



Reimagining Wellness for Lawyers

- Strategies to Thrive at Work and Life



ERIN CLIFFORD
WELLNESS COACHING®



Statistics show that being a lawyer is the most stressful occupation in the United States. Lawyers feel constant pressure to:

- Perform at a high level and make critical decisions.
- Work under tight deadlines.
- Grapple with the constant demands of clients, colleagues, and the court system.



Research also suggests that lawyers typically experience more anxiety, depression, loneliness, and show greater incidences of substance use than the general population.

What Does It Mean
To Have Resilience?



Resilience is the capacity to rebound from adversity, trauma, or stress by adapting effectively.

When you have resilience, you're like a superhero in disguise. You've got a secret weapon that allows you to thrive despite challenging circumstances.





Research further reveals that 90% of lawyers score in the bottom half of the scale on the psychological trait called “resilience”.

- People with lower resilience tend to be defensive, easily wounded by criticism, rejection or other setbacks. They don’t bounce back as well from adversity.

- Dr. Larry Richard, Founder & Principal Consultant at LawyerBrain LLC



Not only do lawyers struggle to maintain a healthy work-life balance, but a lawyer's skill set lends itself to being less resilient.

- Actively cross-examine people's thinking and poke holes in arguments and contracts
- Look at situations with a critical frame of mind
- Under constant pressure to win and excel

- Building Resilience in the Legal Profession, Arun Birla and Paul Hastings

Polling Question:

How do lawyers build resilience and persevere when faced with challenging times?

- Living according to their values and prioritizing life domains.
- Setting healthy boundaries and time management.
- Practicing self-compassion and fostering a positive mindset.
- Connecting with loved ones and community.
- Engaging in non-negotiable self-care.
- A combination of the above.

A woman with her hair in a ponytail, wearing a light blue sleeveless dress, is sitting in a meditative lotus position on a grassy field. She is facing away from the camera, looking towards a large body of water under a soft, hazy sunset sky. The overall mood is peaceful and serene.

