

## **Health, Wellness, and Ethics**

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The ethical rules we lawyers are subject to are formally known as the Louisiana Rules of Professional Conduct. The Louisiana Supreme Court enacted them effective March 2004. There's been revision to a few of the advertising rules on constitutional grounds, but, other than that, they have stayed intact and usually align with the American Bar Association's Model Rules upon which they are based. For decades, continuing legal education requirements have mandated that lawyers learn an hour of ethics annually. In the early 1990s, after much debate, the supreme court required that one hour of professionalism also be part of the yearly 12.5 hours total. And for newly admitted lawyers, the ethics/professionalism requirements for the first year are 8 of the 12.5 yearly hours.

In large part, the thrust of education in ethics and professionalism has been anecdotally based. Presenters frequently lecture on what comprises best practices in the subject area. They tell stories which seek to convey a teaching moment or provide aspirational goals that listeners should strive to attain. Many of the presentations discuss the serious consequences of failing to comply with ethical standards and admonish lawyers to know the rules and follow them.

According to the Office of Disciplinary Counsel,<sup>1</sup> the top five ethical complaints against Louisiana lawyers are:

1. Neglect/lack of diligence
2. Lack of communication

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<sup>1</sup> Based on a recent personal phone call with Chuck Plattsmier, Chief Disciplinary Counsel.

3. Fee dispute/charging an excessive fee
4. Dishonesty/fraud
5. Conflicts of interest

A problem rarely touched upon in the presentation of ethics is that the presenter is teaching an audience of lawyers with more mental and physical health problems than that of the general population. As a group, lawyers are in poor health. Abundant studies document that many lawyers are unhappy in their work, and that lawyers experience levels of depression, anxiety, and other mental illnesses at a higher rate than any other profession. Commentators have identified several reasons for lawyers' despair: heightened competitiveness, a quest for money, a general decline in values, dissatisfaction with work, and the diminished view in which the public holds the profession (only 18% of the public view lawyers favorably according to the latest Gallup Poll).

In the last decade, an explosion of social science research has provided insight into the reasons why the practice of law can create so much emotional distress. Investigations cover a broad range of academic areas, including neuroscience, evolutionary biology, moral psychology, positive psychology, and others. Researchers are finding effective ways to decrease stress. Some involve a new idea such as reframing troublesome issues to allow self-disputation, a suggestion from positive psychology. Older remedies like mindfulness, meditation, and yoga have been tested and measured. So far, much of this research has been limited to scholarly books and publications. Little has found its way into presentations about ethics.

Research shows that lawyers' health problems start in law school.

Investigations conducted by Professors Kennon Sheldon and Lawrence Krieger consistently reveal that the optimism law students possess when they enter law school is substantially eroded by the time the students finish their first year of study.

The authors explain their findings:

The popular notion that law school is an exceptionally stressful experience for many students has been substantiated by longitudinal studies. Indeed, the emotional distress of law students appears to significantly exceed that of medical students and at times to approach that of psychiatric populations. These findings have substantial human and social significance, given that the level of adjustment of graduating law students is likely to carry over into professional practice and may set the stage for the unparalleled frequency of psychological distress and other problems seen broadly among lawyers today.<sup>2</sup>

Further complicating matters, renowned psychologist Martin Seligman studied over 100 professions and pursuits and found that law is the only one where pessimists outperform optimists. Seligman is the founder of Positive Psychology which basically looks at psychology from the perspective of wellness as opposed to dysfunction. Seligman explains that a “pessimist views bad events as pervasive, permanent and uncontrollable, while the optimist sees them as local, temporary and changeable.”<sup>3</sup> In all other endeavors pessimism is a bad trait, and pessimists tend to perform more poorly than their optimistic cohorts. Writes Seligman:

Pessimism is seen as a plus among lawyers, because seeing troubles as pervasive and permanent is a component of what the law profession deems prudent. A prudent perspective enables a good lawyer to see every conceivable snare and catastrophe that might occur in any

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<sup>2</sup> Kennon M. Sheldon & Lawrence S. Krieger, *Understanding the Negative Effects of Legal Education on Law Students: A Longitudinal Test of Self-Determination Theory*, 33 *Personality & Soc. Psychol. Bull.* 883 (2007).

