or regular check-ins for everyone.

Shouting "self-care" at people who actually need "community care" is how we fail people.

--Nakita Valerio

But true support is very individual and people's preferences may be widely varying. A more individual approach could include: reflecting on the question of what we individually need/prefer to feel supported at work generally or after a significant event; communicating to others the support we need; offering people the support that they communicate is useful and valuable to them. Leaders and experienced staff members can build cohesion within an office by modeling vulnerability and communicating to people how they can be emotionally supported.

³⁰ [Self-care isn't enough. We need community care to thrive](#), by Heather Dockray, Mashable, May 24, 2019.

³¹ [Self-care isn't enough. We need community care to thrive](#), by Heather Dockray, Mashable, May 24, 2019.

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Assessing Your Culture of Community Care
Mission/Values How is well-being included in the mission and value statement of the agency? How is it communicated that defenders who maintain their health and well-being, and who support each other, provide the highest level of care and representation to the people we defend?
Leadership How is leadership continually advocating for sufficient resources for staff to complete work within the scheduled work day? Are leaders modeling boundaries by taking vacation, having off hours during each day, week and month? ³² Do leaders model vulnerability by sharing difficult experiences and communicating how they can be supported?
Training Do all new staff receive education about trauma and stress management within the first six months? Is there ongoing education about trauma and stress management? Is there training prior to entering a new assignment such that each person feels informed and prepared? Is mentorship provided for those in the early years of practice?
Supervision Are evaluators trained to give performance evaluations that are timely, fair and empathetic? Are efforts made to highlight positive accomplishments and skills gained? What steps are taken to promote autonomy of staff to manage their own schedules and workflow? ³³ How are staff members encouraged to take time off each day, week, month and year by having undisturbed rest times? How are non-emergency communications discouraged during non-work hours?
Human Resources Does initial onboarding include: how to take time off for illness, vacation, emergency and other circumstances; how to confidentially access support and assistance for mental health, substance use, or other impairment? Is each person's work station ergonomically evaluated and fitted within the first month, and options for any specialized office equipment explained? Do the available health plans include coverage for mental health and substance use treatment? Is it regularly communicated that confidential support and assistance is available for mental health, substance use or other impairment?

³² "Leader behavior has a substantial impact on followers' well-being. Additionally, people monitor leaders closely for indicators of cultural norms. If leaders don't walk the talk of lawyer well-being, followers are not likely to either--and are likely to become cynical." Well-Being Toolkit for Lawyers and Legal Employers, ABA, 2018, p. 14

³³ "[R]esearch reflects that, much more than individual employee traits and qualities, situational factors like workload, a sense of control and autonomy, adequate rewards, a sense of community, fairness, and alignment of values with our organizations influence whether people experience burnout or work engagement." Well-Being Toolkit for Lawyers and Legal Employers, ABA, 2018, p. 4

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Is there a clear vacation policy, including encouragement of taking vacation, ease of requesting vacation time, ease of securing case coverage, and discouragement of work-related communication during vacation?³⁴

Have all work flexibility options been clearly explained so that people understand when they are expected to be physically in the office?

Have communications been clearly explained so that people understand when they are expected to be available by phone, text, email or other communication method?

Culture of Support

How has the office created supportive spaces to talk about difficulty or loss?

How has the office created rituals, events and spaces for celebration, recognition, appreciation and gratitude?

How are people encouraged to share how they can best be supported?

³⁴ “[T]he number of vacation days taken was a significant predictor of lawyer wellbeing-- and was stronger even than income level in predicting well-being.” Well-Being Toolkit for Lawyers and Legal Employers, ABA, 2018, p. 13

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Competence and Wellness

Attorney Rules of Competence and Diligence
ABA Model Rule of Professional Conduct 1.1 : A lawyer shall provide competent representation to a client. Competent representation requires the legal knowledge, skill, thoroughness and preparation reasonably necessary for the representation.
ABA Model Rule of Professional Conduct 1.3 : A lawyer shall act with reasonable diligence and promptness in representing a client.

ABA Includes Wellness in Duty of Competence³⁵
Lawyer health is not solely by absence of illness, but by a positive state of wellness.
We define lawyer well-being as a continuous process whereby lawyers seek to thrive in each of the following areas: emotional health, occupational pursuits, creative or intellectual endeavors, sense of spirituality or greater purpose in life, physical health, and social connections with others. Lawyer well-being is part of a lawyer's ethical duty of competence. It includes lawyers' ability to make healthy, positive work/life choices to assure not only a quality of life within their families and communities, but also to help them make responsible decisions for their clients. ³⁶
Well-being is a continuous process toward thriving across all life dimensions. ³⁷

Paralegal Standard of Integrity and Competence³⁸
Canon 6 - A paralegal must strive to maintain integrity and a high degree of competency through education and training with respect to professional responsibility, local rules and practice, and through continuing education in substantive areas of law to better assist the legal profession in fulfilling its duty to provide legal service.

Social Worker Ethical Standard of Judgment and Performance and Impairment³⁹
4.05 Impairment (a) Social workers should not allow their own personal problems, psychosocial distress, legal problems, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties to interfere with their professional judgment and performance or to jeopardize the best interests of people for whom they have a professional responsibility. (b) Social workers whose personal problems, psychosocial distress, legal problems, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties interfere with their professional judgment and performance should

³⁵ The [Path to Lawyer Well-Being: Practical Recommendations for Positive Change](#), from the National Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being of the American Bar Association, August 14, 2017 [hereinafter "2017 ABA Lawyer Well-Being Report of Recommendations"].

³⁶ 2017 ABA Lawyer Well-Being Report of Recommendations at p. 9

³⁷ 2017 ABA Lawyer Well-Being Report of Recommendations at p. 9

³⁸ [National Association of Legal Assistants, Inc.](#) "Each NALA member agrees to follow the canons of the NALA Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility. Violations of the Code may result in cancellation of membership. First adopted by the NALA membership in May of 1975, the Code of Ethics and Professional Responsibility is the foundation of ethical practices of paralegals in the legal community."

³⁹ [National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics](#).

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immediately seek consultation and take appropriate remedial action by seeking professional help, making adjustments in workload, terminating practice, or taking any other steps necessary to protect clients and others.

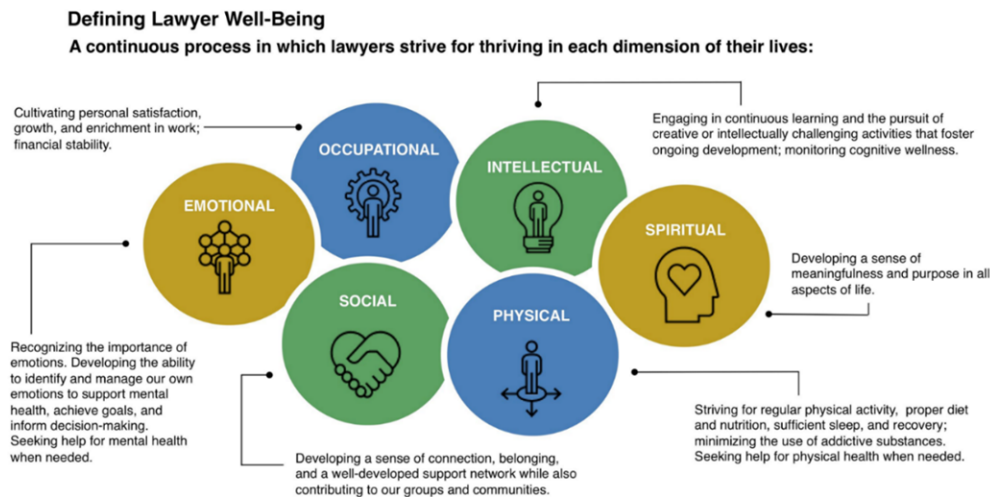
AND

2.08 Impairment of Colleagues

(a) Social workers who have direct knowledge of a social work colleague's impairment that is due to personal problems, psychosocial distress, substance abuse, or mental health difficulties and that interferes with practice effectiveness should consult with that colleague when feasible and assist the colleague in taking remedial action.

(b) Social workers who believe that a social work colleague's impairment interferes with practice effectiveness and that the colleague has not taken adequate steps to address the impairment should take action through appropriate channels established by employers, agencies, NASW, licensing and regulatory bodies, and other professional organizations.

A Broad Definition of Well-Being⁴⁰



ABA Wellness Dimension	ABA Description
Occupational	Cultivating personal satisfaction, growth and enrichment at work; financial stability.
Intellectual	Engaging in continuous learning and the pursuit of creative or intellectually challenging activities that foster ongoing development; monitoring cognitive wellness.
Spiritual	Developing a sense of meaningfulness and purpose in all aspects of life.

⁴⁰ 2017 ABA Lawyer Well-Being Report of Recommendations at p. 9

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Physical	Striving for regular physical activity, proper diet and nutrition, sufficient sleep, and recovery; minimizing the use of addictive substances. Seeking help for physical health when needed.
Social	Developing a sense of connection, belonging, and a well-developed support network while also contributing to our groups and communities.
Emotional	Recognizing the importance of emotions. Developing the ability to identify and manage our own emotions to support mental health, achieve goals, and inform decision making. Seeking help for mental health when needed.

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Unwellness and Incompetence: Impacts on work performance and struggles with basic competence⁴¹

ABA Wellness Dimension	Connection to Public Defense Competence	Impact of Struggle on Public Defense Competence
Occupational	Growth and development Financial stability	Tardiness/absence from work Conflict with colleagues, supervisors, clients Reduced quality, errors in work or poorly executed work Irritability, impatience, conflict Faulty judgement
Intellectual	Intellectual stimulation and development Cognitive wellness: concentration, clarity, problem solving, memory, planning, organization, creativity/flexibility	Respond and formulate arguments Articulate arguments Recall evidence and execute clear questioning Plan effective evidence presentation Formulate creative, effective storytelling
Spiritual	Meaning and purpose	Questioning the meaning of life, purpose Lack of self- satisfaction Pervasive hopelessness Loss of feelings of guidance, security and anchoring from spirituality leading to questioning meaning of work, purpose of work. Why even bother?
Physical	Physical health-diet, exercise, nutrition, sleep Moderation and mindful use of substances	Symptoms of sweating, rapid heartbeat, breathing difficulty, aches, pains, dizziness, compromised immune system Tardiness, absence Energized toward work Commanding court presence Smooth, strong voice for arguments Stamina for long, demanding work days
Social	Feeling support and connection Offering support and connection	Feeling withdrawn, isolated, intolerant, lonely, distrustful, over-protective Projecting anger or blame Conflict with loved ones, clients, witnesses, colleagues Ability to compassionately listen to others Ability to be supportive in relationships inside/outside of work
Emotional	Emotional regulation Decision making Mental health	Feeling sad, depleted, hypersensitive, overwhelmed, powerless, guilty, numb Emotional regulation to respond effectively to: -emotionally charged interviews, evidence, testimony or argument -demands of rapidly changing schedule and heavy workload -remain energized to complete tasks -offer support to colleagues, clients and community

⁴¹ 40 to 70 percent of disciplinary proceedings and malpractice claims against lawyers include substance use or depression, and often both. Marjorie A. Silver, [Substance Abuse, Stress, Mental Health and The Legal Profession](#), New York State Lawyers Assistance (2004).

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Resources:

Public Defender Well Being as Competence and Access to Justice, [Video of presentation](#) by Jenny Andrews, Spring 2020 (50 min)

Marjorie A. Silver, [Substance Abuse, Stress, Mental Health and The Legal Profession](#), New York State Lawyers Assistance (2004).

The [Path to Lawyer Well-Being: Practical Recommendations for Positive Change](#), from the National Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being of the American Bar Association, August 14, 2017 [hereinafter “2017 ABA Lawyer Well-Being Report of Recommendations”].

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Coverage

NAPD Principles of Sustainability

Principle 6: The office normalizes and prepares for workplace absences.

Employees need time off. They may need to address their own health, care for a family member, take a well-earned break from work, or adjust their schedule to accommodate a change in life circumstance.³³ A workload recess leave policy would facilitate unpaid leaves of absence, sick leave or family and medical leave, paid time off (vacation), flexible time off, and flexible work assignments. The policy and procedures will depend on many factors, including office size, budget, and structure, but will ensure all employees are eligible to request a recess and that the office has a clear procedure for assigning coverage to ensure no interruption of legal services for clients and no unnecessary strain on other staff.

Taking vacations is one of the single best predictors of overall well-being. “In their study of 6,000 practicing lawyers, law professor Larry Krieger and psychology professor Kennon Sheldon found that the number of vacation days taken was a significant predictor of lawyer wellbeing--and was stronger even than income level in predicting well-being.”⁴²

The expansion of work into a 24/7 expectation of availability is not good for us. [Research at Lehigh](#), on the personal impact of 24/7 availability expectations, found that email communications and expectation of response contributes to emotional exhaustion, poor work-life balance, anxiety and a strain on personal relationships. Even employees who didn't respond to off-hours emails were negatively impacted by receiving them. These researches suggest setting clear expectations of when employees are expected to monitor communications and limit use of electronic communications outside those windows.

In [24/6: The Power of Unplugging One Day a Week](#), Tiffany Shlain reminds us of the important ways that religious traditions, secular organizations, and labor groups have fought for non-work time. The very makers of the devices that monetize our attention with dopamine-fueled screen dependence limit or prohibit those habits within their own families. She jokes of rewriting the beginning of Allen Ginsberg's “Howl” as: “I saw the best minds of our generation distracted by texting, tweeting, emailing.” She is unquestionably right in advising us that down time is “a force field of protection that gives us strength, resilience, perspective and energy.”

Many public defenders don't take vacations, and we need to take them. Taking time off, so that we can build our own strength and resilience, is client centered. We need to overcome our own hero complexes and work addiction, plan stridently to protect our time away, advocate for office culture and practices to support time off, and happily cover for our colleagues by offering high quality and compassionate representation to the people we represent to cover the absence of others. As discussed below, taking vacation requires office support and adequate coverage systems. In the unfortunate (and too common)

⁴² 2018 [ABA Well-Being Toolkit](#) at p. 12.

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absence of effective coverage systems, we still need to plan time away and likely need to improvise our own coverage systems with colleagues.

Taking a restful vacation (or other time away) requires adequate coverage. It is extraordinarily, unreasonably and unnecessary stressful to worry that clients are standing alone in court with no one standing next to them, or to return to angry and frustrated clients who had motions dropped or cases continued unexpectedly with no explanation.

Adequate coverage has the following components:

- The person who will be absent is expected to leave sufficient notes/memo/coverage information for another person to provide high quality advocacy.
- The person who will be absent is expected to avoid setting cases while away as long as no interest of a client is harmed (but clients are not asked to waive or give up rights for staff vacations; staff are not required to choose between time off and pressuring clients to agree to continue proceedings that are not in their interest to continue).
- There is a clear procedure for the person who will be absent to seek coverage and provide the coverage instructions, and a person assigned to cover tasks and cases, with sufficient time to prepare (ideally this is done by a supervisor, and not by going door to door begging for help).
- The person covering the cases is expected to provide meaningful advocacy (communicate with the clients, argue motions or resolve cases to the extent possible, not just continue everything).



As an assistant public defender in Wichita, I worked every single weekend for two years straight because my caseload was so out of control.

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Resources:

Be Well Wednesday topic 4/28/21 (recording at mygideon on the NAPD website)

[North Carolina Notice of Leave form](#)

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Creativity, Crafts, and Justice

“There's a direct line between art, imagination, and justice.”

--Ava Duvernay⁴³

[Researcher] Conner believes her findings suggest that people should incorporate more creativity into their week—perhaps learn to knit, take up cooking, sing in a group, paint, or play music. She also suggests tapping into creativity at work, by trying to come up with novel solutions to problems or writing creatively. “We can add creativity to the list of ‘actionable things’ people can do to take charge of their well-being,” she says.-- Doing Something Creative Can Boost Your Well-Being, by Jill Suttie. Greater Good Science Center, March 21, 2017.

I know a chief public defender who knits non-stop, including in meetings. I know a brilliant appellate defender who makes gorgeous and witty crafts for all occasions. I once texted the other lawyer on a capital case team, from the intermission of the San Francisco Ballet, to say *we need the team to see this production of Frankenstein. It's the most powerful mitigation story I've ever seen.* The point is, creative arts fire different synapses in ways that can be incredibly useful to us.

Resources:

[Doing Something Creative Can Boost Your Well-Being](#), by Jill Suttie. Greater Good Science Center, March 21, 2017.

[Everyday Creativity](#), by Carlin Flora, Psychology Today, June 9, 2016.

[Everyday creativity in daily life](#): An experience-sampling study of “little c” creativity. Silvia, P. J., Beaty, R. E., Nusbaum, E. C., Eddington, K. M., Levin-Aspenson, H., & Kwapil, T. R. (2014). Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts, 8(2), 183–188. Everyday creativity—creative actions that are common among ordinary people in daily life, such as drawing, making recipes, writing, and any activity done with the purpose of being creative—both fosters and reflects psychological health.



⁴³ [Video of her saying this](#) and the entire inspiring speech at the 2019 Glamour Women of the Year 11/12/19.

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Debriefing

A debriefing is a meeting that takes place in order to collect information about a particular piece of work or a completed undertaking, to assess the conduct and results of the undertaking, and to meet about any trauma or stress that participants experienced. During a team debrief, team members reflect upon a recent experience, discuss what went well, and identify opportunities for improvement.

