

# MANAGING YOUR LEGAL CAREER 2012

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Lawyers Assistance Program

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## It Takes A Plan....

- A plan for managing daily work stress
- A plan for maintaining balance with work and life
- A vision for the career path you want to travel

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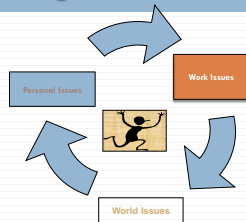
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## Various Influences On New Attorney Well-Being

- parenting challenges
- Relationship issues
- work-life balance/self-care
- Issues with parents/in-laws
- finances
- Friendships and outside interests



Isolation    QUESTIONING COMPETENCY  
 heavy caseloads    *feeling overwhelmed*  
 "drinking from the fire-hose"    self-doubt  
 lack of mentoring    STRESS    no power  
 lack of respect for the profession    media exposure  
 lack of workplace support  
 few promotional opportunities    procrastination  
 colleagues    STEEP LEARNING CURVE  
 time management    technology

- Challenging job market
- Safety concerns
- Volatile economic conditions
- Increasing pressure to understand other cultures and races

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### For Lawyers, Unaddressed Stress Can Translate to:

- > Missed court appearances and deadlines
- > Changes in behavior
- > Decline in performance
- > Diminished ability to think or concentrate
- > Neglecting personal appearance
- > Incoherent in court
- > Inappropriate emotional outbursts in court
- > Friction with judges or other lawyers out of proportion to the normal give and take of the legal process
- > Higher risk for depression, substance abuse and other issues




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### STRESS=PERCEPTION OF THREAT

- Internal Appraisal of Danger/Discomfort
  - Sympathetic Nervous System Response
    - (Fight, Flight, Freeze)
    - Increased Heart Rate
    - Increased Breathing Rate
    - Increase Adrenaline
    - Decreased Breathing Volume
    - Increased Muscle Tension
- Frequent Over-Stimulation Leads to Chronic Elevation

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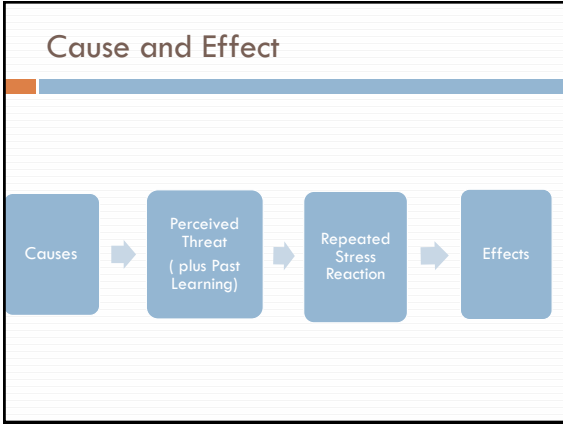
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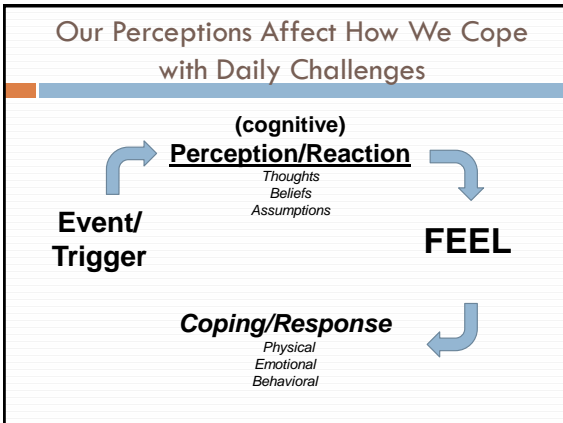
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### STRESS: Know Your Signals - - Recognize YOUR Stress Response

- *Physical*
  - sleeplessness
  - appetite change
- *Cognitive*
  - memory
  - concentration
- *Emotional*
  - withdrawing
  - irritability

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**If you change the way  
you look at things, the  
things you look at  
change....**



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### STRATEGY:

**1. Develop Awareness of Self-Talk:**

- Notice it
- Write it down

**2. Challenge the Belief or Thought:**

- Talk back to it/counter it
- Come up with a practical solution

**3. Ask Yourself:**

- Is it true?
- What happens when you believe the thought?

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### Mindfulness as a Strategy

**□ Stop**

Bring Awareness to Negative Thinking:  
*"I notice I'm having the thought that...."*

**□ Breathe:** Inhale & Exhale

**□ Reflect Nonjudgmentally**

On Your Appraisal of the Situation  
*Is there another perspective?*

**□ Choose**

Alternative Ways of Thinking / Acting

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## Self-Awareness Is Key

- Do you discover that you're in a bad mood only after you've been stressed for a while? Some days it's understandable!
- What calms you during the day? Going outside for lunch, or maybe taking a walk? Taking time to enjoy good weather? Lunch with colleagues? Closing your eyes for a few minutes to recharge?
- Recognizing your mood is half the problem.

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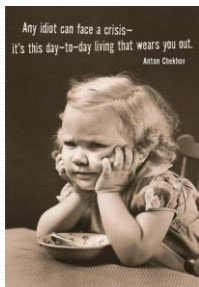
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## Work Life Balance




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## Responding to Life's Challenges...

*The place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet.*  
—Frederick Buechner

### **BALANCE IS ABOUT VALUES**

- What's important to you and why.
- Where do you see yourself in 5--10--15 years.
- When you're nearing retirement and looking back on your career what do you want to see?
- How will you feel thus far about the choices you've made.




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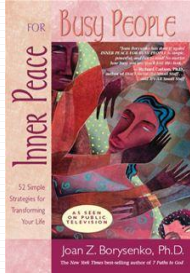
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## Can there really be Inner Peace for Busy People?

- *Inner Peace for Busy People*, Joan Borysenko, Ph.D.
- 52 “User-friendly” essays focusing on issues related to Work-Life Balance.




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## Taking the job home?

- Are you distracted? Struggle paying attention?
- Quiet, crabby, or drained?
- Do others get it?

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## WORK-LIFE BALANCE Strategies

- Include non-work activities that allow for pleasure, creativity, contribution;
- Use schedule, create accountability if needed
- Cultivate **both** lawyer and non-lawyer relationships
  - ▣ Lawyer friends understand the pressures
  - ▣ Non-lawyer friends keep you grounded

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### Crafting a Vision...

#### Performance Goals vs. Learning Goals:

- Get more Class A Felony Clients (Sharpen my skills; Attend more CLEs in that area of Criminal Defense).
- Increase revenue (Improve bookkeeping skills; utilize new software).

Who might be able to help me?

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### WSBA Job Seeking Resources

- One on one consultations
- Weekly job seeker group
- Bi-Monthly job seeker group
  - Website:
    - Job Board
- "Getting There: Your Guide to Career Success"

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### The Lawyers Assistance Program



- ✓ Alcohol and Drug Abuse
- ✓ Depression/Anxiety
- ✓ Balancing Work and Family
- ✓ Career Concerns, including Job Seeking
- ✓ Marital & Family
- ✓ Stress and Burnout
- ✓ Safety and Security

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## LAP Services

- Consultations, In-person and phone
- Third Party Assistance
- Referrals/Resources
- Groups
  - Weekly and Bi-Monthly Job Seekers
  - Mindful Lawyers
  - Coming: Solo Support group....

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