<sup>3</sup> Martin E. P. Seligman, *Authentic Happiness: Using the New Positive Psychology to Realize Your Potential for Lasting Fulfillment*, 177–78, The Free Press (2002).

transaction. The ability to anticipate the whole range of problems and betrayals that non-lawyers are blind to is highly adaptive for the practicing lawyer who can, by so doing, help his clients defend against these far-fetched eventualities. If you don't have this prudence to begin with, law school will seek to teach it to you. Unfortunately, though, a trait that makes you good at your profession does not always make you a happy human being.<sup>4</sup>

Causes that contribute to our profession's unhappiness include the selection of lawyers for their pessimism which they too often generalize to their personal lives; jobs characterized by high pressure and low decision latitude; and the adversary nature of our legal system (a zero-sum game) from which negative emotions flow.

A recent study transcends the anecdotes and instead uses data from several thousand lawyers in four states. The authors designed their work to research empirically how to guide lawyers and law students who seek well-being. This latest research from Krieger and Sheldon shows:

Psychological factors related to self, others, and meaningful, personally engaging work were far more predictive of well-being than external factors relating to competitive standing, honors, or financial rewards. Secondary analyses showed that public service lawyers were happier and more satisfied than other lawyers, including those in the most prestigious, highly paid positions. Further, across the sample, a number of personal routine and life style choices matched or exceeded the power of income, honors, and credentials as predictors of lawyer well-being.<sup>5</sup>

In other words, lawyers, and the schools that educate us, have misplaced priorities. The things that gain the most attention—income, law school debt, class rank, law review, and school ranking—show zero to minimal correlations with lawyer

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<sup>4</sup> *Id.* at 178.

<sup>5</sup> Lawrence S. Krieger & Kennon M. Sheldon, *What Makes Lawyers Happy? Transcending the Anecdotes with Data from 6200 Lawyers* 55 (FSU College of Law, Working Paper No. 667, 2014), available at [http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=2398989###](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2398989###).

well-being. In fact, the group with the lowest incomes and grades in school (public interest lawyers) had the highest autonomy and purpose and were the happiest. Law school deans have initiated a variety of procedures to combat undue stress in their students (Appendix).

The American Bar Association recently published a thorough analysis of the research. *The Path to Lawyer Well-Being* opens with an Introduction that points out lawyers especially at risk are those in their first ten years and in private firms.

Although the legal profession has known for years that many of its students and practitioners are languishing, far too little has been done to address it. Recent studies show we can no longer continue to ignore the problems. In 2016, the American Bar Association (ABA) Commission on Lawyer Assistance Programs and Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation published their study of nearly 13,000 currently practicing lawyers [the “Study”]. It found that between 21 and 36 percent qualify as problem drinkers, and that approximately 28 percent, 19 percent, and 23 percent are struggling with some level of depression, anxiety, and stress, respectively. The parade of difficulties also includes suicide, social alienation, work addiction, sleep deprivation, job dissatisfaction, a “diversity crisis,” complaints of work-life conflict, incivility, a narrowing of values so that profit predominates, and negative public perception. Notably, the Study found that younger lawyers in the first ten years of practice and those working in private firms experience the highest rates of problem drinking and depression. The budding impairment of many of the future generation of lawyers should be alarming to everyone. Too many face less productive, less satisfying, and more troubled career paths.

This presentation will explore some of the social science studies which explain negative well-being in lawyers and examine possible solutions to eliminate or lessen the causal factors. For those interested, further reading in this area is found below.

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Alcoholism/Chemical Dependency/Mental Health

Eaton, William W., et al., *Occupations and the Prevalence of Major Depressive Disorder*, 32 J. Occupational Med. 1079 (1990).

Harkness, Jr. John F., *Lawyers Helping Lawyers: A Message of Hope*, 73 FLA. B.J. 10 (1999).

Seligman, Martin E. P., Paul R. Verkuil & Terry H. Kang, *Why Lawyers are Unhappy*, 23 Cardozo L. Rev. 33 (2001).