A debriefing can be useful after a crisis event or stressful experience, particularly if strong emotions have come up and haven't been addressed.

Situations in which debriefing may be useful:

1. For a team to move toward closure after a lengthy or difficult case experience.
2. To support a person struggling with specific case content (such as person saying they are struggling or "triggered" by having young children and being assigned a case involving child injury or death)
3. A person keeps mentioning struggle or "burn out"
4. A team has completed a project (like a planned training program) that would be work re-evaluating before moving to the next project.
5. In small groups at an office retreat.

The goal of the debriefing is to create a space to voice and process the emotion, and possibly to move forward or toward closure.

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Debriefing Worksheet:

Opening a Debrief:

Explain the goal. Encourage people to share as much as they are comfortable sharing, and to listen (not interrupt, fix, counsel, etc., just listen).

Useful Debrief Questions:

Describe the experience.
How was this experience for you?
How do you feel about it now?
What was/is challenging about it?
What was your role? How well do you feel you contributed to the team goal?
Did the outcome or conclusion feel successful?
What did your team have to do or believe to be successful?
What would you do differently next time?
Do you feel you communicated well as a team?
What changes would you make in how you communicated?
How did you ensure everyone knew what was happening?
Did the group have a clear action plan and how did you come up with this?

In what ways has the experience been positive/negative?
What skills have you gained?
What advice would you give others facing a similar challenge?
What did others do that was helpful?
What can we do now that would be helpful?

Closing a Debrief:

Thank people for sharing and supporting each other.

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Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Resources:

Black Public Defender Association <http://blackdefender.org/> The Black Public Defender Association aims to improve the quality of defense provided to low-income communities across the United States by creating and maintaining a national network of skilled Black public defenders that identify with and are committed to the populations they serve.

Minority Corporate Counsel Association, 1111 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, District of Columbia 20004 <https://www.mcca.com/> The Minority Corporate Counsel Association (MCCA) is committed to advancing the hiring, retention and promotion of diverse lawyers in law departments and law firms by providing research, best practices, professional development and training; and through pipeline initiatives.

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Efficiency and Time Management

Being able to establish boundaries and take time for rest and rejuvenation requires systems to organize and prioritize work, and to maximize efficiency during your work time. There needs to be an overall system to prioritize and track work, to filter in new cases and tasks, to adjust due dates as tasks are re-triaged, and to locate status updates quickly (for calls from investigators, clients the client family members, etc). There needs to be a workflow with predictable turnaround times, in order to give honest and realistic estimations when asked *how long until you'll get that motion filed?* There needs to be a way to tuck in all the tasks at the end of the day so they don't poke you incessantly at 3 a.m. and keep you awake.

Efficiency Strategies
Communication: Stop checking email, voicemail, etc. more than twice per day. Turn off notifications. Set times with parameters to check communications (10-130 am and 330-4 pm), and filter tasks into priority lists.
InboxZero⁴⁴ 1.Delete unnecessary emails. 2.Delegate. While organizing your emails, you may find some emails which may need some action, but not from you. 3.Respond. Can the email you've run into be answered in under two minutes? If so, take the time and answer it. The strength of this system is getting away from using your inbox as a disorganized and non-prioritized task list, which constantly interrupts your work and hijacks your priorities list.
Stop Multitasking: Do not be fooled into thinking you can do everything, all at once, all the time. Someone called this multitasking and set us all up for a lot of stress and disappointment. Multitasking doesn't work and isn't good for you.
Separate organizing from working: Have designated times for checking messages and getting organized and designated time for uninterrupted writing and thinking—like with your door closed and your notifications off.
Manage incoming communications: Decide the times you'll check and respond to email, text, etc. Don't let it hijack you day by continually interrupting.
Work to your strengths: As much as you can within your assignment, work to your own strengths, such as (my version): using the 7-8 am window for the most challenging thinking/writing/innovating tasks that require fresh clear thinking; using the late afternoon lull for non-tasking administrative tasks, such as updating my caselist and tasklist.

Resources:

[Manage Your Energy, Not Your Time](#), by Tony Schwartz and Catherine McCarthy, HBR, 2007.

⁴⁴ [Merlin Mann YouTube video](#), 7/23/07.

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[How To Gain Control of Your Free Time](#), by Laura Vanderkam, 2016 TED Talk, 11:46 mins. Vanderkam, a time management expert, offers practical strategies to help find more time for what matters, so we can “build the lives we want in the time we’ve got.” She’s the author of [Off The Clock: Feel Less Busy While Getting More Done](#).

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Choosing Your Workspace:

- Choose a desk that has enough clearance for your knees, thighs, and feet. Avoid sitting where you cannot slide in under the desk.
- Avoid working on the couch - as comfortable as it may feel, it causes a C shape for your back which hurts your spine. A couch can work for short times if a pillow is placed behind the back to provide lumbar support.
- Position screens at the right angle to windows and away from harsh lighting. Avoid areas with direct sunlight or where lighting is directly behind, above, or in front of you.
- Use your laptop at a desk or table if you can, or place it on a flat smooth surface with a thin pillow underneath if you're using it on your lap. Never place a laptop directly on pillows or other soft materials as it may cause the fan to overheat.
- If you need to raise your chair up to reach the proper arm height, you may need to add a footrest to elevate your knees if your thighs are not parallel to the ground.
- At-home footrest options include empty boxes, garbage cans on their side, old books, storage containers, etc. Get creative!

Laptop/Monitor Set-Up:

- Angle your screens so that you are not bending forward or hunching your shoulders to view them. You are aiming for a neutral neck posture, with your head balanced on top of your spine. Sometimes it can be useful to ask someone else to look at your posture to verify it's correct.
- At home, you can use stacks of books, boxes, etc. to raise your screens up.
- Position your screens about one arm's length away from you. Some users may need to adjust closer or farther depending on their vision, keeping neutral neck posture in mind.

Adjusting Your Chair:

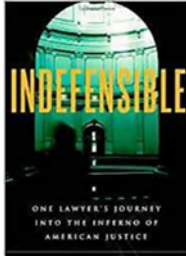
- Choose a chair with a firm back, arms that can support your elbows when held close to your body, and that can go low enough that your feet can completely touch the floor when your thighs are parallel to the ground.
- If you're using a chair from home, consider adding a pillow or rolled-up towel for back support, to make the seat plusher, or to better support your elbows if your chair arms don't adjust.

⁴⁵ This very useful list was sent out by our wonderful HR Coordinator, Dee Engler, at the beginning of the Covid-19 transition to setting up home offices and expanding working from home.

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Forgiveness



**David Feige's 3 rules for public defense,
from his wonderful book *Indefensible*:**

Trust yourself, pace yourself, forgive yourself.

Given the volume of cases, a public ...defender has to make an almost unfathomable number of snap decisions during the course of the day - take the plea or get a trial date, deal with the DA or go straight to the judge, send a client to the grand jury or just wait for trial. Every one of those decisions has potentially catastrophic consequences for a client, and being an effective decision maker requires a preternatural confidence. That's the first part - trust yourself, trust your instincts. Generally they're good.

Second, remember that no matter how hard you work and no matter how efficient you are, no amount of work will ever be enough. There is an inexhaustible supply of clients, and almost every single one of them will need more than you have to give. There is never going to be enough money, enough time, or enough compassion to do much more than triage. Even when you do focus on someone, their needs are usually so beyond your capacities that no good will come of the effort. Accept this as a condition of your life and work as hard pace yourself as you can for as long as you can every single day, and then when it's finally time to go home, accept that you've done all you can do -.

The problem is that with all that volume, with all those decisions, you will screw up. It's inevitable. Every public defender is going to make mistakes, and those mistakes are going to take a terrible, inexcusable, and unforgivable toll on the lives of the clients you love. It's just going to happen. You will err, and someone will go to jail because of it. Somehow, to survive in the work, you need to find a way to forgive the unforgivable, to accept and acknowledge that you've screwed up, and to recognize the price of that screw up without becoming so paralyzed that you can no longer do the work. As bad as you may think you are, clients need you - they are desperate for decent lawyers. Don't be your own worst enemy. Forgive yourself- or you'll burn out in two years

Some useful steps toward self-forgiveness:

1. Distinguish between moral failings and simple unskillfulness. Look at the circumstances of the behavior you regret as possible unskilled, and perhaps see a path to forgiving things that would be done differently with more skill. ⁴⁶

⁴⁶ [How to Let Go of an Old Regret](#), by Christine Carter. Greater Good Magazine. Sept. 20, 2018.

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2. Take accountability for mistakes and pain we've caused others, let go of judgments and justifications, and practice skills to do better in the future.⁴⁷

Class:

[Cultivating Forgiveness: Letting Go to Find Inner Freedom](#) online course from Mindful.org (for fee)

Articles:

[How to Forgive Yourself](#)

[The Healthy Way to Forgive Yourself](#), By Juliana Breines, GGSC

⁴⁷ [How to Let Go of an Old Regret](#), by Christine Carter. Greater Good Magazine. Sept. 20, 2018.







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Goal Setting

Setting Goals to Sustain Well Being in Public Defense
Create a cycle: self-assessment→goal setting→ self-assessment→ goal setting.
Repetition over time makes habit.

DEFINING LAWYER WELL-BEING A CONTINUOUS PROCESS IN WHICH LAWYERS STRIVE FOR THRIVING IN EACH DIMENSION OF THEIR LIVES:					
					
EMOTIONAL	INTELLECTUAL	OCCUPATIONAL	PHYSICAL	SPIRITUAL	SOCIAL
Value emotions. Develop ability to identify and manage our emotions to support mental health, achieve goals, & inform decisions. Seek help for mental health when needed.	Engage in continuous learning. Pursue creative or intellectually challenging activities that foster ongoing development. Monitor cognitive wellness.	Cultivate personal satisfaction, growth, and enrichment in work. Strive to maintain financial stability.	Strive for regular activity, good diet & nutrition, enough sleep, & recovery. Limit addictive substances. Seek help for physical health when needed.	Develop a sense of meaningfulness and purpose in all aspects of life.	Develop connections, a sense of belonging, and a reliable support network. Contribute to our groups and communities.

The ABA Well Being dimensions are helpful for identifying relevant objectives.

SMART Goals
Specific: make the action specific and narrowly defined. Measurable: what evidence of progress will be collected? Attainable: goal can be accomplished in the defined timeframe. Relevant: aligns with identified objective/value/mission. Timely: has a defined and realistic start date, frequency, and end date.
Refine goal, recheck S-M-A-R-T, anticipate obstacles, make preparation, build in accountability, start, end, re-assess. Start again.
Examples of PD Well being SMART goals: -For social wellness, I will call 2 people each week, for 4 weeks. I've made a list of 8 people with whom I've fallen out of touch and would like to be in touch. I've put a weekly reminder in my calendar and will log completion each week. -For physical wellness, I will add a 20 minute daily walk with my dog. I'll walk every morning for 30 days, with my partner, who will hold me accountable. -For occupational wellness and financial stability, I will complete a checklist of ten steps toward budgeting and financial control. I've scheduled a weekly time and put it on my calendar for the next 6 weeks. I've created a folder to track each weekly assignment and completion of the step.

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For emotional and mental health, I will keep a “daily wins” list for 30 days, adding at least one positive accomplishment at work each day. I’ve created the document and a daily reminder, and printed out a hard copy to also keep in my calendar to add on the fly.

Goal setting and tracking apps:

[Goals on Track](#) generate and track SMART goals.

[Strides](#)

[Way of Life](#)

Resources:

Teresa Amabile (2012). [Track Your Small Wins to Motivate Big Accomplishments](#). TEDx Talk, 21:09 mins. Amabile shares key insights from her research about staying motivated at work, including the importance of measuring progress, documenting challenges, and taking time to reflect. Amabile is the author of the book [The Progress Principle](#) and Harvard Business Review article [The Power of Small Wins](#). Her website offers a helpful checklist: [Progress Principle Daily Progress Checklist](#).

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Setting a SMART Well-Being Goal Step-by-Step

1. Review and Reflect on the six well-being dimensions on the chart below. Brainstorm what is going well, that you want to invest energy into continuing. Identify areas where you may want to make a shift. Perhaps take a self-assessment to assist in this process. Take some time to review and select one aspect of one dimension, on which to focus your goal.
Well-Being Dimension: _____ Specific Goal: _____
(Example: Well-Being Dimension: *Occupational Wellness*. Specific Goal: *Financial Stability, debt reduction*)
2. Translate intentions into specific actions and behaviors. What specific actions bring you closer to the goal? _____
(Ex: *To sleep better, I will develop a wind-down routine and maintain a firm bed time*).
3. Set a frequency of action. Focus on repetition to build a habit or break down progress into manageable pieces that can be reasonably accomplished in your current life.
_____ action will be done _____ times per _____ (day/week/month)
for _____ length of time. (good increments: 21 days, 1 month, 6 weeks)
(ex: *I will stop doomscrolling by 10 pm, do a 5 minute Calm mindfulness practice for sleep at 10 pm, read a little, and have the lights out by 1030. I will do this every night for 4 weeks.*)
4. How will the goal be tracked and measured? In your calendar? On an app? _____
(ex: *I've entered this goal in the [Goals on Track](#) and will track progress nightly*)
5. Set a start date: _____ And a completion date: _____
Set a start date within a week, and not contingent on something else happening that's outside you're control or not certain to happen.
6. What do you need to do/prepare to be ready to start: _____
7. How can you build in accountability? Perhaps tell someone your goal, partner with an accountability partner or group. _____
8. What obstacles do you anticipate: _____
How will you overcome them: _____
9. Write out your complete SMART goal: _____

10. Is your goal Specific? Measurable? Attainable? Relevant? and Timely? Refine as needed.
11. After completion date: What went well? What do you want to continue, changed, end, adjust?

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12. Reflect, review, repeat.

Well Being Goal in Public Defense			
ABA Wellness Dimension	What's going well? What would you like to shift?	Obstacles, barriers, and strategies to navigate them.	Specific action/ behavior to advance the goal.
Occupational Wellness Cultivating personal satisfaction, growth, and enrichment at work. Financial stability			
Emotional Wellness Maintain the ability to identify and manage emotions to support mental health, achieve goals, and inform decision making. Seek help for mental health when needed.			
Physical Wellness Strive for regular physical activity, healthy nutrition, and sufficient sleep. Maintain preventative health care and seek help for physical health when needed. Mindful use of alcohol and addictive substances.			
Intellectual Wellness Engage in continuous learning and creative or intellectually challenging activities that foster ongoing development. Maintain cognitive wellness and strength of concentration, clarity, problem solving, memory, planning, organization, creativity and flexibility.			
Spiritual Wellness Develop a sense of meaningfulness and purpose in all aspects of life.			
Social Wellness Develop a sense of connection, belonging, and a well-developed support network. Contributing to groups and communities. Offer and receiving support, trust and connection.			

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Gratitude and Positive Psychology

Gratitude practice benefits
Increased sleep, happiness, productivity, generosity Decreased anxiety Connection to purpose Creates trust, connection, community Better ability to advocate for yourself Recognize and value your own skills in transitioning within your career

Seligman's Gratitude Exercises
Write down a story about a time when you were at your best. Re-read it every day for a week, and each time ask yourself: "What personal strengths did I display when I was at my best?" Did you show a lot of creativity? Good judgement? Were you kind to other people? Loyal? Brave? Passionate? Forgiving? Honest? The next step is to contemplate how to use these strengths to your advantage, intentionally organizing and structuring your life around them.
Set aside 10 minutes before you go to bed each night to write down three things that went really well that day. Next to each event answer the question, "Why did this good thing happen?" Instead of focusing on life's lows, the exercise turns your attention to the good things in life, so it changes what you attend to.
The next time someone you care about shares good news, give an active constructive response. Instead of saying something passive like, "Oh, that's nice," express genuine excitement and prolong the discussion by encouraging them to tell others or suggest a celebratory activity.
<i>Dr. Seligman (Psychology professor at UPenn), suggests these gratitude exercises based on research, from "Get Happy: Four Well-Being Workouts," NY Times, April 5, 2017.</i>

Practice Apps:

[Gratitude](#): a personal journal app where you can write about things that you are grateful for.

[Live Happy](#): Bringing you scientifically proven tips and ideas to live a happier and more meaningful life through interviews with positive psychology and well-being thought leaders.

[365 Gratitude](#) game style daily challenges.

Practice Resources:

[Science of Happiness](#) online course (free):

Research:

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[Greater Good Science Center](#) at UC Berkeley

Articles:

Robert Emmons, [Five Myths about Gratitude](#)

Robert Emmons, [How Gratitude Can Help You Through Hard Times](#)

Robert Emmons, [Three Surprising Ways That Gratitude Works at Work](#)

Sheldon, K. M., & Lyubomirsky, S. (2006). [How to increase and sustain positive emotion: The effects of expressing gratitude and visualizing best possible selves](#). The Journal of Positive Psychology, 1, 73-82.

[Your brain on gratitude: How a neuroscientist used his research to heal from grief](#), By Liz Tung, WHYY, Nov. 21, 2019.