Harmonious Living

Strive for Harmony
Not Balance



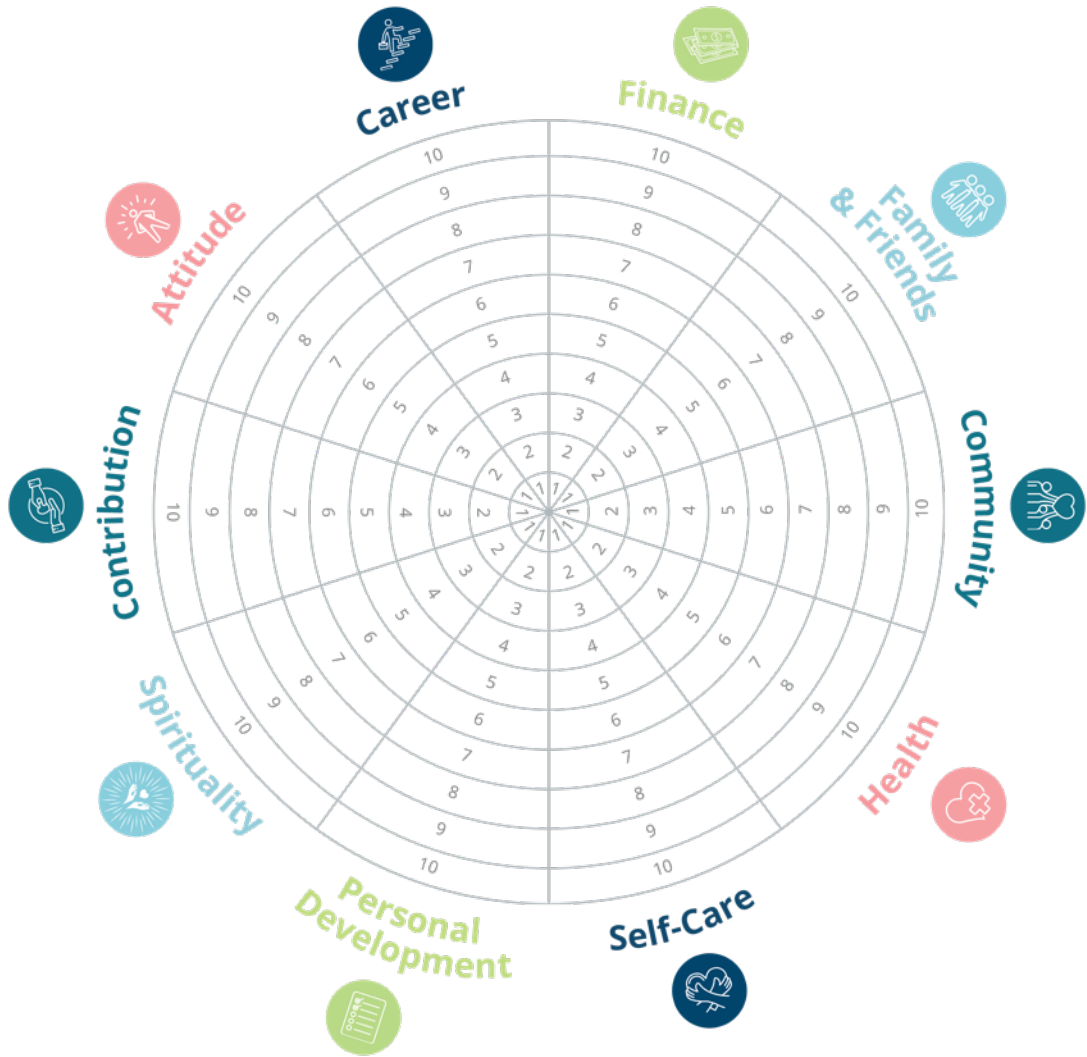
Lead with Your Values —
Your North Star





Values should guide your decisions, actions, and thoughts.

- Where are you now?
- Where do you want to go?
- How will you get there?



Wheel of Harmony

Harmonious Living is the blending of all your life domains in a way that aligns with your values and personally brings you the most life satisfaction.

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a light-colored long-sleeved shirt and dark pants, stands on a sandy beach. She has her arms raised and her head tilted back, looking towards the sky. The background shows a calm blue sea and a clear sky. The text "Limits Liberate" is written in a white, cursive font across the center of the image.

Limits Liberate

Say NO 80% more often - “the extras”

- What is your gut reaction?
- Is this something you truly want at this moment in your life?
- Does it compliment your values, wheel of harmony, and desired schedule?



Self-Care

Emotional

Technology

Material

**CATEGORIES OF
BOUNDARIES**

Professional

Time

Relationship

Social

Polling Question:

What is your top time management strategy for becoming a more efficient and successful lawyer?

- Prioritizing your to-do list (i.e., Eisenhower Matrix)
- Managing email communications
- Using organizational tools (i.e., desk or phone calendar, smartphone app, project management software)
- Setting up your workspace to minimize distractions
- Delegating



4 Ps of Time Management for Lawyers

- Prioritize
 - High, Medium and Low
- Plan
 - Break down into steps, buffer time
- Prepare
 - Resources, minimize distractions
- Perform
 - Self-care breaks, grace

A person is lying on their back on a light-colored, patterned rug. They are wearing a blue long-sleeved shirt and grey pants. Their hands are holding a white mug with a saucer, containing a beverage with a slice of orange. The background is a warm, yellowish wall. The text is overlaid in a white, cursive font.

Become Your Inner Ally
Instead of Your Inner Enemy



Self-compassion means showing kindness to yourself and giving yourself grace. Accept yourself for who you are, imperfections and all.



Foster a Positive Mindset

- Journaling.
- Practice Daily Gratitude.
 - Journal on 5 things you are grateful.
 - Gratitude walk.
 - Gratitude object.
- Engage in Positive Self-Talk.
 - Challenge negative thoughts.
 - Replace with positive statements.
 - Use mantras and affirmations.



Increase Emotional Intelligence -

how well individuals identify and manage their own emotions and react to the emotions of others.