The Role of Law School in Causing Lawyer Unhappiness

Beck, Phyllis W. & David Burns, *Anxiety and Depression in Law Students: Cognitive Intervention*, 30 J. Legal Educ. 270 (1979).

Benjamin, G. Andrew H., et al., *The Role of Legal Education in Producing Psychological Distress Among Law Students and Lawyers*, 11 Am. B. Found. Res. J. 225 (1986).

Peterson, Todd David & Elizabeth Waters Peterson, *Stemming the Tide of Law Student Depression: What Law Schools Need to Learn from the Science of Positive Psychology*, 9 Yale J. Health Pol'y L. & Ethics, 357 (2009).

Sheldon, Kennon M. & Lawrence S. Krieger, *Understanding the Negative Effects of Legal Education on Law Students: A Longitudinal Test of Self-Determination Theory*, 33 Personality & Soc. Psychol. Bull. 883 (2007).

Lawyer Attitudes About the Profession

Elwork, Amiram & G. Andrew H. Benjamin, *Lawyers in Distress*, 23 J. Psychiatry & L. 205 (1995).

Krieger, Lawrence S. & Kennon M. Sheldon, *What Makes Lawyers Happy? Transcending the Anecdotes with Data from 6200 Lawyers* (FSU College of Law, Working Paper No. 667, 2014), available at [http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=2398989###](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2398989###).

Rhode, Deborah L., *The Profession and Its Discontents*, 61 Ohio St. L.J. 1335 (2000).

Schiltz, Patrick J., *On Being a Happy, Healthy and Ethical Member of an Unhappy, Unhealthy, and Unethical Profession*, 52 Vand. L. Rev. 871 (1999).

Coping with Stress, Increasing Professional Satisfaction, and  
Inoculating against Pessimism

Austin, Debra S., *Killing Them Softly: Neuroscience Reveals How Brain Cells Die from Law School Stress and How Neural Self-Hacking Can Optimize Cognitive Performance*, 59 Loy. L. Rev. 791 (2013).

Brostoff, Teresa Kissane, *Meditation for Law Students: Mindfulness Practice as Experiential Learning*, Legal studies research paper series, Working Paper No. 2016-26 (2016).

Daicoff, Susan Swaim, *Lawyer Know Thyself: A Psychological Analysis of Personality Strengths and Weaknesses*, American Psychological Association (2004).

Elwork, Amiram, *Stress Management for Lawyers: How to Increase Personal & Professional Satisfaction in the Law*, Vorkell Group (3d ed. 2007).

Kaufman, George W., *The Lawyer's Guide to Balancing Life and Work: Taking the Stress Out of Success*, American Bar Association (2d ed. 2006).

Keeva, Steven, *Transforming Practices: Finding Joy and Satisfaction in the Legal Life*, American Bar Association (10th ed. 2011).

Levit, Nancy & Douglas O. Linder, *The Happy Lawyer: Making a Good Life in the Law*, Oxford University Press (2010).

Melcher, Michael F., *The Creative Lawyer: A Practical Guide to Authentic Professional Satisfaction*, American Bar Association (2007).

Riskin, Leonard L., *The Contemplative Lawyer: On the Potential Contributions of Mindfulness, Meditation to Law Students, Lawyers, and Their Clients*, 7 Harv. Negotiation L. Rev. 1 (2002).

Seligman, Martin E. P., *Learned Optimism, How to Change Your Mind and Your Life*, Vintage Books (2006).

*The Path to Lawyer Well-Being: Practical Recommendations for Positive Change*, American Bar Association (2017).



## APPENDIX

### Initiatives re Student Well-Being

#### School 1:

- We run a series of health and wellness events each semester including a wellness fair, anti-stress trainings, and last year we brought in a professional massage company for an afternoon/evening.
- We also discuss Prof. Kreiger's work with our students to encourage them to seek their own stress-relief strategies and to be aware of the issues.

#### School 2:

- The main thing we did was bring a counselor in house to talk with our students confidentially. A psychologist from our main campus (which is 45 miles away) rotates through here each week.
- Appointments are made through main campus and no one at the law school has any idea who is using this resource. However, the counselor reports being slammed.