Books:

[Flourish: A Visionary New Understanding of Happiness and Well-being](#), by Martin P. Seligman

[Gratitude WORKS! A 21-Day Program for Creating Emotional Prosperity](#), By Robert Emmons

[Thanks!: How Practicing Gratitude Can Make You Happier](#), Robert Emmons, 2008

TED talks and other video resources:

[An Experiment in Gratitude](#) The Science of Happiness: What makes you happy? Have you ever wondered why? Join us as we take an experimental approach on what makes people happier. July 11, 2013. (7 min)

The Emotional Life: In Search of Ourselves and Happiness. PBS 2010. Available on [DVD](#) and via [Amazon Prime Video](#), 3 episodes, 1 hr, 53 mins each. The series is hosted by Dr. Daniel Gilbert, Harvard psychologist and author, and covers three themes: (1) improving social relationships, (2) resolving negative feelings (depression, anxiety, etc.), and (3) searching for greater happiness. It's aimed at giving viewers a deeper sense of what makes us tick and insights into how to use that information to improve their own emotional and social well-being.

[Gratitude Is Good For You](#) from John Templeton Foundation, Nov. 18, 2015. Catalog of benefits of gratitude. (2 min video)

[Gratitude and Well-Being at Work](#)-set of videos from Greater Good Science Center

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[Gratitude Works!](#) The Science and Practice of Saying Thanks. Robert Emmons (Professor of Psychology, UC Davis) explains how gratitude can heal, energize, and change human lives, with reference to recent empirical psychological research. Delivered at Biola University on March 6, 2014. (60 min)

[365 grateful project](#), Hailey Bartholomew, TEDxQUT. Hailey Bartholomew found the secret to happiness. After struggling to enjoy and appreciate all of the great things in her life she set out on a year long photography project to find gratitude everyday (12 min)

[Nature. Beauty. Gratitude.](#) Louie Schwartzberg TedxSF. Nature's beauty can be easily missed — but not through Louie Schwartzberg's lens. His stunning time-lapse photography, accompanied by powerful words from Benedictine monk Brother David Steindl-Rast, serves as a meditation on being grateful for every day. (10 min)

Project Happiness (2011). [Amazon Prime](#). 1hr. Award-winning documentary that includes interviews of George Lucas, Richard Gere, neuroscientist Richard Davidson, and the Dalai Lama on the nature of lasting happiness.

Happy (2012). Available on [DVD](#) and via [Amazon Prime Video](#), 1h 15mins. Combining real life stories from around the world and interviews with leading scientists in happiness research, *Happy* explores the secrets behind lasting happiness.

[The happy secret to better work](#), Shawn Achor, TEDxBloomington. Theme: happiness inspires productivity. (12 min)

[The Science of Gratitude](#), 10/6/16. Research shows that an “attitude of gratitude” can measurably improve your overall well-being. (2 min)

[The Gratitude Experiment](#), from WellCast. 9/26/12. Summary of research findings. (4:43 min)

Anne Brafford (2020). [Resilient Thinking for Lawyers Part II: Boosting Positive Emotions](#), Lawyer Well-Being Channel, 1hr. Guided by a downloadable [Worksheet](#), Anne explains 8 science-backed activities for boosting positive emotions: (1) Prioritize Positivity, (2) Notice & Savor Positive Emotions, (3) Grow Your Gratitude, (4) Do Acts of Kindness, (5) Identify & Use Your Strengths, (6) Pick & Practice Positive Emotions, (7) Align Your Life With Your Goals & Values, and (8) Mindfulness & Meditation.

Elina Teboul (2020). [Tips for Boosting Optimism for Health & Happiness](#), Lawyer Well-Being Channel, 10:40 mins.

[Want to be happy? Be grateful](#), David Steindl-Rast (15 min)

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Gratitude Journal

Commit to filling this out each day for seven days, preferably at the same time each day. Write down in detail exactly what happened. Consider including how it made you feel at the time.

Day 1	
I am grateful for: 1. 2. 3.	Amazing things that happened today: 1. 2. 3.
Day 2	
I am grateful for: 1. 2. 3.	Amazing things that happened today: 1. 2. 3.
Day 3	
I am grateful for: 1. 2. 3.	Amazing things that happened today: 1. 2. 3.
Day 4	
I am grateful for: 1. 2. 3.	Amazing things that happened today: 1. 2. 3.
Day 5	
I am grateful for: 1. 2. 3.	Amazing things that happened today: 1. 2. 3.
Day 6	
I am grateful for: 1. 2. 3.	Amazing things that happened today: 1. 2. 3.
Day 7	
I am grateful for: 1. 2. 3.	Amazing things that happened today: 1. 2. 3.

Complete at the end of the week: How did it feel to do this for a week? Did you notice any changes in your ease of completing the list? Did you notice any changes at other times?

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Public Defender Gratitude Bingo

<p>Explore: Take a class or try something new that you haven't tried before</p>	<p>Build Community: Reach out to a colleague for a hike or coffee walk.</p>	<p>Get Outside: Take a mindful walk in nature</p>	<p>Commit: Set a new daily goal for your well-being—something attainable like a 5 minute walk.</p>	<p>Be Grateful: Make a list of 5 things you're grateful for. Tape it up where you can see it!</p>
<p>Breathe: Take 5 minutes to focus on relaxed, calm breathing. Close your eyes and enjoy.</p>	<p>Support. Reach out to a colleague with less experience to offer support and encouragement.</p>	<p>Weekend Warrior: Take a new class on the weekend</p>	<p>Rest: Intentionally take a rest day, whatever that looks like for you</p>	<p>Get Curious: Ask a friend or colleague about something they do which you admire and/or aspire to do.</p>
<p>Celebrate! Share warm wishes or express appreciation for a colleague.</p>	<p>Love Yourself: Write down 5 things you love about yourself. Tape it up where you can see it!</p>	<p>FREE SPACE: Because you're amazing!</p>	<p>Strengthen! Challenge yourself with a hike or workout that pushes you.</p>	<p>Spread appreciation. Write a thank you note to a colleague or client or family member.</p>
<p>Detox Day: Eat healthy! Load up on fruits & veggies, & avoid processed food for a day.</p>	<p>Slow Down: Take a Yin or Restorative Yoga class, or a relaxing walk.</p>	<p>Connect to nature! Take a walk and take 3 photos of beauty you see.</p>	<p>Let go: Write down 5 things that no longer serve you. Take a deep breath. Throw the paper away.</p>	<p>Unplug: Go offline completely for a day.</p>
<p>Share: Use a silly photo of your pet as a zoom virtual background to lights up a meeting.</p>	<p>Re-Kindle: Call, text, or email a friend you haven't connected with in the last 6 months.</p>	<p>News Vacation: Take a break from the news for one entire day.</p>	<p>Get Social: Introduce yourself to someone new.</p>	<p>Meditate: Try a meditation practice.</p>

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Imposter Syndrome

Imposter syndrome describes feelings of severe inadequacy and self-doubt that can leave people fearing that they will be exposed as a “fraud”, usually in their work lives. It can affect anyone, regardless of their success. It is “a close relative” of general anxiety disorder.
Associations -High achieving generally in society -Having a “gifted” sibling -Being labeled as gifted or high achieving
Impostor syndrome can be impacted by race , says Dr. Harden Bradford. “Black students who are taught from very young ages that they need to work twice as hard to be successful, often struggle with imposter syndrome, primarily due to the narrative crafted by others that they don’t belong or are taking spots from more 'qualified' students.” ⁴⁸
Triggers: -New opportunities -Transitions
Types of Imposter syndrome ⁴⁹ The expert: must research EVERYTHING to be ready The perfectionist The natural genius: expects to master everything quickly The soloist: works alone, asking for help exposes didn’t know something The superhero: workaholic
70% of people have at least 1 episode of imposter syndrome Believe inadequate despite evidence of skill and success Chronic self-doubt, doubt accomplishments, attribute to “luck” Fear being exposed as a fraud Associated with anxiety Fear of failure causes self-sabotage
Strategies for Imposter Syndrome Awareness: learn about it Talk about it Challenge negative thinking patterns Accept that perfectionism is impossible Document accomplishments-with assessments, feedback from friends or mentors. Celebrate successes Gratitude practice, affirmations, give and accept praise

Resources:

[7 Coping Strategies to Overcome Impostor Syndrome](#), by Hari Ali, Huffington Post, 02/01/2017.

[Imposter Syndrome Comes In 5 Different Forms](#), by Kasandra Brabaw, Women’s Health, Apr 2, 2019.

⁴⁸ [Imposter Syndrome Comes In 5 Different Forms](#), by Kasandra Brabaw, Women’s Health, Apr 2, 2019.

⁴⁹ [Imposter Syndrome Comes In 5 Different Forms](#), by Kasandra Brabaw, Women’s Health, Apr 2, 2019.

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Journaling

Journaling is any regular practice of recording occurrences, experiences or observations.

“Journaling requires the application of the analytical, rational left side of the brain; while your left hemisphere is occupied, your right hemisphere (the creative, touchy-feely side) is given the freedom to wander and play (Grothaus, 2015)! Allowing your creativity to flourish and expand can be cathartic and make a big difference in your daily well-being.”

--Courtney Ackerman, MSc, [83 Benefits of Journaling for Depression, Anxiety, and Stressed](#)

Benefits of regular journaling
-boosts mood and affect -enhances sense of well-being -improves working memory

Writing a journal can contribute to better mental health on many levels ⁵⁰
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•It's a way of getting to know and understand yourself better which can put you in a stronger position to manage your mental health and wellbeing•Expressive writing can be an effective tool for clarifying your thoughts, feelings and emotions and making sense of what think and feel•Writing about painful and complex feelings and emotions can effectively decrease the intensity of some emotions and allow you to be more present and mindful•Writing in a journal about difficult relationships and conversations can help you gain different perspectives and points of view, which can help in resolving certain issues and misunderstandings•Writing therapeutically and creatively can provide greater access to the right brain and creative thinking channels that generate solutions to your everyday problems and challenges

Practice Apps:

[Day one](#)

[Chronicle](#) - A Personal Journal / Writing Diary

[Grid Diary](#)-system of prompts and questions in grid format

[Momento](#)- compiles social media posts into journal entries

Prompts:

[32 Journal Prompts](#) for Self-Reflection and Self-Care

⁵⁰ [How Creativity Boosts Your Mental Health and Wellbeing](#), by Jackee Holder, Feb. 18, 2016.

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[50 Visual Journal Prompts](#) to Promote Drawing and Creative Thinking Skills

[50 Therapeutic Journal Prompts for Mental Health](#)

[The Isolation Journals](#): free daily prompt from Suleika Jaouad

Research:

Courtney Ackerman, MSc, [83 Benefits of Journaling for Depression, Anxiety, and Stress](#)

TED talks and other video resources:

[Writing Our Way Out of Trouble](#): Sue Reynolds at TEDxStouffville

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Leading for Well-Being

One component of effective public defense leadership is leading with the intention to support well-being. Seek out training and information to understand how leadership impacts well-being and how well-being impacts effectiveness and access to justice for the people we represent.

Seek out training in leadership generally, and specifically for leading public defenders.

“High quality leadership is vital to the health of an organization. A good leader works with her team to create a vision of possibility for an organization that will inspire the organization to change how it views its future. She empowers her followers to implement the vision. She creates an environment where people can thrive. She recognizes the importance of growth and constant learning. She understands complexity and the need to adapt to changing circumstances. She is doggedly persistent and committed to the higher value represented by the vision. She is self-aware and uses critical thinking to avoid cognitive bias and other mind traps. She is emotionally intelligent in how she deals with her friends and those with whom she is in conflict. She has high ethical principles and models them with integrity and courage. Without high quality leadership, an organization will stagnate or worse in a rapidly changing world.”—Ernie Lewis, NAPD Executive Director who developed its Executive Leadership Institute program.

ABA Well Being Task Force Recommendations
24. Establish Organizational Infrastructure to Promote Well-Being. 24.1 Form a Lawyer Well-Being Committee. 24.2 Assess Lawyers’ Well-Being. 25. Establish Policies and Practices to Support Well-Being. 25.1 Monitor for Signs of Work Addiction and Poor Self-Care 25.2 Actively Combat Social Isolation and Encourage Interconnectivity. 26. Provide Training and Education on Well-Being, Including During Orientation. 26.1 Emphasize a Service-Centered Mission. 26.2 Create Standards, Align Incentives, and Give Feedback

Resources

[NAPD](#) mygideon page dedicated to PD office leadership

[NAPD](#) Executive Leadership Institute training programs

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Questions to Ask Yourself About Your Leadership:⁵¹

- ☐ What is your organizational and/or personal commitment to well-being? (this is ABA language)?
- ☐ How do you model sustaining well-being?
- ☐ Are there barriers in your organization to incorporating well-being practices?
- ☐ What shifts have you recognized in your office?
- ☐ How do you support your teams when they are suffering?
- ☐ What is your relationship with self-care?

⁵¹ Many of these questions are taken from a 2020 presentation by [Lori James-Townes](#), who is a wonderful presenter on leadership.

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Mental Health

THE EVIDENCE IS IN ON LAWYER WELL-BEING

We can no longer ignore our profession's well-being problem.

(Source: Krill et al., 2016; Mental Health Daily report of suicide by occupation)



Resources

[80 Awesome Mental Health Resources When You Can't Afford a Therapist](#)

[American Bar Association Lawyer Assistance Program](#)

[Black Emotional and Mental Health Collective](#) a training, movement building and grant making organization dedicated to the healing, wellness and liberation of Black and marginalized communities.

[The National Queer and Trans Therapist of Color Network](#) healing justice organization committed to transforming mental health for queer and trans people of color (QTPoC).

[Sista Afya Community Mental Wellness Organization](#) sustaining the mental wellness of Black women through building community, sharing information, and connecting Black women to quality mental wellness services.

[Tending to Racial Trauma Crisis](#) training, hosted by Inclusive Therapists work shop: Culturally Responsive Care Supporting Asian and Communities of Color. (\$60 + 3 CEUs)

[Therapy For Black Girls](#) resources to find a trusted, culturally competent therapists that know our feelings and can help navigate being a strong, black woman.

[The Unplug Collective](#): a place where Black and Brown womxn and non-binary folks can share their stories about existing in their bodies without being silenced or censored.

Articles:

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[Physical Symptoms of Anxiety Disorder That You Might Not Recognize](#), by Lauren Jarvis-Gibson, Teen Vogue, Dec. 27, 2019.

[Taking Care of Your Mental Health in the Face of Uncertainty](#), by Doreen Marshall, PhD, March 10, 2020.

Diana O'Brien & Jen Fisher (2019). [5 Ways Bosses Can Reduce The Stigma of Mental Health At Work](#). Harvard Business Review.

Kristen Bell De Tienne et al. (2020). [How to Manage an Employee With Depression](#). Harvard Business Review.

Douglas Jacobs (2015). [Employers Should Offer Free Screenings For Depression](#). Harvard Business Review.

Barbara Harvey (2018). [What Companies Can Do To Help Employees Address Mental Health Issues](#). Harvard Business Review.

Apps

[ACT Coach](#), developed by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, teaches users how to tolerate negative thoughts and feelings. The app virtually guides people through awareness exercises and gives tips on how to ditch self-doubt. With an extra focus on mindfulness, this app also provides a log to track your progress.

[Breathe2Relax](#) Sometimes, all we need to de-stress is take a few deep breaths. Created by the National Center for Telehealth and Technology, this app teaches users how to do diaphragmatic breathing (read: breathe down into the low belly).

[The Safe Place](#) - a mental health app geared towards the Black community.

TED talks and other video resources:

[The Anxiety Toolkit: Mindfulness Practices to Reduce Anxiety in Trying Times, Lawyer Well-Being Channel](#), 16 mins. By Jon Krop, 2020. a lawyer and meditation teacher, offers practical mindfulness strategies to manage anxiety, which is skyrocketing for many during the COVID crisis.

[Cultivating Wisdom During the COVID Crisis: Resilience Strategies to Combat Loneliness](#), Olivia Ash & Elina Teboul (2020). Lawyer Well-Being Channel, 1 hr.

Depression: Out of The Shadows. PBS Documentary, 2008. Available on [DVD](#), 90 mins. Addresses the stigma and challenges of living with depression.

The Emotional Life: In Search of Ourselves and Happiness. PBS 2010. Available on [DVD](#) and via [Amazon Prime Video](#), 3 episodes, 1 hr, 53 mins each. The series is hosted by Dr. Daniel Gilbert,

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Harvard psychologist and author, and covers three themes: (1) improving social relationships, (2) resolving negative feelings (depression, anxiety, etc.), and (3) searching for greater happiness. It's aimed at giving viewers a deeper sense of what makes us tick and insights into how to use that information to improve their own emotional and social well-being.

[How to Make Stress Your Friend](#), by Kelly McGonigal (2013) TED Talk, 13:47 mins. Research suggests that stress may only be bad for you if you believe that to be true. Psychologist Kelly McGonigal urges us to see stress as a positive. She's the author of [The Upside of Stress: Why Stress Is Good For You, And How To Get Good At It](#).

[Lonely Advocates: Combating Loneliness in the Legal Profession](#), Olivia Ash (2019). Lawyer Well-Being Channel, 7:14 mins.