- Practice observing how you feel and behave
 - Mindfulness, visualization
- Question your own opinions about a situation and reframe
- Don't overlook the positive in situations or your successes

A group of four diverse professionals (two women and two men) are walking on a modern office staircase. They are dressed in business-casual attire and appear to be in a positive, collaborative mood. The background shows a bright, contemporary office environment with large windows and a wooden ceiling.

*Advance Community
in the Legal Workplace*



A recent survey, *Bullying in the Legal Profession*, found that one out of every four Illinois lawyers recounts being bullied between 2022 and 2023.

- Negative change in emotional well-being and decline in physical health
 - Loss of self-confidence and work productivity
 - Left a job practicing law
- Illinois Supreme Court Commission on Professionalism

Polling Question:

What can lawyers do to be advocates for colleagues in their organizations?

- Lawyers in leadership roles should speak up in the workplace.
- Legal workplaces should enforce anti-bullying policies and conduct real training.
- Be an ally and mentor lawyers who are navigating challenging situations (i.e., technology, difficult superior).
- Nothing. Being bullied is part of the deal in our profession.



How do Lawyers Build Community in the Workplace?

- Empathetically listen to colleagues and appreciate generational differences.
 - Consider communication styles.
- Recognize your own biases and actively work to challenge them.
- Engage in team building activities with colleagues.
 - Wellness challenge, eating lunch together, attending firm sponsored events.



Increase Community and Social Interactions

- Stay connected to family, friends, and build new relationships.
- Increase your community involvement in bar organizations, philanthropic boards, book clubs, sports leagues, classes, workshops.
- Use professional supports and join support groups.



Contribute to the Community

Psychoanalyst Erik Erikson believed that when human beings contributed to future generations and the world around them, they gained higher life satisfaction and left behind a legacy.



Lawyers Can Pay it Forward in the World by:

- Mentoring other lawyers.
- Volunteering in the legal and neighborhood communities.
 - Organizing firm advocacy
- Coaching sports teams, teaching classes, advocating for personal causes



Engage in Non-Negotiable Self-Care

Polling Question:

What is your go to self-care non-negotiable that you consistently incorporate into your routine?

- Exercise
- Healthy Nutrition
- Mindfulness Practices
- Sleep Hygiene

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a light blue cardigan over an orange top, stands with her arms outstretched and her head tilted back, looking up towards the sky. The background is a soft-focus outdoor setting with greenery and a building. The text "Oxygen Mask Rule" is written in a white, elegant cursive font across the center of the image.

Oxygen Mask Rule



Create Consistent Daily Routines to Serve as Your Self-Care Base

- AM
- Workday
- PM
 - Afterwork winddown



Incorporate Pockets of Self-Care

Give yourself 10 minutes of self-care per day and make it nonnegotiable. It adds up to 70 minutes a week.

- Limit social media and online scrolling
- Time management
- Shift your mindset



Exercise

- Stretch or do yoga when you get out of bed.
- Go for a walk during the workday.
- Do a brief strength training workout on a fitness app.



Nutrition

- Eat a protein-rich meal or snack away from technology.
- Refill your water bottle throughout the day to stay hydrated.
- Pack healthy meals and snacks to take with you to work.



Mindfulness Practices

- Pause in your day to meditate or engage in breathwork.
- Put on a facemask and listen to soothing music.
- Be creative – draw, color, paint, write, cook.



Sleep Hygiene

- Read a book or listen to a story before bed as opposed to hopping on your laptop.
- Take a shower or bath to cool off the body.
- Write in a sleep journal to track sleeping patterns
 - Do certain foods, activities, or occurrences assist/disrupt sleep patterns?

Make Time For The
People And Little Things
That Bring You Joy!



A silhouette of a person with a backpack standing on a mountain peak with arms raised, set against a backdrop of a large mountain (Mount Fuji) and a hazy sky. The person is positioned in the center-left of the frame, with their arms raised in a 'V' shape. The background features a large, conical mountain with a reddish-pink hue on its peak, likely due to the lighting. The sky is a gradient of light blue and purple. The overall scene is a landscape of mountains and a clear sky.

We spend about 1/3 of our life either sleeping or attempting to do so, what you do with the other 2/3 is up to you...



Questions?



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