#### School 3:

- In the fall of 2013, the David Nee Foundation did a presentation at [ ] Law School regarding depression and suicide in law students and the legal profession. As a result of this presentation, we introduced students to yoga, pilates, healthy cooking, and mindfulness.
- As of result of this initiative, students decided to form a student organization focused on wellness. Over the past three years, students have organized yoga classes, meditation sessions, a speaker series, and the Dean's Challenge each February. During the month of February, students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to record their exercise and attend special wellness events. Prizes are awarded to top finishers. This year the club also planned a special 5K Race in November.
- This wellness initiative has changed the culture of the law school so that exercise breaks are valued and not considered a waste of time. The Dean's leadership and the participation of the faculty has been an integral part of the effort. This past fall we had over 30 first year students attend our initial information session and students sought out leadership positions in the wellness club. We were also fortunate to have highly skilled yoga instructors and personal trainers in our first year class so they could serve as instructors.
- In addition to the Wellness Club, we make it a point to discuss the biology of stress with first year students as well as ways to decrease stress. We also incorporate stress management techniques into our pre-orientation program in the summer.

#### School 4:

- We do outreach to students and share resources relating to addiction, substance abuse, resilience, and suicide prevention.
- Lawyer Assistance Programs provide confidential services and support to judges, lawyers and law students who are facing substance use disorders or mental health issues. We've also made available to our students the Dave Nee Foundation mental health screening tool, which allows students to take an online anonymous mental health screening for depression and other mood and anxiety disorders. The screening provides them with a quick, anonymous, and effective way to recognize if they are at risk for treatable mental health disorders.
- We also provided the following programming this year: Mindfulness & Stress Management for the Busy Law Student, Yoga, and free massages.
- We also arranged for the university Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) to come and do a vicarious trauma and wellness training with all of the clinical students; We had representatives from both CAPS and the Bert Nash Community Mental Health Center meet with our Dean's Fellows at the beginning of the year to educate them about how to spot students in distress, as well as the available mental health resources on and around campus.

#### School 5:

- We sponsor a chapter of Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers ("LCL") on our campus. LCL is an anonymous support group founded as a place for law students, lawyers and judges to share their experience, strength and hope with each other so that they may solve their common problems and help others to recover from any impairment such as stress, anxiety, depression, substance abuse, or addiction.
- We have a year-long structured program for our first-year students that puts them into small groups, provides social and academic mentors, and offers a wide array of career services and academic support programming, networking opportunities, fun social activities, and the like. Some of the sessions are explicitly focused on student well-being, such as a session on anxiety and stress management.
- We run a six-week support group called Creating Calm in Law School.

#### School 6:

- Our efforts include reforming the first year curriculum to add a "Lawyering Elective" in which students begin to develop skills and discuss ethical issues in their second semester, not otherwise covered in the traditional first-year curriculum. We offer a number of different sections on a range of discrete topics – the idea of choice as well

as an experience in the first year that emphasizes what lawyers do is tied to Larry's work. We also implemented the importance of student choice in the upper division by reducing the number of required courses and instead giving students menus of options as to Bar subjects, externships, clinics, upper division writing, etc.

- We also have therapy dogs around exam time. We implemented a coaching program for first year students to meet with a faculty member not teaching them to discuss the transition to law school in smaller groups.
- We have been offering Essential Mindfulness for Lawyers for about 8 years and we host weekly drop in meditation hours.