[Resilient Thinking For Lawyers Part I: Taming Negative Emotions](#), Anne Brafford, 2020. Lawyer Well-Being Channel, 1 hr 29 mins. Guided by a downloadable [Worksheet](#), Anne gives 6 steps for resilient thinking based on positive psychology, cognitive behavioral therapy, and acceptance and commitment therapy.

[There's No Shame In Taking Care Of Your Mental Health](#), by Sangu Delle (2017). TED Talk, 8:58 mins. TED Fellow Sangu Delle talks about confronting his own deep prejudice that men shouldn't take care of their mental health and learning to handle anxiety in a society that's uncomfortable with emotions.

[Why We Focus on The Negative](#), Greater Good Science Center, 1:55 mins. Esteemed scholar Dr. Roy Baumeister describes the evolutionary reasons why we notice and are more strongly impacted by negative emotions.

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Mentoring

“It is critical that public defender’s office employ mentoring to ensure that the values taught are further developed and reinforced”⁵²

Mentoring is an informal transmission of knowledge and personal support that is relevant to work, career, or professional development. Mentoring includes informal communication, usually face-to-face and during a sustained period of time.

There is a dramatic difference between unstructured pairings and a structured program with clear expectation and training. With minimal time to establish a structure and provide mentor training, a program can be dramatically improved. This can also help avoid some of the common pitfalls (ghosting by mentee or mentor, lack of time boundaries for questions/support, lack of substance beyond becoming drinking buddies).

Benefits to Mentee	Benefits to Mentor
Establishes a strong ongoing connection to purpose and goals of PD work Provides confidential resource for guidance Offers a neutral sounding board to challenges Provides support in an emotionally challenging profession.	Continues and reinforces a strong ongoing connection to the purpose and goal of PD work Provides an opportunity to give back Provides an opportunity to share knowledge. Reinforces commitment to principles. Provides an opportunity to grow and learn

Useful Training for Mentors

Principles and values to be supported and advanced through the mentorship program

The role of a mentor within a critical thinking and support driven model, as a coach who assists the mentee in developing confidence and problem solving skills

The importance of confidentiality, and the limited situations when confidentiality can be broken for safety or ethical practice

Communication skills, such as active listening and promote de-escalation techniques, coaching and reflection practices for mentors

Tools for supporting and modeling health work/life balance and well-being in public defense

Useful Structure for a Mentorship Program

Defined length, with a scheduled start and end date.

Pairing process to survey and pair mentors with mentees.

Schedule of pair/group activities, especially a few icebreakers and community activities at the beginning and a closing/transition meeting or celebration at the end.

Defined expectations: Frequency of meeting (ex: 1 hour per month), format (phone, zoom, in person).

⁵² Jonathan Rapping, You Can’t Build on Shaky Ground: Laying the Foundation for Indigent Defense Reform through Values-Based Recruitment, Training, and Mentoring,” 3 Harvard Law and Policy Review 161 (2009), p. 179.

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Suggested activities with supporting resources: mentorship goals, developing a mentorship action plan, developing quarterly discussion topics.
Check-ins and surveys to respond to issues and lapses.

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Microaggressions

Resources:

[How microaggressions are like mosquito bites](#), Same Difference, 10/5/16, video (2 min)

Microaggressions in Everyday Life, Derald Wing Sue (video 15 min)

[Microaggressions in the Classroom](#), University of Denver.

[WHAT DOES MICROAGGRESSION MEAN TO YOU?](#) Under Our Skin, Seattle Sun Times video series

[WHAT I HEAR WHEN YOU SAY Code Words](#), PBS, video (7 min)

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Mindfulness and Meditation

Think about the Montgomery bus boycott and how people walked for nearly a year, gathering each night at churches to sing and pray, so they could walk the next day. That's mindfulness. Think about the young people who integrated the lunch counters and trained themselves to maintain their composure. They sat at the counters while people poured food and drinks over them and they maintained their equanimity. –Jenee Johnson, in [Encouraging Meaningful Conversations about Race and Trauma](#)

Some definitions of meditation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- practices to heighten concentration and consciousness-to engage in contemplation or reflection-the process of quieting the mind to spend time in thought for relaxation or spiritual purposes- a practice of concentrated focus upon a sound, object, visualization, the breath, movement, or attention itself in order to increase awareness, reduce stress, promote relaxation, and enhance personal and spiritual growth

Some definitions of mindfulness
<ul style="list-style-type: none">-“the ability to know what’s happening in your head at any given moment without getting carried away by it.” —Dan Harris-act of focusing on being in the present- the quality or state of being conscious or aware of something-a mental state achieved by focusing awareness on the present moment, while calmly acknowledging and accepting feelings, thoughts, and bodily sensations- the practice of maintaining a nonjudgmental state of heightened or complete awareness of one's thoughts, emotions, or experiences on a moment-to-moment basis- basic human ability to be fully present, aware of where we are and what we’re doing, and not overly reactive or overwhelmed by what’s going on around us

Principles and aspirations of mindfulness practice
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Being in the present moment, rather than lost in thoughts about past and future.2. Observing your experience with kindness, curiously and without judgement.3. Seeing thinking as it arises and choosing how/whether to respond.4. Using the 5 senses as a gateway to observe and experience the present moment.5. Being open to the present experience or sensation, even if it is unpleasant.

Some benefits of mindfulness practice ⁵³
Improved Attention Greater Compassion Letting go of unproductive, unhelpful thoughts.

⁵³ See list of research centers below and follow links to abundant research on benefits of mindfulness practice.

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Understanding and managing our energy Reduced stress Reduced anxiety Reduced perseveration Reduced reactivity Increased self-regulation, self-knowledge, and self-awareness Reduced “burnout”

Mindfulness practice to try
5 senses: Notice (or notice and write down): 5 things you can see 4 things you can feel 3 things you can hear 2 things you can smell 1 think you can taste
5x5x5 Inhale slowly as you count to 5. Exhale slowly as you count to 5. Repeat 5 times.
Simple mindful breathing practice for beginners (from gaia.com) 1.Sit comfortably. 2.Close your eyes. 3.Make no effort to control the breath; simply breathe naturally. 4.Focus your attention on the breath and on how the body moves with each inhalation and exhalation. Notice the movement of your body as you breathe. Observe your chest, shoulders, rib cage, and belly. Simply focus your attention on your breath without controlling its pace or intensity. If your mind wanders, return your focus back to your breath. Maintain this meditation practice for two to three minutes to start, and then try it for longer periods. Additional Body Scan and other mindfulness exercise at stillmind.com.

Practice Apps:

[Calm](#) online app for sleep and meditation. Subscription with free trial.

[Gaia](#) online app, with yoga, meditation, movies and other content. Subscription with free trial.

[Headspace](#) online guided meditation app. Led by Andy Puddicombe. Includes instruction at different lengths and levels, and themed series (stress, sleep, etc). Subscription with free trial.

[Insight Timer](#) free meditation app, with an enormous selection of practices and styles.

[Liberate](#) a meditation app for the Black, Indigenous, and People of Color community.

[Ten Percent Happier](#) guided meditations app, with a variety of teachers. Site from Dan Harris, author of [10% Happier](#) and other books.

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Practice Resources:

[Mindful Mondays](#) weekly practice (Mon. 3 pm Eastern) from Mindfulness in Law Society

[Videos from Niroga](#), including Dynamic Mindfulness Practices

Instruction and teaching centers:

Dynamic Mindfulness: this evidence-based and trauma-informed curriculum of Niroga is summarized in a [book](#) and offered in both [live](#)/online and self-paced/[online](#) courses.

[Spirit Rock Meditation Center](#)

Research:

The [Greater Good Science Center](#) studies the psychology, sociology, and neuroscience of well-being, and teaches skills that foster a thriving, resilient, and compassionate society.

[Mindful Schools](#) includes research on the benefits of mindfulness, including neuroscience, latest scientific studies, and specific benefits for educators and students.

[Niroga](#) includes independent research in educational psychology, neurobiology, social welfare and youth development.

Articles:

[Balancing What is Reactive](#), a brief excerpt at jackkornfield.com, which also includes links to other articles, courses, events and resources.

[Can Mindfulness Help Us Dismantle Inequality?](#) by Barry Boyce, Mindful. May 27, 2020. Rhonda Magee explains how mindfulness practices that transform problematic habits and thought patterns can help us tune in to the subtle ways that society cultivates barriers.

[Encouraging Meaningful Conversations about Race and Trauma](#), an interview with Jenee Johnson, Program Innovation Leader: Mindfulness, Trauma, and Racial Equity at the San Francisco Department of Public Health, about using mindfulness as part of a systemic approach to address trauma, and foster wellness and resilience.

[How to Fight Racism Through Inner Work](#), by Jill Suttie, Greater Good Magazine, Sept. 25, 2019. Rhonda Magee explains how mindfulness-based awareness and compassion is key to racial justice work.

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[Trauma Informed Mindfulness: Why Meditation May Not Be Helpful](#), by Molly Rae Benoit-Leach MSW RSW RYT, Yogapedia, July 3, 2019

[Why Every Lawyer Should Be Practicing Mindfulness](#), by Jeena Cho (Above the Law, 2015)

[Why Every Lawyer Should Be Practicing Mindfulness](#), Part 2, by Jeena Cho (Above the Law, 2015)

Books:

[10% Happier](#), by Dan Harris. After having a nationally televised panic attack, Dan Harris knew he had to make some changes. A lifelong nonbeliever, he found himself on a bizarre adventure involving a disgraced pastor, a mysterious self-help guru, and a gaggle of brain scientists. 10% Happier takes readers on a ride from the outer reaches of neuroscience to the inner sanctum of network news to the bizarre fringes of America's spiritual scene, and leaves them with a takeaway that could actually change their lives.

[The Anxious Lawyer](#): An 8-Week Guide to a Happier, Saner Law Practice Using Meditation, by Jeena Cho & Karen Gifford

[Comfortable with Uncertainty](#), by Pema Chodron. This book offers short, stand-alone readings designed to help us cultivate compassion and awareness amid the challenges of daily living.

[From Suffering to Peace](#), The True Promise of Mindfulness, by Mark Coleman.

[How to Meditate](#), by Pema Chodron. See the extensive library of other wonderful books from Pema Chodron [here](#).

[The Inner Work of Racial Justice](#): Healing Ourselves and Transforming Our Communities Through Mindfulness, by Rhonda V. Magee

[Radical Acceptance](#), by Tara Brach. Four-step meditation practice (Recognize, Allow, Investigate, Nurture) for feelings of overwhelm, loss, self-aversion, painful relationships, and past trauma, to discover love, forgiveness, compassion, and deep wisdom.

TED talks and other video resources:

[Why Mindfulness is a Superpower](#), Dan Harris narration from Happify (3 min video).

[All it takes is 10 mindful minutes](#), TED talk by Andy Puddicombe

[Andy Puddicombe Guides Jimmy Through a Two-Minute Headspace Meditation](#)

[Mindful Music Moments](#): News profile about music-based mindfulness program (4 min)

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[Mindful Music Moments presents Heroes](#) (3 min video, you can practice with)

[Videos from Niroga](#), video library that includes Dynamic Mindfulness Practices

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Moral Injury

Moral Injury in Public Defense
Moral injury, as applied to public defense, looks at the impact on our well-being from systemic obstacles to meeting the needs of the people we represent.
<p>Deep soul wounds in public defense result from a system in which, for example (not at all exhaustive in capturing the infinite list):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -women are handcuffed to metal beds during childbirth in custody -money bail and mandatory minimums extort pleas for daylight -fines, fees and forfeiture are used to line pockets and destroy communities
<p>The lens of moral injury invites these question of public defense leaders:</p> <p>Is this action that is being taken making it easier or harder to do right by the people we represent?</p> <p>Is it increasing or decreasing obstacles to achieving the goal or providing high quality and client centered representation?</p>
The moral injury framework is a necessary shift to a more useful way of conceptualizing chronic workplace stress and trauma. This shift is important because it stops placing responsibility for solutions on the individual (do yoga! be more mindful!) and recognizes that systemic obstacles are the true causes of much of the chronic stress that we are experiencing. While we can mitigate some individual impacts with self-care, systemic solutions are needed to correct systemic causes.
The value of shifting from the framework of burnout to the framework of moral injury is in the discussion of causes and the responses. Burnout focuses on individual inability to manage stress, and suggests individual responsibility to develop skills and strength to handle chronic stress—self-care practices like yoga, meditation, and therapy. Moral injury looks at systemic obstacles, abuses and transgressions, and suggests systemic solutions—such as reduced caseloads, supportive leadership, sufficient training, and mentorship support.

Moral Injury Generally
The term moral injury was first used to describe soldiers' responses to their actions in war. Doctor and clinical psychiatrist Jonathan Shay described moral injury as perpetrating, failing to prevent, bearing witness to, or learning about acts that transgress deeply held moral beliefs and expectations. ⁵⁴
Journalist Diane Silver described moral injury as “a deep soul wound that pierces a person’s identity, sense of morality, and relationship to society.” ⁵⁵
<p>Dr. Shay’s version of moral injury is:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.A betrayal of what’s right 2.by someone who holds legitimate authority (or by one’s self) 3.in a high stakes situation.

⁵⁴ [Doctor Moral Injury](#), by doctor and clinical psychiatrist Jonathan Shay, MD, PhD, Psychoanalytic Psychology, 2014, Vol. 31, No. 2, 182-191.

⁵⁵ [Beyond PTSD: Soldiers Have Injured Souls](#), by Diane Silver, Sept 1, 2011.

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Jonathan Shay outlined a definition of moral injury that suggests a solution from those in leadership. Moral injury deteriorates trust, ideals and ambitions; it creates an expectation of harm, exploitation and humiliation from others. He writes that the solution is within our control, and is “the need for leadership to be expert, ethical, and properly supported.”

Resources:

[Those Who Love the Fight](#) | Episode 12: Sherr & Andrews, Moral Matters, 3/18/21. (48 min) “In this episode, Jenny Andrews, a public defender in Santa Barbara, CA, and Jeff Sherr, the Training Director for the National Association for Public Defense talk about why the language of moral injury matters for public defenders. Systemic obstacles preventing "gold standard" representation is a familiar frustration. Burdened by excessive caseloads, endless hours of work, and with their client's freedom on the line, many public defenders are struggling to stay in the profession. Why? Just like healthcare workers, public defenders are experiencing moral injury.”

[Beyond PTSD: Soldiers Have Injured Souls](#), by Diane Silver, Sept 1, 2011.

[Burnout Is About Your Workplace, Not Your People](#), by Jennifer Moss, Harvard Business Review, Dec. 11, 2019. While this article doesn't mention moral injury, it's all about shifting responsibility for managing and preventing burnout from the individual to the organization. it lists the top 5 reasons for “burnout” as: Unfair treatment at work, Unmanageable workload, Lack of role clarity, Lack of communication and support from their manager, and Unreasonable time pressure.

Fixmoralinjury.org. Moral Injury is covered extensively at fixmoralinjury.org, [this site from doctors Wendy Dean and Simon Talbot](#), is a useful lens through which to view public defense.

[Doctor Moral Injury](#), by doctor and clinical psychiatrist Jonathan Shay, MD, PhD, Psychoanalytic Psychology, 2014, Vol. 31, No. 2, 182-191.

[Physicians aren't 'burning out.' They're suffering from moral injury](#), by Simon G. Talbot and Wendy Dean, STAT News, July 26, 2018.

It's Not Burnout, It's Moral Injury is the [YouTube video of Dr. Zubin Damania](#) explaining why Moral Injury should replace the term burnout for physicians. This 6 minute video is a great overview of the concept of moral injury as it applies to doctors. The concepts are easily applied to public defense

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National Association for Public Defense
10 Principles for Creating Sustainability in Public Defense
Published March 2021

Introduction

Serving in public defense is an important job with an enormous amount of responsibility. Public defense is a profession that requires teamwork amongst leaders, lawyers, administrative professionals, core staff, administrators, sentencing advocates, mitigation specialists, social workers, investigators, and all other members of the defense team. Working with clients whose lives sit in the balance can be personally and professionally challenging, and that challenge is exacerbated when the systems operate against our clients' liberty interests or separate them from their families. The emotional toll of feeling responsible for system challenges that impact our clients¹ is real and can have a tremendous impact on defense team members, sometimes resulting in compassion fatigue and burnout.²

Organizations that view employees “as an asset to be nurtured and developed” are more likely to have employees that feel valued.³ The primary reason for creating a work environment that fosters the overall well-being of public defenders and team members is to better serve clients.⁴ In light of the historical and present day inequities in the system, anything less than high level representation can hurt clients and their families. High level defense of clients requires complex, creative thinking, intense focus, emotional regulation, and perspective taking, all of which suffer if well-being is compromised.⁵ Studies show that employees who feel emotionally supported are more effective, more satisfied in the workplace, more likely to stay engaged at the office and in the work, and are in a better position to consistently fulfill the mission of the office.⁶ On the other hand, employees who are not emotionally supported are more likely to experience stress, vicarious trauma, moral injury, and burnout.⁷

Admittedly, there is a dynamic tension between what public defenders need to support their own well-being and the effort required to provide optimal defense for clients.⁸ Sometimes, individual defense team members will be less focused on their own well-being in favor of client needs. Other times, individuals may be more focused on their own well-being, potentially at the expense of client interests. A team that aligns with values of well-being will better adapt to and balance such episodic strains.⁹ It is important to hold equally, without judgment, both sides of the dialectic that defenders are doing their best to navigate competing demands at any given moment, but that they also have the capacity to do better.