#### Law School 7:

- All students have a graduation requirement called the "Legal Profession Curriculum." This includes: 1L Year – Fall: Presentation by Lawyers Assistance Program (LAP); Spring: Presentation by Dave Nee Foundation. 2L and 3L/4L years are focused on financial responsibility and candor.
- We host three "Wellness Wednesday" events each semester (ranging from a resource fair to programs on mindfulness and nutrition). Additionally, we do a "Wellness Wednesday" feature every week in our daily newsletter to students.
- Leading up to Law Student Mental Health Day at the end of March, we usually do several events related to the program – send out the surveys, publicize resources and giveaways.
- This past new year, we had some fun contests that were more interactive (during February). For example, for anyone who turned in a healthy recipe received a chance to win free barrister ball tickets. The second week, students who turned in "their best" health and wellness tip got a chance to win an Uber gift certificate. All students who participated but didn't win received a consolation prize of a tote. These recipes and health tips will be compiled and posted to our health and wellness webpage.
- One of the things we've learned in doing all these things is that they want to see professionals who have come out of the darkness. Our LAP program now features a recovering attorney and Dave Nee has now added an attorney who has sought treatment. This approach seems to resonate with the students, with a "it gets better" feeling. David Jaffe at American created a DVD years ago about a student who received a DUI and how she came around – I used it at my last school. He is on the cutting edge and I get a lot of ideas from Co-Lap - [http://www.americanbar.org/groups/lawyer\\_assistance/initiatives\\_awards/law\\_school\\_assistance.html](http://www.americanbar.org/groups/lawyer_assistance/initiatives_awards/law_school_assistance.html).

#### Law School 8:

- We are starting a mentoring program under which each incoming student will be assigned a faculty mentor for the duration of his or her time at our school. The mentor will be trained to assist with and make appropriate referrals for academic advising, career counseling and general wellness.

#### Law School 9:

- Education: In the past three years, we have provided students with lunch programs that address wellness. I teach a session on implicit beliefs about intelligence (growth mindset). My colleagues have hosted sessions on mindfulness and resilience. My colleagues and I research and publish in these areas, and we are passionate about the change we believe we can foster.
- Student Wellness Committee: This year we turned our ad hoc group of faculty and students interested in wellness issues into a law school committee. The committee is charged with developing student wellness programming.
- Counseling: We provide drop-in counseling at the Law School from professional counselors in consultation with the State Bar Association and University Health Services.
- Website: This year, we created a web page for students looking for resources regarding wellness.
- Other programming: This summer, when approximately 100 of our students were in the building working with their clinics, we hosted a few impromptu lunches to allow students to discuss current events many found disturbing. From those discussions, we suggested some follow-up programming and training.
- We also hosted an afternoon-long training for faculty and staff on implicit bias.
- Re-orientation: We also developed a second orientation near the beginning of the spring semester, just after students received their first-semester grades. We provided a healthy lunch and we reminded the students of the resources we have in the Law School related to: academic well being, financial well being, career wellness, and mental and physical health. The invitation to the orientation and the introduction re-enforced the importance of a growth mindset.

#### Law School 10:

- Last year, we augmented our access to the university mental health clinic with a full time licensed mental health counselor who manages triage and referral of students to various health providers, allowing her to follow up and ensure the students make

appointments and follow treatment regimes. That person is under the jurisdiction of our new assistant dean for law student affairs, and the counselor receives referrals from that office, faculty, staff, and students.

- We have an active engagement with our lawyers' assistance program, and TLAP makes presentations twice yearly to our students, as well as taking direct referrals.
- We have a new student wellness committee, which sponsors outdoor activities as well as programs on nutrition, work-life balance, etc. That committee has overhauled food selections in our snack machines, moving to the installation of fresh food dispensers. They do other small but useful things, like sponsor puppy days during exams.
- Perhaps more importantly, we have worked with student organizations to reduce the quantity of alcohol at student events. Kegs at events are now rare, though punches and wines are more common.

#### Law School 11:

- As standing resources, we incorporate information on our University's alcohol and drug recovery and counseling program; Behavioral Medicine (psychological counseling) and Chapel (religious, and non-religious meditation) programs into our Orientation and have regular intervals where information is redistributed through information screens throughout the building, brochures and programming.
- We work annually with the Dave Nee Foundation to provide a by-stander training and personal assessment related to depression and suicide.
- We also have a program that trains (mostly) staff and students on how to identify and respond to persons with various levels of stress, depression and suicidal ideation. A few of the staff members in the School of Law are trainers for the program. Also, as a standing resource the Dean's Office pays for weekly yoga classes.
- In addition to informing students about these resources, we provide programming on various forms of personal wellness strategies – physical; mental; spiritual; and so on, so as to keep the topic of wellness, and personal balance in-front of students on a regular basis.
- We also have annual events, such as the "Ambulance Chase 5K" that are wellness-related and community building.
- Winter is hard here, so Student Affairs sponsors a Wellness Fair at the start of the Spring term, bringing a wide-variety of resources to the School of Law to make it as easy as possible for students to access the resources that are best for them, and to be knowledgeable of options.

- We also provide chair massages and therapy dogs prior to exams, as a reminder for students to take time for their personal well-being while under the stress of exams.
- Student Affairs has also supported a program, “Live Well, Learn Well” that promoted a weekly challenge to students to encourage them to look at healthy recipes one week, and then get physically active another week, and engage in a service project the following week. While this was very successful two years ago, it absolutely bombed this year, so I’m hesitant to recommend it.
- Going forward we are looking into a wellness app for students and hope to promote positive exchanges and connections through electronic tools. I’ll be eager to learn any programs or ideas that others have found to be particularly good, as we’re always looking to adapt new options into the students’ experience at BU.

#### Law School 12:

- .25 FTE licensed counselor located on the law school campus
- Psycho-educational programming on mindfulness and depression
- Participation in the ABA mental health day with mental health screenings
- Participation in conversations with main campus regarding a campus-wide mental health assessment in collaboration with the Jed Foundation
- Formation of informal support groups with assistance of faculty in “Just Talk” series
- Faculty and staff sit on informal work group with members of the Board of Bar Examiners, Lawyers Assistance Program, and Disciplinary Board to analyze results of the Survey of Law Student Well-Being Survey and determine ways to reduce barriers to help-seeking behaviors
- Worked in collaboration with Student Health and Counseling to implement best-practices, including post-vention after student suicides
- Faculty organized LAP meetings on and off-campus
- Practicum (required 1L first semester class) focusing on issues of wellness, mindfulness, and professional identity
- Participation by faculty and staff in ABA COLAP assessment of local LAP
- Created a brochure “Student Resources for Emotional and Physical Wellbeing” with referrals to local and national service providers

### Law School 13:

- The school of law hosts a wellness week which consist of weeklong student outreach through programming. The events were aimed at promoting fitness, balance and healthy choices. As part of Wellness Week, students were able to enjoy physical exercise with spinning and yoga, programming aimed at educating students about financial literacy, and a presentation concerning mental well-being and mindful health choices. The highlight of wellness week is the student organization and resource fair. The event features law school, campus, and local resources for law students.
- The first Wednesday of each month has been designated “Wellness Wednesdays.” On Wellness Wednesday, the law school publishes an e-newsletter, providing information and resources regarding various wellness events and initiatives offered on campus and in the community.
- The school of law offers Mindfulness for Law School. The six-week series covered the basics of mindfulness based stress reduction (MBSR) practice.
- In addition, for ABA Mental Health Day, the Office of Student Affairs collaborated with Counseling & Psychological Services to offer a Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) Suicide Prevention Training. The QPR training covered myths and facts about suicide, warning signs of suicide, and ways to offer hope and support. In the past, the Office of Student Affairs collaborated with Health and Wellness Promotion to offer confidential online mental health screenings for law students.
- The Office of Student Affairs focused on sexual assault prevention programming in collaboration with the Office of Health and Wellness Promotion. The law school joined the university for PurpleThursday. Students were able to get resources and information about domestic and dating violence. Participants were encouraged to wear purple to stand with survivors and to show that you believe in relationship safety for all. Also, the law school offered Haven Plus for law students. Haven Plus is nationwide sexual assault prevention initiative. It is an online course that provides relevant information through adaptive pathways to provide a personalized educational experience specifically tailored to graduate and professional students.
- Throughout the year, Indiana University Robert H. McKinney School of Law partners with the Indiana Judges & Lawyers Assistance Program (JLAP). The law school offers pet therapy day in collaboration with JLAP, Indiana Canine Assistant Network (ICAN), and Love on a Leash.