Public defenders need to start from a strong base of overall wellness to best represent their clients under what are frequently challenging circumstances.¹⁰ Employee wellness is multi-layered, and best practices toward sustainability can be woven into organization

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operations, policies, procedures, training, supervision, atmosphere, and interpersonal interactions.

The end goal is to increase not only individual resilience, but community resilience of the office, which creates sustainability.¹¹ When individual well-being is addressed, we can better support the well-being of our colleagues and teams. Only then can we become a community that is adaptable and sustainable and that provides the level of representation our clients deserve.

Definitions

Culture: The “character and personality of your organization...the sum of its values, traditions, beliefs, interactions, behaviors, and attitudes.”¹²

Health: “A state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.”¹³

Healthy Office Culture: “A healthy workplace is one in which all organizational members collaborate to continually improve processes to protect and promote member well-being and organizational success. All seek alignment of organizational and member goals and needs so that they can grow and thrive together.”¹⁴

Moral Injury: “Moral injury is the damage done to one’s conscience or moral compass when that person perpetrates, witnesses, or fails to prevent acts that transgress one’s own moral beliefs, values, or ethical codes of conduct.”¹⁵

Public Defender Team: All staff at a public defender office.

Self-Care: “Self-care is a broad term that encompasses just about anything you do to be good to yourself. In a nutshell, it’s about being as kind to yourself as you would be to others. It’s partly about knowing when your resources are running low, and stepping back to replenish them rather than letting them all drain away.”¹⁶

Sustainability: “[O]rganizations cannot be sustainable without protecting the safety, health, and welfare of their most vital resource: workers. Sustainability is not just about what is done, but how it gets done. It is a mindset that requires leadership; not settling for second best in any aspect of operations; setting and achieving goals beyond regulatory compliance.”¹⁷

Wellness: “Wellness is an active process through which people become aware of, and make choices toward, a more successful existence.”¹⁸

Well-being: “[A] continuous process whereby [individuals] seek to thrive in each of the following areas: emotional health, occupational pursuits, creative or intellectual endeavors, sense of spirituality or greater purpose in life, physical health, and social connections with others.”¹⁹

Well-being includes our individual health, happiness, and quality of life. In a public defender office, this extends to the collective health, happiness, and quality of life in our organization.

Principles

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Principle 1: Clients are best served by interdisciplinary teams that strive for well-being.

High level representation and effective team competency and contribution require clarity of thinking, the ability for rational choice-making, and the ability to retain and marshal information necessary for a client's defense. This level of competence is less attainable when a team member is unwell, whether physically, socially, emotionally or spiritually.²⁰ In the same way one would not conduct a court hearing or client interview or case investigation when sick with the flu or inebriated, it is best to also ensure our psychological wellness is not similarly diminished and negatively impacting competent representation.²¹ A best practice to ensure this Principle and the Model Rules of Professional Conduct are met, is to follow the Principles of this document.

Principle 2: Sustainability of the public defender office is a goal all staff actively strive toward.

The sustainability of an office is a collective responsibility of all those in an organization.²² A public defender office cannot be sustainable if staff members are not well.²³ Empowering and engaging staff in creating a healthy environment that prioritizes wellness through building community, effective communication, transparency and space for dialogue and well-being is the goal of sustainability efforts. Those goals can best be met through the participation of all staff.

Principle 3: Leadership and supervisors model wellness and set standards for sustainability.

Agency leadership and supervisors have a responsibility to create and model a culture of wellness.²⁴ They promote and integrate wellness discussions and considerations into recruiting, on-boarding, and continuing education and training. Self-care and wellness practices for all staff are normalized as routine actions to promote well-being.²⁵ Expected activities necessary to maintain resilient workplaces and workforces include, but are not necessarily limited to, the use of personal, vacation, sick, family, parental leave, employee assistance programs and other wellness options, without judgment. Performance evaluations seek to identify and address barriers staff experience in implementing wellness practices.²⁶

Barriers to seeking help are removed and destigmatized.²⁷ Leadership and supervisors recognize that wellness practices are flexible and that individuals may approach wellness practices differently.

Principle 4: Staff promote workplace values that align with a healthy work culture.

A healthy office culture depends on individual alignment with the stated purpose, mission, and values of the organization. Office leadership, with input from staff, establish intrinsic workplace values, with a goal of creating a healthy work culture and sense of belonging on staff.²⁸ Behaviors detrimental to the agreed upon values of the organization are actively and timely addressed and discouraged.²⁹ Leadership foster a team-oriented environment where staff share responsibilities within the office.

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Leadership encourage constructive feedback and welcome difficult conversations about inclusion, well-being, and operations that are necessary to maintain the values of the organization.

Principle 5: Leadership and staff actively seek to uphold principles of equity and inclusion while striving to create a welcoming environment for all.

Representation matters, and true representation is by equity and inclusion of a diverse workforce. A best practice for ensuring this is the creation of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives in offices that do not yet have them, and full support of existing DEI initiatives.³⁰ DEI initiatives exist to encourage difficult conversations, educate staff, and combat racism and trauma.³¹

Principle 6: The office normalizes and prepares for workplace absences.

Employees need time off.³² They may need to address their own health, care for a family member, take a well-earned break from work, or adjust their schedule to accommodate a change in life circumstance.³³ A workload recess leave policy would facilitate unpaid leaves of absence, sick leave or family and medical leave, paid time off (vacation), flexible time off, and flexible work assignments.³⁴

The policy and procedures will depend on many factors, including office size, budget, and structure, but will ensure all employees are eligible to request a recess and that the office has a clear procedure for assigning coverage to ensure no interruption of legal services for clients and no unnecessary strain on other staff.

Principle 7: The office creates time and space for individuals to reflect on positive and negative work experiences in a supportive environment.

Staff is given time and space for work-related debriefing with colleagues, which may be built into standard meetings.³⁵ The office nurtures a culture of affirmation and celebrates the client-centered successes of colleagues. The definition of success within an office is defined more broadly than a “legal win,” and includes more nuanced victories toward justice.

People are encouraged to have and share the feelings they are having, no matter what they are. Healthy conflicts and timely crucial conversations amongst staff is normalized. Grieving, sadness, and feelings of loss related to working in the fight for justice is normalized. Staff is educated about diversity of experiences related to coping with loss. Supervisors are trained to identify signs of burnout, moral injury, and secondary trauma. When an employee suffers a traumatic work or personal event, supervisors perform meaningful check-ins with that employee.³⁶ Leadership and supervisors support taking time off after significant work events if needed. Leadership and supervisors raise awareness and promote employee assistance programs and make efforts to normalize requests for help. Leadership and supervisors provide timely, meaningful, and consistent feedback on work performance, which has been shown to increase well-being.³⁷

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Principle 8: The physical atmosphere of the workplace is designed with wellness in mind.

The built environment influences wellness and job performance.³⁸ While a purpose-built office is often not an option, intentional use of space and design elements (i.e., how public and private areas interact, lighting, windows, acoustics, temperature, etc.) can have a significant impact on occupants' well-being and productivity.³⁹

Both staff and clients benefit from spaces designed with the mission and values of the office in mind and that reinforce self-care and wellness.

Attending to the aspects of the office that maximize occupant wellness can also impact inclusivity and productivity goals.⁴⁰ Considerations for organizations designing or reworking their space to improve wellness might include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Ventilation and allergen mitigation to accommodate employees with service animals
- Wall color
- Lighting color (yellow- vs. blue-toned), source (overhead and eye level)⁴¹
- Noise mitigation, to the extent possible⁴²
- A quiet area or Wellness Room that offers a restful place to address stressors
- A Mother's Room properly equipped with a refrigerator and sink so breastfeeding mothers have privacy and their basic needs met
- Space for staff to highlight milestones, accomplishments, reflections and to recognize their colleagues' contributions, with consideration given to maintaining client boundaries

Principle 9: Training programs regularly encompass a sustainability component.

Where feasible, agencies provide opportunities and consistent invitations for staff to participate in well-being and self-care training.⁴³ Training Directors establish orientation practices that set new staff up for success, engagement, and well-being. Mentorship is a way to ensure employee well-being is being monitored.⁴⁴ Self-care and wellness are principles incorporated into all training programs. Training programs model self-care by providing regular breaks and offering time for reflection.

All staff are trained annually around communication and interpersonal health, teamwork, compassion fatigue/moral injury, and creating self-care/wellness culture.

Principle 10: Leadership creates clear policies and expectations that properly balance the health and well-being of staff with the interests of clients.

There are times when the interests of clients and the interests of staff may not align. Leadership seeks input from staff when creating policies or guidelines to address this tension and provides transparency in decision-making. Leadership ensures staff are clearly and timely made aware of expectations, even during extreme or changing circumstances. Office internal operating procedures and policies leave little room for ambiguity in terms of job duties, roles, best practices, and expectations. New office policies are developed and adopted only after staff has a meaningful opportunity to provide input. Disagreements over policies and expectations are addressed timely by leadership and supervisors.

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Leadership proactively engages with outside stakeholders in order to advance the office's missions and values. Within the system, leadership consistently prioritizes the commitment to clients over efficient, cost-effective, or convenient practices for courts or corrections.

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- 6 *Workplace Performance*, p. 71. ("Employee job satisfaction was found to be positively associated with workplace financial performance, labour productivity and the quality of output and service.")
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- 8 Bacak, Valerio & Lageson, Sarah E. & Powell, Kathleen. *The Stress of Injustice: Public Defenders and the Frontline of American Inequality*, p. 16 (2020). ("Working within these structural constraints makes public defenders highly vulnerable to chronic stress and can have profound implications for their ability to safeguard the rights of poor defendants.") (Hereafter *The Stress of Injustice*.)
- 9 Primus, Eve Brensike, *Culture as a Structural Problem*, University of Minnesota Law Review, Vol. 100, 5, p. 1781. (2016). "If we can improve some of the structures, we can improve some of the culture, thus raising the proportion of criminal defenders who defy the difficulty of their role and succeed in delivering zealous, client-centered advocacy." (Hereafter *Culture as a Structural Problem*.)
- 10 *The Stress of Injustice*, p. 16. ("Increasingly limited resources within a constantly expanding penal system also creates structural stress, most often manifested in public defender caseloads. With the exception of some appellate and capital defense attorneys, the relentless stream of cases and the little time that the sheer volume leaves for investigation, consultation with clients, and trial preparation created significant stress for our participants. Chronic underfunding was reflected in the insufficient numbers of attorneys in the office, high office turnover, relatively low salaries, and simply making ends meet."

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- 17 *Sustainability in the Workplace*, United States Department of Labor. Located at: <https://www.osha.gov/sustainability/>.
- 18 *The Six Dimensions of Wellness*, National Wellness Institute. Located at: <https://nationalwellness.org/resources/six-dimensions-of-wellness/>.
- 19 *ABA National Task Force*, p. 9.
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- 22 *ABA Well-Being Toolkit*, p. 8 ("A healthy workplace is one in which all organizational members collaborate to continually improve processes to protect and promote member well-being and organizational success.")
- 23 *Toxic Workplaces & Employee Wellness Go Hand in Hand*. (2020). ("An organization is only as healthy as its employees.") Located at: https://blog.rewardian.com/toxic-workplaces-employee-wellness-go-hand-in-hand?hs_amp=true
- 24 *ABA National Task Force*, pp. 12-13, ("Broad-scale change requires buy-in and role modeling from top leadership." citing E. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership* (2010); R. R. Sims & J. Brinkmann, *Leaders As Moral Role Models*, 35 J. BUS. ETHICS 327 (2002)).
- 25 *ABA National Task Force*, p. 32. ("Therefore, we recommend that legal employers monitor for work addiction and avoid rewarding extreme behaviors that can ultimately harm their health. Legal employers should expressly encourage lawyers to make time to care for themselves and attend to other personal obligations.")

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26 *Achieving Employee Wellbeing*, p. 742. ("Employee and organizational well-being and performance are part of a dual agenda where interests between workers and the company are seen as complimentary.")

27 *ABA Well-Being Toolkit*, pp. 18-20; *ABA National Task Force*, p. 13. ("All stakeholders must take steps to minimize the stigma of mental health and substance use disorders because the stigma prevents lawyers from seeking help." Referencing studies by: T. W. Britt, T. M. Greene-Shortridge, S. Brink, Q. B. Nguyen, J. Rath, A. L. Cox, C. W. Hoge, C. A. Castro, Perceived Stigma and Barriers to Care for Psychological Treatment: Implications for Reactions to Stressors in Different Contexts, 27 J. SOC. & CLINICAL PSYCHOL. 317 (2008); S. Ey, K. R. Henning, & D. L. Shaw, Attitudes and Factors Related to Seeking Mental Health Treatment among Medical and Dental Students, 14 J. C. STUDENT PSYCHOTHERAPY 23 (2000); S. E. Hanisch, C. D. Twomey, A. H. Szeto, U. W. Birner, D. Nowak, & C. Sabariego, The Effectiveness of Interventions Targeting the Stigma of Mental Illness at the Workplace: A Systematic Review, 16 BMC PSYCHIATRY 1 (2016); K. S. Jennings, J. H. Cheung, T. W. Britt, K. N. Goguen, S. M. Jeffirs, A. L. Peasley, & A. C. Lee, How Are Perceived Stigma, Self-Stigma, and Self-Reliance Related to Treatment-Seeking? A Three-Path Model, 38 PSYCHIATRIC REHABILITATION J. 109 (2015); N. G. Wade, D. L. Vogel, P. Armistead-Jehle, S. S. Meit, P. J. Heath, H. A. Strass, Modeling Stigma, Help-Seeking Attitudes, and Intentions to Seek Behavioral Healthcare in a Clinical Military Sample, 38 PSYCHIATRIC REHABILITATION J. 135 (2015).)

28 *ABA National Task Force*, pp. 34. ("Consequently, we recommend that legal employers evaluate what they prioritize and value, and how those values are communicated. When organizational values evoke a sense of belonging and pride, work is experienced as more meaningful." Citing A. Hansen, Z. Byrne, & C. Kiersch, How Interpersonal Leadership Relates to Employee Engagement, 29 J. MANAGERIAL PSYCHOL. 953 (2014))

29 *ABA National Task Force*, p. 34. ("To achieve change, legal employers will need to set standards, align incentives, and give feedback about progress on lawyer well-being topics." Citing R. A. NOE, EMPLOYEE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT (McGraw-Hill 2013).)

30 *ABA National Task Force*, pp. 16. ("Regulators and bar associations can play an especially influential role in advocating for initiatives in the profession as a whole and educating on why those initiatives are important to individual and institutional well-being." Referencing C. U. Stacy, Trends and Innovations Boosting Diversity in the Law and Beyond, L. PRAC. TODAY, March 14, 2016, available at <http://www.lawpracticetoday.org/article/trends-and-innovations-boosting-diversity-in-the-law-and-beyond>; IL. SUP. CT. COMM'N ON PROFESSIONALISM, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION TOOLKIT, <https://www.2civility.org/programs/cle/cle-resources/diversity-inclusion>.)

31 *Encouraging Meaningful Conversations about Race and Trauma*. (2019). ("To begin to unravel the harm of racism—the historical trauma, the microaggressions, the white fragility that often is a barrier to conversation—people need to have a level of self-awareness, to be able to sit, without judgment, with what is uncomfortable, to be present and aware, and to hold this inquiry with curiosity and kindness.") Located at: <https://www.mindful.org/encouraging-meaningful-conversations-about-race-and-trauma/>.

32 *ABA Well-Being Toolkit*, p. 13. ("In their study of 6,000 practicing lawyers, law professor Larry Krieger and psychology professor Kennon Sheldon found that the number of vacation days taken was a significant predictor of lawyer well-being—and was stronger even than income level in predicting well-being." citing L. Krieger & K. Sheldon, What Makes Lawyers Happy? A Data-Driven Prescription to Redefine Professional Success Redefine Professional Success (2015).)

33 *ABA National Task Force*, p. 20. ("Research confirms that environments that facilitate control and autonomy contribute to optimal functioning and well-being.")

34 *ABA Well-Being Toolkit*, p. 9. ("There is recognition of the need for balance between the demands of work, family, and personal life.")

35 *Culture as a Structural Problem*, p. 1792. ("In addition not the emotional support and motivation that a group structure provides, defenders also benefit from working together in communities because their

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ability to learn from one another and pool their combined intellectual resources raises the level of representation that each of them is able to provide.”)

36 *Achieving Employee Wellbeing*, p. 742. (“In fact a recent study reported in the *New York Times* (Amible and Kramer, 2011) suggests that employees perform better when they are positively psychologically engaged at work. Amible and Kramer argue that managers must be facilitators of employees’ work by helping eliminate barriers, offering support, and assistance and recognizing high level effort.”)

37 *Workplace Performance*, p. 38. (“Environmental clarity also comprises the availability of feedback on performance. This can be in the form of performance appraisal, which can act to improve [subjective wellbeing] by enabling employees to be more effective in their work and providing a form of recognition.”)

38 Kamarulzaman, N & Saleh A.A. & Hashim, S.Z. & Hashim H. & Abdul-Ghani, A.A. *An Overview of the Influence of Physical Office Environments Towards Employee*. *Procedia Engineering*, Vol 20, pp. 266. (2011). (“From the literature reviews, it is very clear that indoor environments in an office has a great influence on employees’ attitudes, behaviours, satisfaction and works performance.”) Located at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.proeng.2011.11.164>. (Hereafter *Physical Office Environments*.); See also *NAPD Policy Statement on Proper Professional Space, Equipment, Confidential Communications with Clients, Supporting Services for Public Defense*. (2020).

39 *Physical Office Environments*, p. 266. (“Therefore, it can be concluded that not only temperature, water quality, lighting and noise should be taken into consideration, but also the indoor air quality, thermal comfort, layout of individual workspaces, workplace colour schemes, interior plants, dust levels and biological contaminants, indoor carbon dioxide concentration and many other factors should be considered by the top management of organizations.”)

40 *Workplace Matters*. U.S. General Services Administration, p. 3. (2006). (“The link between physical infrastructure and organizational performance is real. A well-designed workplace offers great potential to improve organizational performance and realize financial return far greater than the initial investment.”)

41 Han, Seulki, PhD, PT & Lee, Daehee, PhD, PT. *The Effects of Treatment Room Lighting Color on Time Perception and Emotion*. *Journal of Physical Therapy Science*, Vol. 29, 7, pp. 1248. (2017). (“However, the mood states of depression-dejection, anger-hostility, and confusion-bewilderment were significantly different according to light colors, with higher scores for blue and red lights compared to yellow light.”)

42 Münzel, Thomas et al. *The Adverse Effects of Environmental Noise Exposure on Oxidative Stress and Cardiovascular Risk*. *Antioxidants & Redox Signaling*. Vol. 28, 9, pp. 873-908. (2018).

43 *Kirkland & Ellis Starts New Firmwide Wellness Program*. (2019). Located at:

https://news.bloomberglaw.com/daily-labor-report/kirkland-ellis-starts-new-firmwide-wellness-program?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=DLNW&utm_campaign=0000016b-0421-dbad-a36b-4f27a3f30002; N. Rodriguez, *What the Army Can Teach BigLaw about Bouncing Back*, *LAW360*. (2017). (Identifying Goodwin Procter LLP, O’Melveny & Myers LLP, Morgan Lewis & Bockius LLP, Fish & Richardson PC, Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP, Quarles & Brady LLP, and Neal Gerber & Eisenberg LLP as having hosted resilience workshops). Located at: <https://www.law360.com/articles/891995/what-the-army-can-teach-biglaw-about-bouncing-back>.

44 *ABA National Task Force*, p. 16. (“Research has shown that mentorship and sponsorship can aid wellbeing and career progression for women and diverse professionals.”)

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Nutrition

Articles:

Ron Friedman (2014). [What You Eat Affects Your Productivity](#). Harvard Business Review.

Kira M. Newman (2019). [What Is The Best Diet For Mental Health?](#) Greater Good Magazine.

Books:

[Caffeine Blues](#), by Dr. Steven Cherniske

[Eat Move Sleep: How Small Choices Lead to Big Changes](#), by Tom Rath.

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Pandemic and Crisis Public Defense

[Do You Have 'Zoom Fatigue' or Is It Existentially Crushing to Pretend Life Is Normal as the World Burns?](#) by Devon Price. Medium, 9/24/20.

[Engaging Pandemonium: A Conversation between Social Workers about Secondary Trauma and Resilience during COVID19](#), by Annabelle Winne, Medium, 3/31/20.

[How to Manage Your Team in Times of Political Trauma \(Michelle Kim\)](#)

[Leading during traumatic and triggering events](#)

[Supporting Black Staff In Times of Crisis:](#) What Managers and Organizational Leaders Can Do To Support Black Lives (Bryce Celotto)

[Your 'Surge Capacity' Is Depleted — It's Why You Feel Awful](#), by Tara Healle. Medium. Aug. 17, 2020.

[When Every Sentence is a Possible Death Sentence: Public Defenders Speak From The Front Lines About Covid-19](#), by Irene Oritseweyinmi Joe and Ben Miller, April 2020.

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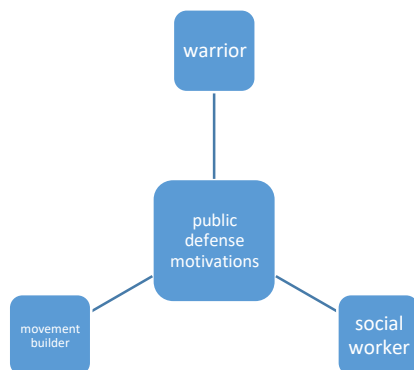
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Purpose and Motivation

“[H]aving a purpose in life is associated with all kinds of benefits. Research suggests that purpose is tied to having better health, longevity, and even economic success. It feels good to have a sense of purpose, knowing that you are using your skills to help others in a way that matters to you.”⁵⁶

Jeff Sherr⁵⁷ offers a triad of public defense motivations, including warrior, social worker and movement builder.



The warrior is motivated to fight for the underdog, against bullies who misuse their power. The social worker is motivated to meet the needs of the individual client. The movement builder is motivated to achieve systemic change. While each person may have a primary motivation that brings them to this work, the motivation may change or evolve over time. Jeff argues that a key to sustaining this work is to develop the ability to draw from each of the three motivations.

Resources:

Articles:

Charles J. Ogletree, Jr., [Beyond Justifications](#): Seeking Motivations to Sustain Public Defenders, 106 HARV. L. REV. 1239,1271-94 (1993).

Abbe Smith, [Too Much Heart and Not Enough Heat](#): The Short Life and Fractured Ego of the Empathic, Heroic Public Defender, 37 U.C. Davis L. Rev. 1203-1265 (2004). She's written more on this topic in [What Motivates a lawyer to defend a Tsarnaev, a Castro or a Zimmerman?](#), by Abbe Smith, The Washington Post, July 25, 2013,

⁵⁶ [Seven Ways to Find Your Purpose in Life](#), by Jill Suttie, Greater Good Magazine, Aug. 6, 2020.

⁵⁷ NAPD Training Director, former director of training for Kentucky's statewide public defense system.

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[The Value of "Values Affirmation"](#), Stanford Business School, May 2, 2012. Research shows that modest school interventions can help raise grades and improve health and happiness.

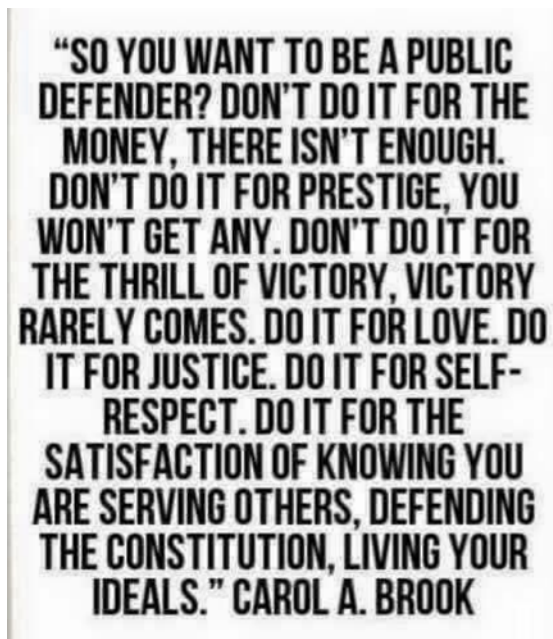
[Why People Lose Motivation -- and What Managers Can Do To Help](#). By Dan Cable, Harvard Business Review, 2018. The feeling of purpose ignites when we can see the cause and effect between our inputs and our team's progress.

Books:

[How Can You Represent Those People?](#) by A. Smith (Editor) and M. Freedman (Editor).

[How Can You Defend Those People](#): The Making of a Criminal Lawyer, by James S. Kunen

[Indefensible](#): One Lawyer's Journey into the Inferno of American Justice, by David Feige.



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Racial Justice and Well-Being

“Racism is a form of trauma. To begin to unravel the harm of racism—the historical trauma, the microaggressions, the white fragility that often is a barrier to conversation—people need to have a level of self-awareness, to be able to sit, without judgment, with what is uncomfortable, to be present and aware, and to hold this inquiry with curiosity and kindness. My hope is that in becoming a mindful organization we will have greater focus, emotional balance, and the tools for the difficult conversations that need to happen. Being mindful—knowing and being in touch with what is going on with you—is essential to undoing racism.” —Jenee Johnson, in [Encouraging Meaningful Conversations about Race and Trauma](#)

There’s Racial Bias in Our Police Systems. Here’s Overwhelming Proof

The criminal legal system aspires to offer **equality**, but the evidence of **racial bias** in our criminal justice system is overwhelming.⁵⁸ Black students are more likely to be suspended than white students. Black people are more likely to be pulled over in traffic stops and searched after a stop, even though police were more likely to find drugs, weapons or other contraband among whites. Black motorists and pedestrians are more likely to be the subject of pretext stops and investigatory stops, and more likely to receive tickets and be arrested. People who reported more police contact reported more trauma and anxiety symptoms, and the burden falls predominantly on young Black and Latino males. Officers speak with less respect toward black versus white community members. Citizen complaints of white citizens are more likely to be sustained than those of black citizens. Black and Latino drivers were more likely to be jailed for inability to pay petty fines for moving violations. Despite equal rates of drug use and sales, Black people are arrested, charged and convicted of drug crimes including possession, distribution and conspiracy at far higher rates than white people. Black and Hispanic residents are over-represented as targets of narcotic search warrants. Paramilitary police tactics are disproportionately used against Black and Latino people, having little effect on public safety but eroding public trust in police. Black people are five times more likely to go to prison for drug possession than white people, and 12 times more likely to be wrongly convicted of drug crimes. Black defendants are more likely than white defendants to be detained pretrial when charged with similar crimes, and more likely to be required to pay money bail, and to have a higher bail set. Prosecutors systematically exclude Black people from juries. Jurors were more likely to evaluate ambiguous, race-neutral evidence against a dark-skinned suspect as incriminating and more likely to find a dark-skinned suspect guilty. Death sentences are disproportionately imposed on Black defendants convicted of killing white people. In a system in which 80-95% of cases resolve through plea bargaining, which is widely abused and does little to serve the interests of justice, black defendants are less likely than white defendants to have charges dismissed or reduced, and more likely to receive jail time, sentencing enhancements, and longer sentences (for similar crimes). Black prisoners are more likely to be held in solitary confinement than white prisoners. To summarize, “the darker the skin of a black person, the greater the disparity in arrests, charges, conviction rates and sentencing.” After release, Black people are more likely to have their probation revoked, and more likely to be re-incarcerated for technical violations of parole. Mass incarceration combined with felon

⁵⁸ Research detailed by Radley Balko in [There’s Racial Bias in Our Police Systems. Here’s Overwhelming Proof](#), The Washington Post, June 10, 2020.

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disenfranchisement laws have led to severe underrepresentation of black Americans in the voting electorate.

For people of color—particularly Black people—the practice of mindfulness becomes a protective factor. When microaggressions come at me, mindfulness offers me protection. I don’t have to be caught up and reactive. I can have self-compassion, and that self-compassion builds my courage. –Jenee Johnson, in [Encouraging Meaningful Conversations about Race and Trauma](#)

When I talk about mindfulness for Black people, I am looking at it as sankofa—the principle of going back and reclaiming what you left—but it’s also an opportunity for us to stop doing the heavy lifting, to take off the burden and lovingly hand it over to white human beings and say “You have some work to do.” My work is to heal. And your work is to take a look at this stuff that is really hard, and I’ll hold the space and when you get done we can come back and have this conversation. --Jenee Johnson, in [Encouraging Meaningful Conversations about Race and Trauma](#)

Race and Racial Identity⁵⁹

Although race has no genetic or scientific basis, the concept of race is important and consequential. Societies use race to establish and justify systems of power, privilege, disenfranchisement, and oppression.

The notion of race is a social construct designed to divide people into groups ranked as superior and inferior. The scientific consensus is that race, in this sense, has no biological basis – we are all one race, the human race. Racial identity, however, is very real. And, in a racialized society like the United States, everyone is assigned a racial identity whether they are aware of it or not.

Critical race and education scholars recommend that adult educators hoping to confront racism: (i) acknowledge racism, (ii) engage in self-reflection, (iii) commit to addressing it in the learning environment, and (iv) reflect cultures and histories of nonwhite groups in the pedagogy. (Collin III & Preciphs, 1991; Ross-Gordon, 2010).

The six key tenets to critical race theory:⁶⁰

1. Racism is a normalized and commonplace part of society. It is not just reflected in individual actions but embedded in our cultural and political practices and systems.
2. Consequently, whiteness is a “property” – something with tangible value – that offers white people unearned privileges and opportunities not afforded to people of color at the

⁵⁹ Excerpted from Talking About Race, Tools and Guidance from the Smithsonian National Museum for African American History and Culture, at <https://nmaahc.si.edu/learn/talking-about-race/topics/race-and-racial-identity>.

⁶⁰ As summarized by Nicole Cardoza in 5/7/21 Anti-Racism daily, crediting: Critical Race Theory: An Annotated Bibliography, by Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic, Virginia Law Review. Vol. 79, No. 2 (Mar., 1993), pp. 461-516. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1073418>

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	same level, like access to wealth, safety from law enforcement, opportunities for academic success, etc.
3.	Because of this, the notion that all are treated equally, and have the same rights and opportunities, is a myth, challenging concepts like colorblindness and meritocracy.
4.	Since racism benefits those with power and privilege, there is little incentive to solve it – unless it benefits both people of color and dominant members of society. This is also referred to as “interest convergence.”
5.	Intersectionality is critical for understanding racism. Everyone has intersecting identities based on their racial/ethnic background, socioeconomic status, gender identity, etc., which means that each person experiences racism in unique ways.
6.	The personal experiences of people of color are worthy and legitimate forms of discourse in the conversations on racism, especially when countering the default narrative.

Practice Apps:

[Liberate](#) - a meditation app for the Black, Indigenous, and People of Color community.

[The Safe Place](#) - a mental health app geared towards the Black community.

Racial Disparities in Public Defense Resources

Aaron Gottlieb, "[Making Gideon Count? Public Defender Resources and Felony Case Outcomes for Black, White, and Latinx Individuals.](#)" *Race and Justice*.

Trauma and Wellness Resources Focused on Racial Justice:

['Are you still watching?', The Affects on Seeing Traumatic Events](#)

[Can Mindfulness Help Us Dismantle Inequality?](#)

[Diversity Efforts Fall Short Unless Employees Feel They Belong.](#) Pat Wadors (2016). Harvard Business Review.

[Enabling Lawyer Well-Being Through Diversity & Inclusion.](#) Anne Brafford (2020).

[Encouraging Meaningful Conversations about Race and Trauma](#), an interview with Jenee Johnson

[How to Manage When Things Are Not Okay \(And Haven't Been For Centuries\)](#), The Management Center

[The Four Bodies: A Holistic Toolkit for Coping with Racial Trauma](#)

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[Self-Care Tips for Black People Who Are Struggling With This Very Painful Week](#) Vice, 5/28/20

[Supporting Black Staff In Times of Crisis: What Managers and Organizational Leaders Can Do To Support Black Lives \(Bryce Celotto\)](#)

[Leading during traumatic and triggering events](#)

Shannon Cumberbatch, "[When Your Identity Is Inherently "Unprofessional": Navigating Rules of Professional Appearance Rooted in Cisheteronormative Whiteness as Black Women and Gender Non-Conforming Professionals.](#)" 34/2 *Journal of Civil Rights and Economic Development*. 81-123.

Practice and Referral Resources

[The Self Care Agency](#), from Anana Harris Parris

[44 Mental Health Resources for Black People Trying to Survive in This Country](#) Self, 6/2/20

[Sista Afya Community Mental Wellness Organization](#) sustaining the mental wellness of Black women through building community, sharing information, and connecting Black women to quality mental wellness services.

[Therapy For Black Girls](#) resources to find a trusted, culturally competent therapists that know our feelings and can help navigate being a strong, black woman.

[Tending to Racial Trauma Crisis](#) training, hosted by Inclusive Therapists work shop: Culturally Responsive Care Supporting Asian and Communities of Color. (\$60 + 3 CEUs)

[The National Queer and Trans Therapist of Color Network](#) healing justice organization committed to transforming mental health for queer and trans people of color (QTPoC).

[Black Emotional and Mental Health Collective](#) a training, movement building and grant making organization dedicated to the healing, wellness and liberation of Black and marginalized communities.

[The Unplug Collective](#): a place where Black and Brown womxn and non-binary folks can share their stories about existing in their bodies without being silenced or censored.

Podcasts

Call with my Sis- <https://anchor.fm/blackgirlschangeworlds>

Shaping the Shift <https://shapingtheshift.com>

La Cura Podcast - <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/la-cura/id1454543749>

Books:

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[Self Care Matters: A Revolutionary's Approach](#), by Anana Harris Parris

[The Inner Work of Racial Justice: Healing Ourselves and Transforming Our Communities Through Mindfulness](#), by Rhonda V. Magee

Resource List:

[A Conversation on Race](#): Videos from the New York Times.

[Implicit Bias and Structural Racialization](#), By Kathleen Osta & Hugh Vasquez, National Equity Project.

[Inclusive Teaching Resources](#), from The Harriet W. Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning at Brown University.

[Project Implicit](#), Implicit Association Tests.