### Law School 14:

- Each year, during Mental Health Day (Spring) and Wellness Week (Fall) we provide students with a series of wellness related offerings. Over the years these have

included physicians, exercise physiologists, and psychologists speaking at luncheon events and discussing the health aspects of sleep, nutrition, meditation, gratitude, and exercise, the concerns associate with non-prescribed cognitive enhancing pharmaceuticals, multi-tasking and technologies, and generating greater awareness around anxiety, depression, substance abuse, and suicide and proactive things that can be done for themselves and their classmates who may be in distress. During these events, we also bring onto campus trained staff to offer free massages, yoga, therapy dogs, fruit smoothies, healthy foods and cooking instructions, stress-relieving devices, and mental health information. We also create spaces for drop-in meditation, reflection, aroma therapy, labyrinth walking, and the cultivation of gratitude.

- Weekly throughout the school year, we offer a series of “Mindful Spaces” where faculty facilitate an opportunity for students can come for (a) a 20-minute mindful walk around the lake, (b) a 10-minute mindful movement session in the student lounge, (c) a 20-minute mindful sitting, and (d) a student run space for a 30-minute nap, and (e) a 10-minute student run mindfulness of sound meditation. We seek to have these offered on different days of the week.
- We have a very close relationship with the school’s counseling center leadership and staff and are attentive to the needs of students, helping them access this important resource.
- There is a mindfulness student organization called the Insight Mind Initiative where law students can meet and discuss issues of interest to them, have special luncheon get-togethers with lawyers and judges who practice mindfulness, and collaborate with the school’s Mindfulness in Law Program.
- We offer a 6-week voluntary class for first semester 1L students called Jurisight that introduces students to mindfulness insights and practices along with relaxation/stress-reduction exercises, and connects them to their first-year experience.
- Each incoming student is paired with a Student Development Director who meet individually with each student during the first semester of 1L year to become familiar with their backgrounds, challenges, short and long term goals. They maintain an open-door policy and meet with students on an as-needed basis, maintaining a ongoing relationship with them throughout their time at Miami Law.
- A group of faculty and staff who interact with students from a variety of student service perspectives meet regularly to discuss student well-being, ideas for implementing mental health related programs, and working together to be able to best help students in need.



- We offer four courses where mindfulness is integrated into the curriculum: Mindful Ethics (3-credits), Mindfulness in Law (2-credits), Mindful Leadership (1-credit), and Mindfulness and Motivating Business Compliance (1-credit). Each class introduces students to mindfulness and creates the opportunity for ongoing practice as it weaves mindfulness into the course subject matter. The Mindfulness in Law class, in particular, is one where students explore the connection between mindfulness practice and mental health concerns, such as depression, anxiety, and substance abuse. It is not uncommon for several students integrate this subject matter into their paper and class presentations. We also offer a course on Emotional Intelligence (3-credits).
- While students are studying for the bar, we offer incentives/contests for them to exercise at the school's wellness center or their own fitness studio and offer opportunities for them to meet and practice relaxation and mindfulness exercises.

#### Law School 15:

- Every entering student is placed in a 5-6 student structured study group facilitated by a carefully-trained and closely-supervised upper-division student. In addition to working on law school success skills, the groups minimize social isolation and provide social support.
- We offer yoga and meditation classes, and the Dean's orientation welcome trains students in three proven stress management techniques.
- Every entering student is assigned a practitioner mentor, works with the mentor on a resume and career goals and completes 11 hours of shadowing and five hours of pro bono.
- In our required Professionalism course, we teach interpersonal communication skills, bringing in a national expert in positive interpersonal communication. In that course, we also teach cross-cultural proficiency under the label "lawyering across difference."
- During the dean's welcome as part of orientation, each student authors a letter to herself, in which she imagines herself retiring from practice and envisions what she hopes people will be saying about her. The students self-address the envelopes to a more permanent address, and the dean mails the letters to the students after they graduate.
- We have an active JLAP student organization and a close relationship with our state JLAP.
- The dean memorizes the names of every entering student, and most faculty members do the same.

- We bring counselors on campus an average of once per month.
- Every semester, we hold, on the last day of class, a day-long "Stress Less Fest." We provide therapy dogs, free massages, games, meditation, and, at the end of the day, the faculty, staff and administration cook and serve a pot-luck dinner to the students.