[#RaceAnd: Kay Ulanday Barrett](#). YouTube video (3:42 min)

[Social Identity Wheel](#), University of Michigan

[Talking About Race](#), Tools and Guidance from the Smithsonian National Museum for African American History and Culture

[The urgency of intersectionality](#), Kimberlé Crenshaw TED Talk, 12/7/16.

[When you say you 'don't see race', you're ignoring racism, not helping to solve it](#), Zach Stafford, The Guardian, 3/26/15.

“How Studying Privilege Systems Can Strengthen Compassion”: Peggy McIntosh at Ted xTimberlane Schools/Tedx Talks/Nov. 5, 2012

A Mindful Approach to Race and Social Justice | Rhonda Magee, Jon Kabot-Zinn, Anderson Cooper/Wisdom 2.0/May 28, 2019

Book List

How to Be an Antiracist, Ibram X. Kendi, 2019

White Fragility, Robin J. Diangelo, June 26, 2018

Between the World and Me, Ta-Nehisi Coates, 2015

The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness/Michelle Alexander/2010

Eloquent Rage: A Black Feminist Discovers Her Superpower/Brittney Cooper/2018

Heavy: An American Memoir/Kiese Laymon/2018

Just Mercy/Bryan Stevenson/2014

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Sister Outsider/Audrey Lord/1984

So You Want to Talk About Race/Ijeoma Oluo/2018

The Fire Next Time/James Baldwin/1962

Women, Race, and Class/Angela Davis/1981

Are Prisons Obsolete? Angela Davis, 2003

The Inner Work of Racial Justice, Rhonda Magee, 2019

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Self-Care

Typically, my personal self-care stories usually begin with me learning the hard way. –Anana Harris Parris⁶¹

Self-care includes all the things we do individually to support and sustain our own health. One definition of self-care is deliberately taking care of your well-being through restorative activities.⁶²

Despite countless efforts to sell us things, it isn't all lavender scented shiatsu at fancy spas. More often it is chopping celery sticks and prepping meals for the week, or doing a weekly check in on budgeting and financial goals, or leaving the party early to get enough sleep.

While we may all want to escape to things like streaming and scrolling at times, true self-care is creating a life that we don't need to escape.⁶³

"Self-care suicide is the gradual quiet ignoring of critical needs until the lack of essential care literally stops your emotional, physical, spiritual, educational, social or economic aspects of your life. This happens every day."⁶⁴ "Constructing a Self Care Plan is revolutionary. It challenges your current comforts and forces you to create a new normal rooted in satisfying your critical spiritual, emotional, artistic, physical, economic, educational and social needs."⁶⁵

Most importantly, self-care is only one part of sustaining public defense well-being, and it's entirely inappropriate to shift the entire responsibility of sustaining and supporting well-being to individuals without also trying to create systems that support them.

Creating a self care plan is a process of understanding what you need and putting into place practices to support yourself, and also asking for support to get your needs met.

⁶¹ Anana Harris Parris, [Self Care Matters: A Revolutionary's Approach](#), at p. 70.

⁶² [Self Care: What it Really Is](#), TED talk by Susannah Winders.

⁶³ From presentation of Elizabeth Vartkessian and Katherine Atkins: Part 1: Addressing Trauma, Loss, and Resilience in Criminal Defense – Focus on You, on Jan. 20, 2021, at Be Well Wednesday, recorded and available to members at the [NAPD website](#).

⁶⁴ Anana Harris Parris, [Self Care Matters: A Revolutionary's Approach](#), at p. 4.

⁶⁵ Anana Harris Parris, [Self Care Matters: A Revolutionary's Approach](#), at p. 17.

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Creating a Self-Care Plan to Sustain Your Well-Being in Public Defense
<p>Complete the Self-Assessment in the Assessment section, above.</p> <p>What is going well, that you want to continue?</p> <p>What are the areas in which you might want to make a shift?</p>
<p>Follow the step-by-step worksheet to create and track one SMART goal (worksheet above in Goals section).</p>
<p>Check in on your boundaries:</p> <p>Are you getting enough restful time away from work during each work day?</p> <p>Are you getting enough restful time away from work during each week?</p> <p>Have you taken a vacation recently? Do you have one coming up? Plan one.</p> <p>Have you taken steps to limit work communications during off hours?</p>
<p>What additional support would benefit you from colleagues, supervisors and the public defense community?</p> <p>Can you ask for those supports?</p>
<p>Are your needs being met? ⁶⁶ How can you communicate what you need to someone who can provide it?</p> <p>For example, it is reasonable to expect to feel appreciated, to be heard and respected, to be guided with clear expectations, to see a clear career path of advancement.</p>

⁶⁶ Anana Harris Parris, [Self Care Matters: A Revolutionary's Approach](#), at p. 159.

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Sleep and Insomnia

Things to Try to Improve Sleep
Get outside and/or in bright light during the day. Don't watch tv or look at phones or electronics for 2 hours before bed. No caffeine late in the day. Keep a consistent bedtime and wake up time. Have a wind-down routine before going to bed that includes relaxation tools (meditation, reading). Exercise daily.

Articles:

[tip sheet](#) for a good night's sleep.

Christopher Barnes (2018). [Sleep Well, Lead Better](#), Harvard Business Review

Cristiano Guarana & Christopher Barnes (2017). [Research: Sleep Deprivation Can Make It Harder To Stay Calm At Work](#). Harvard Business Review.

Christopher Barnes (2017). [Sleep-Deprived Judges Dole Out Harsher Punishments](#). Harvard Business Review.

Nick can Dam and Els van der Helm (2016). [There's A Proven Link Between Effective Leadership and Getting Enough Sleep](#). Harvard Business Review.

Books:

[Eat Move Sleep: How Small Choices Lead to Big Changes](#), by Tom Rath.

[Sleep is Your Superpower](#), by Matt Walker

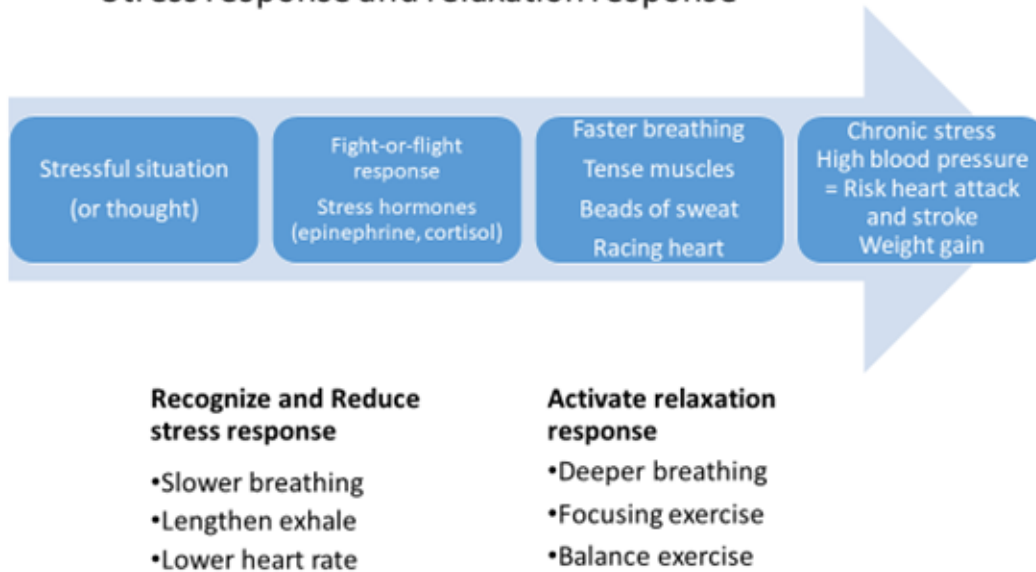
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Stress Response

Stress response and relaxation response



3

Practices to reduce stress response and activate relaxation response
<p><i>Calm heart rate and breathing and stress response:</i> Seated breathing: inhale 4 counts, exhale 8 counts. Link to 3 min video practice: Lengthen the Exhale to Reduce Stress Response</p>
<p><i>Calm heart rate and breathing and stress response:</i> Standing: inhale arms out and overhead for 4 counts, exhale arms out and down to sides 8 counts.</p>
<p><i>Calm heart rate and breathing and stress response:</i> Standing, arms outstretched to right and left. Inhale shrug shoulder, exhale drop shoulders and reach hands apart to right and left.</p>
<p><i>Activate focus and relaxation response:</i> Standing: rest your gaze on a point in front of you, lift one foot a few inches off the ground for 3-4 breaths. Repeat on second side.</p>
<p><i>Deepen breathing to Activate Relaxation Response</i> Link to 4 min video of this breathing practice</p>

Resources:

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[Burnout: The Secret to Unlocking the Stress Cycle](#), by Emily Nagoski PhD and Amelia Nagoski DMA.

Useful strategies to end the cycle of feeling overwhelmed and exhausted. Instead of asking us to ignore the very real obstacles and societal pressures that stand between women and well-being. Includes: what you can do to complete the biological stress cycle—and return your body to a state of relaxation; why rest, human connection, and befriending your inner critic are keys to recovering and preventing burnout.

[1 Hour Podcast on Completing the Stress Cycle](#), with Brene Brown, Emily Nagoski, and Amelia Nagoski

[Understanding the stress response](#), 5/1/18, Harvard Medical School. This article has a very understandable overview of the physiology of stress response and relaxation response. It's useful to read to understand the effectiveness of mindfulness breathing practices to reduce stress response and activate relaxation response.

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Swearing⁶⁷

For those who cringe at the tendency of many public defenders to engage in frequent and colorful swearing, research⁶⁸ establishes many benefits to swearing, including:

1. Cursing may be a sign of intelligence: Well-educated people with plenty of words at their disposal, a 2015 study found, were better at coming up with curse words than those who were less verbally fluent.
2. Swearing may be a sign of honesty: Science has also found a positive link between profanity and honesty. People who cursed lied less on an interpersonal level, and had higher levels of integrity overall, a series of three studies published in 2017 found.
3. Profanity improves pain tolerance.
4. Cussing is a sign of creativity: Swearing appears to be centered in the right side of the brain.
5. Profanity is a quick clear alternative to physical engagement.
6. Swearing uses the universal language of taboo.

Swear on, motherfuckers.

⁶⁷ Hat tip to John Lentine of www.SheffieldLentine.com for this article.

⁶⁸ [Why swearing is a sign of intelligence, helps manage pain and more](#), by Sandee LaMotte, CNN, January 26, 2021

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Surveys

Surveys can be a useful tool to assess the concerns and priorities of an office or group.

Survey Questions Regarding Well-Being⁶⁹

What are some things in this workplace that contribute to your personal well-being?

What general supports do you have in your office now?

What additional office supports would you request?

What are some things in this workplace that are obstacles to maintaining your personal well-being?

What is the single biggest issue that is negatively impacting your well-being at work?

What is one low or no-cost thing that could be done immediately that would improve morale in your office?

List your recommendations for our wellness program.

Do you feel you have sufficient access to medical health care?

Do you feel you have sufficient access to mental health care?

Do you know what is expected of you at work?

Do you have the tools you need to do your work effectively?

Do you have the time you need to do your work effectively?

Do you feel supported by your colleagues? Your immediate supervisor? The leadership team?

Why did you choose to work in a public defender office?

Have you thought about leaving the office in the last year?

Why were you thinking about leaving the public defender office?

What would have to change to make you want to stay?

Scaled Questions

On a scale of 1 to 5, do you feel like part of a team or as if you are working on your own? (1 = on my own, 5 = part of a team)

On a scale of 1 to 10, how affected are you with workplace stress in your personal life?

On a scale of 1 to 10, how much do you worry about job related problems after leaving work?

On a scale of 1 to 10, do you find it difficult to unwind at the end of the work day?

⁶⁹ Many of these questions (all the best ones, none of the clunky awkward ones) are from Meryl Carver-Allmond's survey in Kansas in 2020.

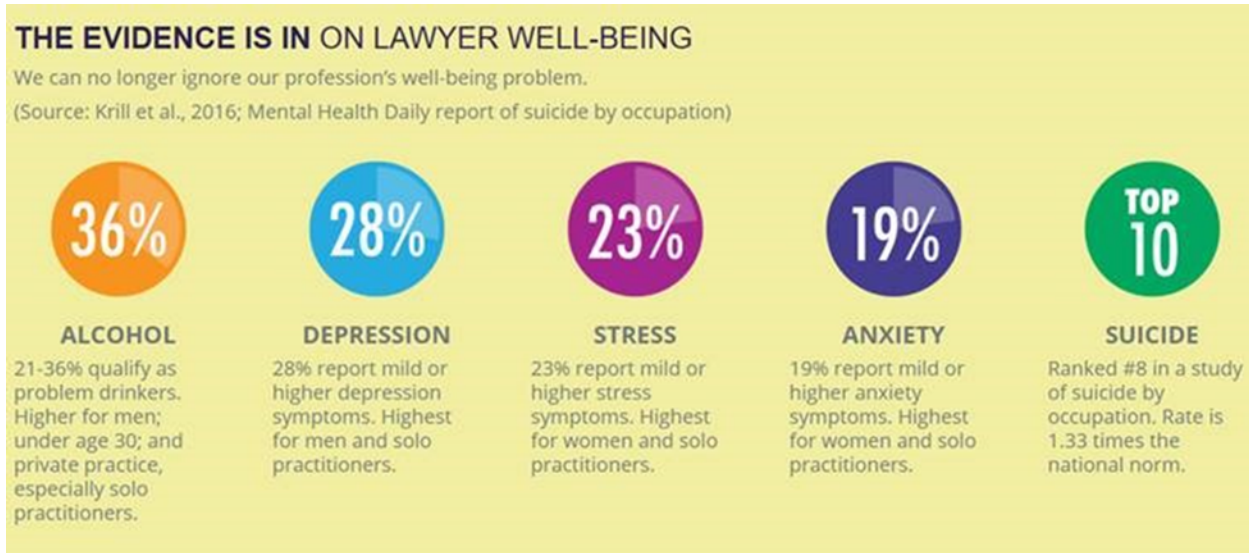
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Suicide Prevention

If you are in crisis, call the [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) at 1-800-273-TALK (8255), or contact the Crisis Text Line by texting TALK to 741741.



[According to CNN](#), "Suicide is a hazard so real that it is the third leading cause of death in the profession. By comparison, suicide is only the 10th leading cause of death in the general population."

Resources:

[American Foundation for Suicide Prevention](#)

The Dave Nee Foundation works to prevent suicide in the legal profession. info@daveneefoundation.org

[How To Start A Conversation About Suicide](#), by Jeremy Forbes. TED Talk, 12:09 mins. In a personal talk, Forbes shares his approach to helping a group of traditionally silent men open up about their struggles.

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Third Thing

“Having a Third Thing makes you a healthier, happier human, and a better attorney. Healthy, happy people tend to have the energy to do the work and the emotional energy to listen to clients, and remain calm in the face of judges and prosecutors. Outside hobbies give us new perspectives, introduce us to new people.” —Renate Lunn

Most of us in public defense spend time on our work, and we spend time with family and friends. Some of us try to develop or sustain spending time on a third thing— a recharging, recreational third thing. [Jeff Sherr traces this concept](#) back to his mom’s advice to him as a child: to pursue multiple extracurricular activities in addition to school and family. Not only does a third thing expand our learning and experience, but it helps us diversify in a useful way. To put it bluntly, with three things going, they probably won’t all suck at once.

[Jeff Sherr video on having a third thing.](#)

[Renate Lunn post on having a third thing.](#)

[Jenny Andrews post on having a third thing.](#)

Other resources:

Jon Jachimowicz, Joyce He, and Julian Arango. [The Unexpected Benefits of Pursuing a Passion Outside of Work](#). Harvard Business Review.

Marguerite Ward (2017). [3 Science-Backed Reasons Having A Hobby Will Help Your Career](#). [CSNBC.com](#).

Kevan Lee (2014). [Why Creative Side Projects Are Good For You](#). [LifeHacker.com](#).

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Trauma

Working in public defense requires us to become trauma informed.
<p>Being trauma informed means learning about trauma. Trauma is relative to the person who has experienced it. Trauma can be one single event or repetitive and long term.</p>

Trauma
<p>Trauma is not just an event that took place sometime in the past; it is also the imprint left by that experience on mind, brain, and body. Trauma results in a fundamental reorganization of the way the mind and brain manage perceptions. --Bessel van der Kolk, M.D, The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma</p>
<p>Opportunities to Experience Primary Trauma in Public Defense Autopsy/scene photos Visiting the dehumanizing conditions of jails and prisons Dealing with prejudice Experiencing terrible outcomes you worked to avoid: remand, conviction, long sentence.</p>

Secondary Traumatic Stress
<p>Secondary Traumatic Stress is the emotional duress that results when an individual hears about the firsthand trauma experiences of another.</p>
<p>Who is at risk for secondary trauma? All professionals, paraprofessionals or family members who work with and/or assist traumatized or distressed children, adults or families. ➔ Public defenders</p>
<p>Opportunities to Experience Secondary Traumatic Stress in Public Defense Listening to stories of trauma in the lives of people we represent and interview Preparing cases Reading trauma stories Hearing testimony Reviewing evidence</p>
<p>Secondary Traumatic Stress Symptoms⁷⁰ intrusive thoughts, chronic fatigue, sadness, anger, poor concentration, second guessing, detachment, emotional exhaustion, fearfulness, shame, physical illness, absenteeism, difficulty sleeping, nightmares, stomachaches, headaches, strained relationships</p>

Definitions⁷¹:

⁷⁰ [Compassion Fatigue: Coping With Secondary Traumatic Stress Disorder In Those Who Treat The Traumatized](#) (Psychosocial Stress Series) 1st Edition, by Charles R. Figley (1995).

⁷¹ [The Toll of Trauma](#), Wisconsin Lawyer, Dec. 2011.

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Compassion fatigue: the cumulative physical, emotional, and psychological effects of continual exposure to traumatic stories or events when working in a helping capacity.

Functional Impairment: Interference with functioning in work, social/leisure life and family/home life.

Strategies for Mitigating Trauma in Public Defense
Specific Strategies for Traumatic Case Content (like graphic photo and video evidence):⁷² <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Divide the task across the team (when appropriate)-Limit the time duration of each review session (30 minute increments rather than 6 straight hours)-Plan an activity to decompress or transition into a different activity after the review.-Seek and plan tools to process (mentor, debrief with team)-Seek and plan supportive tools for yourself (physical activity, mental health care)
Individual Strategies for Mitigating Trauma and Compassion Fatigue:⁷³ <ul style="list-style-type: none">Recognize the risks for yourselfFind a way to debrief distressing material-especially through connection/communityWork on self-awareness every dayTake an inventory of how balanced your life is--be intentional about balancing it outEvaluate your tension reducing behaviorsBe intentional about protecting yourself
Organizational Should Address These Contributing Factors to Compassion Fatigue:⁷⁴ <ul style="list-style-type: none">Excessive workload and work hoursInefficient administrationExcessive paperworkInadequate resources to meet the demandsLack of supportive supervision.

Articles:

[Engaging Pandemonium: A Conversation between Social Workers about Secondary Trauma and Resilience during COVID19](#), by Annabelle Winne, Medium, 3/31/20.

[Representing the Traumatized Client](#): The Case, the Client and You, by Abby Anna Batko-Taylor and Melissa Shearer, Oct. 3, 2012

⁷² Some of these suggestions are from a wonderful presentation by social workers and Dispositional Advisors Jenilee Rowley and Katie a the Minnesota Public Defender.

⁷³ [Keeping Legal Minds Intact](#): Mitigating Compassion Fatigue Among Legal Professionals, ABA 2014

⁷⁴ [Keeping Legal Minds Intact](#): Mitigating Compassion Fatigue Among Legal Professionals, ABA 2014

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Books:

[The Body Keeps the Score](#): Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma, by Bessel van der Kolk M.D. This is a comprehensive book by the Medical Director of The Trauma Center in Boston for over 30 years. He includes research and stories from his work with veterans and people who have experienced sexual and physical violence (some of which can be difficult to read). He explains impacts of traumatic stress on pleasure, engagement, control, trust and fundamental brain function. He addresses treatments through neurofeedback, mindfulness, yoga and other therapies.

[Compassion Fatigue: Coping With Secondary Traumatic Stress Disorder In Those Who Treat The Traumatized](#) (Psychosocial Stress Series) 1st Edition, by Charles R. Figley (1995). Figley edits this compilation of chapters about Compassion Fatigue in crisis and trauma counselors, Red Cross workers, nurses, doctors, and other caregivers who themselves often become victim to secondary traumatic stress disorder (STSD) or “compassion fatigue” as a result of helping or wanting to help a traumatized person. It addresses such questions as: What are compassion stress and compassion fatigue? What are the unintended, and often unexpected, deleterious effects of providing help to traumatized people? What are the characteristics of effective programs to prevent or ameliorate compassion stress and its unwanted consequences?

[Trauma Stewardship](#): An Everyday Guide to Caring for Self While Caring for Others, by Laura Van Dernoon Lipsky.

Reports and Research:

[Keeping Legal Minds Intact](#): Mitigating Compassion Fatigue Among Legal Professionals, ABA 2014

[The Toll of Trauma](#), Wisconsin Lawyer, Dec. 2011. **Study of Wisconsin public defenders**: PDs had significantly higher levels of **compassion fatigue** (the cumulative physical, emotional, and psychological effects of continual exposure to traumatic stories or events when working in a helping capacity) than the general population, by measuring symptoms of **Depression** (loss of interest in pleasure, disturbed sleep, loss of appetite, low energy, poor concentration, feelings of guilt or low self-worth); **Post-traumatic Stress Disorder** (flashbacks, nightmares, severe anxiety, uncontrollable thoughts); **Functional Impairment** (interference with functioning in work, social/leisure life and family/home life); **Secondary Trauma Stress** (“cost of caring” about another person who had experienced trauma; symptoms similar to PTSD). **75% PD Attorneys** report that their work has **negative impact** on their lives as whole.

[Secondary Traumatic Stress in Juvenile Court: Are You Affected?](#) by Claire Chiamulera, (ABA 2016)

[Understanding Secondary Trauma: A Guide for Lawyers Working with Child Victims](#), by Christina Rainville (ABA 2015)

Videos:

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[Beyond the Cliff](#), Laura van Dernoot Lipsky TED talk

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Wellness Research and Studies of Lawyers and Public Defenders

Studies and Reports on Lawyer and Public Defender Well-Being
<p>NAPD Study of Public Defender Self-Care</p> <p>Forthcoming</p>
<p>Bačák, Valerio and Lageson, Sarah and Powell, Kathleen, The Stress of Injustice: Public Defenders and the Frontline of American Inequality (December 12, 2020). Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=3765714 or http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3765714</p> <p>Using semi-structured interviews, researchers at Rutgers University and Drexel University applied a series of tools to assess the “social and psychological demands of working in a punitive system with laws and practices that target and punish those who are the most disadvantaged” to a sample of 87 public defenders across the United States.</p> <p>They found three “major stressors” of injustice that affected the emotional health of those practicing indigent defense just as definitively as the individuals they defended:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) penal excess (2) economic divestment and (3) the criminalization of mental illness. <p>While the researchers said their study was not designed to suggest policy, they noted their findings implied approaches that could mitigate public defenders’ occupational stress. Possible approaches included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase funding for public defenders; Provide assistance with secondary trauma as soon as an attorney starts a job; Introduce workplace interventions for overworked attorneys to reduce occupational stress; Educate young attorneys about stress management early in their careers, or even in law school.
<p>ABA 2018 Well Being Toolkit for Lawyers and Legal Employers, by Anne Brafford.</p> <p>99 page tool kit on supporting a healthy workplace, healthy work habits and lifestyle choices. Some useful things this 99 page Toolkit contains are: An Introduction to why lawyer well-being should be a priority; A definition of Lawyer Well-Being; A definition of a Healthy Workplace; An 8-Step Action Plan for Legal Employers; Guidance for a Policy & Practice Audit to evaluate what supports and harms well-being; Recommendations for Activities & Events and for Education & Development to include as part of your Action Plan; Ideas for Assessments to track progress on wellbeing goals; Online Resources & Technology to help start and develop well-being initiatives; Book Recommendations; A list of Partners, which are organizations that already focus on lawyer well-being and can assist legal employers in their efforts; A list of Speakers and Consultants to contribute to well-being initiatives; An Activity Workbook that contains Worksheets with hands-on activities and checklists for enhancing well-being that can be used individually or collectively as part of organization level initiatives.</p>

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The Path to Lawyer Well-Being: Practical Recommendations for Positive Change. Report from the National Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being, ABA 2017:

This report's recommendations focus on five central themes:

(1) identifying stakeholders and the role each of us can play in reducing the level of toxicity in our profession, (2) eliminating the stigma associated with help-seeking behaviors, (3) ***emphasizing that well-being is an indispensable part of a lawyer's duty of competence***, (4) educating lawyers, judges, and law students on lawyer well-being issues, and (5) taking small, incremental steps to change how law is practiced and how lawyers are regulated to instill greater well-being in the profession.

Prevalence of Substance Use and Other Mental Health Concerns Among American Attorneys, (2016

Ford Foundation study for ABA), Krill, Patrick R. JD, LL.M.; Johnson, Ryan MA; Albert, Linda MSSW, Journal of Addiction Medicine: January/February 2016 – Volume 10 – Issue 1 – p 46–52. A sample of 12,825 licensed, employed attorneys completed surveys, assessing alcohol use, drug use, and symptoms of depression, anxiety, and stress. Substantial rates of behavioral health problems were found, with 20.6% screening positive for hazardous, harmful, and potentially alcohol-dependent drinking. Levels of depression, anxiety, and stress among attorneys were significant, with 28%, 19%, and 23% experiencing symptoms of depression, anxiety, and stress, respectively. The “parade of difficulties” includes suicide, social alienation, work addiction, sleep deprivation, job dissatisfaction, a “diversity crisis,” complaints of work-life conflict. Younger lawyers in the first ten years of practice experience the highest rates of problem drinking and depression.

Keeping Legal Minds Intact: Mitigating Compassion Fatigue Among Legal Professionals, ABA 2014

Organizational Contributions to Compassion Fatigue:

Heavy caseloads-Long Hours
Inefficient administration
Excessive paperwork
Inadequate resources to meet the demands
Lack of supportive supervision.

Research-based suggestions for improving mood, increasing life satisfaction and mitigating CF:

Recognize the risks for yourself
Find a way to debrief distressing material-especially through connection/community
Work on self-awareness every day
Take an inventory of how balanced your life is--be intentional about balancing it out
Evaluate your tension reducing behaviors
Be intentional about protecting yourself

Summary article: [The Toll of Trauma](#), by Dianne Molvig, Wisconsin Lawyer, December 2011. Very readable 7 page summary of the findings of Linda Albert's 2011 study of Wisconsin State Public Defenders. Findings: PDs had significantly higher levels of **compassion fatigue** (the cumulative physical, emotional, and psychological effects of continual exposure to traumatic stories or events when working in a helping capacity) than the general population, by measuring symptoms of **Depression** (loss of

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interest in pleasure, disturbed sleep, loss of appetite, low energy, poor concentration, feelings of guilt or low self-worth); **Post-traumatic Stress Disorder** (flashbacks, nightmares, severe anxiety, uncontrollable thoughts); **Functional Impairment** (interference with functioning in work, social/leisure life and family/home life); **Secondary Trauma Stress** (“cost of caring” about another person who had experienced trauma; symptoms similar to PTSD). **75% PD Attorneys** report that their work has **negative impact** on their lives as whole.

Study: **Secondary Traumatic Stress in Attorneys and Their Administrative Support Staff Working With Trauma-Exposed Clients**, by Andrew P. Levin, Linda Albert, Avi Besser, Deborah Smith, Alex Zelenski, Stacey Rosenkranz, and Yuval Neria, *The Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease*, Vol. 199, Number 12, Dec. 2011. A study in which the Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale, the Impact of Event Scale-Revised (PTSD), the Sheehan Disability Scale (functional impairment) and The Professional Quality of Life Scale Version 5, were administered to attorneys, investigators and support staff at the Wisconsin State Public Defender, an agency that at that time had over 250 lawyers/474 total staff in offices at 38 locations. [At this link](#), the 2011 study is included and begins at page 84.

Resources:

[National Task Force on Lawyer Well Being](#): formed in 2017.

[Lawyer Well Being](#) YouTube channel: created by Anne Brafford, includes yoga and meditation practice videos as well as videos about connecting with clients and other well being video content.

Articles:

“What Makes Lawyers Happy?: A Data-Driven Prescription to Redefine Professional Success,” by Lawrence S Krieger and Kennon M Sheldon, 83 *George Washington Law Review* 554 (2015), FSU College of Law, Public Law Research Paper No. 667, Posted: 22 Feb 2014 Last revised: 13 May 2015.

Books:

[Books on Lawyer Well Being](#) Library of titles from ABA Publishing

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Yoga

Yoga is a Sanskrit word that translates as “yoke” or “union.” This is sometimes translated as a goal of aiming to join the body, mind and spirit. Yoga originated in India, and is widely known in the U.S. today as a system of physical postures (*asanas*) and breathing exercises (*pranayama*) that promote physical well-being and relaxation.

In public defense work, yoga can be a valuable practice for stress management, physical health, meditation and relaxation.

Yoga is also one of the movement practices used [as a somatic therapy for healing trauma](#).

The benefits of yoga include
<ul style="list-style-type: none">-reduces stress, anxiety, fatigue and depression-increases relaxation-reduces cortisol levels-reduces inflammation-improves hearth heath and risk factors for heart disease-may reduce chronic pain and migraines-promotes sleep quality-improves flexibility, balance, breathing

Deciphering yoga descriptions	
If you want to take a class but are confused by the titles and terminology, here is a chart of common class titles/styles. My recommendation is this: before deciding whether yoga is a useful practice for you, try three different styles and three different teachers to get a sense of whether a class, or a teacher, or even yoga as a practice, is a good fit for you. The experience can vary dramatically by teacher and style, so if you're interested, don't give up just because one class was disappointing. There's a lot of yoga out there—saying you don't like it after 1 class is like saying you don't like music after hearing 1 song.	
Ashtanga	Athletic, demanding, series of poses linked with breath, practiced in the same order.
Bikram, hot yoga	26 poses practiced twice, always in the same sequence, in a heated room.
Flow/power/vinyasa	Flowing practice that links movement and breath, sometimes in a heated room.
Hatha	Broad term for teaching yoga postures. Often more gentle and with alignment instruction.
Iyengar	Practice of postures with meticulous attention to alignment and frequent use of props
Jivamukti	Physical practice, often with music, that incorporates spiritual elements (chanting and scripture).
Kundalini	Uses movement, dynamic breathing, meditation and chanting to increase vitality and consciousness.

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Restorative, yin	Passive poses, often using props, designed to soothe and rejuvenate.
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Home practice sequencing								
There are many classes and theories about yoga sequencing. While they are useful, do not be intimidated about developing a home practice on your own. If you wish to develop a home practice, but wonder how to sequence the poses in a useful way, one possible outline for sequencing is below. It's just one possible starting point, try others too.								
Opening/ Intention	Warm up	Standing	Balancing	Seated	Backbend	Core/ Spine	Inversions	Rest/ Savasana
	Half/full Sun salutation (A + B)	Warrior 1,2, 3 Reverse warrior Side angle Triangle Crescent Chair	Tree Eagle	Forward bends and Twists	Bridge Wheel	Boat Twist	Legs up wall Shoulder- stand Headstand	Breathing meditation
	Cat/cow Thread needle Sideplank Childs pose		Arm balancing: Bakasana				Pigeon	

Yoga Practice Resources

[Desk Yoga Practice](#): guide with photos and instructions by Amy Pruett, from 2020 Lawyer Well Being Week.

[Gaia](#): online app with yoga, meditation, videos and other content. Subscription with free trial.

[Yoga with Adrienne](#): free YouTube channel with library of over 500 practice.

[Yoga with Omaid](#) Join Public Defender Investigator/CorePower Instructor Omaid as he takes you on a 14 min relaxing yoga experience. Omaid and fellow CorePower instructor Katie B designed this workout for our office as a quick break to stretch out your bodies while working at home during this pandemic.

Try out some [desk yoga](#) or even some [bed yoga](#).

Articles:

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[Yoga as Somatic Therapy for Healing Trauma and PTSD](#), by Molly Rae Benoit-Leach, Yogapedia, March 11, 2020.

Books:

[The Art of Vinyasa: Awakening Body and Mind through the Practice of Ashtanga Yoga](#), by Richard Freeman and Mary Taylor. Exploring Ashtanga Vinyasa yoga not as a gymnastic feat but as a meditative form.

[Every Body Yoga: Let Go of Fear, Get On the Mat, Love Your Body](#), by Jessamyn Stanley. “Jessamyn Stanley’s Every Body Yoga: Let Go of Fear, Get on the Mat, Love Your Body (Workman) is a clever memoir of a millennial woman’s search for self-acceptance hidden within a beginner’s guide to asana yoga.” —ELLE

[The Heart of Yoga: Developing a Personal Practice](#), by [T. K. V. Desikachar](#)

[Light on Yoga: The Bible of Modern Yoga](#), by B. K. S. Iyengar and Yehudi Menuhin

[Light on the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali](#), by B. K. S. Iyengar

[May I Be Happy: A Memoir of Love, Yoga, and Changing My Mind](#), by Cyndi Lee

[Moving Toward Balance](#): 8 Weeks of Yoga with Rodney Yee

[Yoga Body, Buddha Mind: A Complete Manual for Physical and Spiritual Well-Being](#) from the Founder of the Om Yoga Center, by Cyndi Lee

[Yoga for Lawyers: Mind-Body Techniques to Feel Better All the Time](#), by Hallie N. Love and Nathalie Martin. “Yoga for Lawyers offers techniques that can be practiced at home, in the office, and even while taking a break in court. This book can help you improve your law practice by sharpening your ability to concentrate and bettering your overall state of mind and well-being.”

[Yoga Mala](#), Sri K. Pattabhi Jois

TED talks and other video resources:

[The Power of Breath](#): Yoga's Psychological Benefits, Anjali Mehta, TEDxYouth@SAS

[Yoga and its connection to mental health](#), Nikolai Blinow, TEDxSalveReginaU

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by Jenny P. Andrews

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