

Recognizing When Someone Needs a Helping Hand

Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers

Jon M. Tynjala, Executive Director

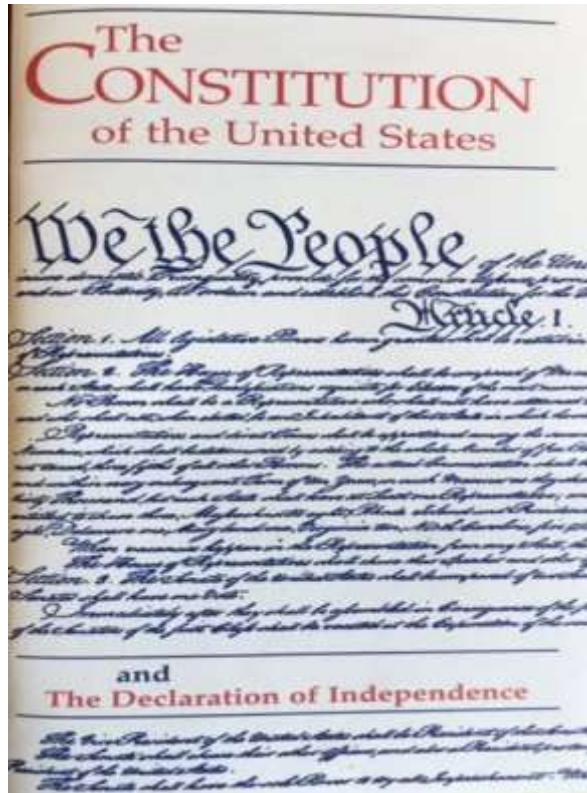


Today's Topics

Stress and Trauma in our Profession
Mental Health (including Substance
Use) in the Legal Profession



The Entire Profession Feels the Impact.



- Justice and rule of law
- Pandemic impacts
- Elections
- International conflict
- We're all experiencing additional stress and anxiety.



Human Stressors

- Working from home/living at work
- Boundaries and balance
- Transitions
- Unique Challenges
 - Family needs
 - Health
 - Community
- Physical needs



Are we special?

Our stress is!

Perfection

Pessimism

Isolation

Uncertainty

Vicarious trauma



Trauma

Trauma is the unique individual experience of an event, series of events, or set of circumstances:

The individual's ability to integrate their emotional experience is overwhelmed; and

The experience is physically or emotionally harmful or threatening and has lasting effects on the individual's functioning and physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being

Direct, secondary and vicarious



Secondary and Vicarious Trauma: Exposure to the pain & suffering of others

Secondary Trauma: continued, frequent, or close contact with persons who have experienced direct trauma

Some practice areas have more potential exposure to secondary trauma (e.g., criminal law, family law).

Judges and trial court personnel who have contact with the litigants, defendants, and victims.

Vicarious Trauma: Exposure to reports, descriptions, and photos of horrific events

Lawyers often work with the details more than any other professional involved in a matter, even without direct client contact.

Appellate court judges and court personnel who review the documents and records



Triggers

Triggers are stimuli that set off a “memory tape” or “flashback” transporting the person back to the emotional state of the original trauma. Triggers are also involved in Substance Use Disorders and have the effect of stimulating cravings.

- Triggers are very personal; different things trigger different people. A person’s triggers are activated through one or more of the five senses: sight, sound, touch, smell and taste.
- The survivor may begin to avoid situations and stimuli that she/he thinks triggered the flashback. She/he will react to this flashback, trigger with an emotional intensity similar to that experienced at the time of the trauma.



Risk Factors - Personal

- Personal history of previous trauma
- Personal values conflicts
- Sense of control
- Personal strength, patience & resilience
- Self-care – health and rest



Risk Factors - Professional

- Work overload
- Traumatic cases
- Isolation
- Adversarial System
- Lack of Appreciation and Support
- Inadequate Resources

Traumatic Impact



COGNITIVE



AFFECTIVE



PHYSICAL



SOCIAL

Stress Reduction

Stressor: what affects us

Stress: what we experience

For stress to abate, there **MUST** be time to rest, the chance to express problems, and a secure environment.

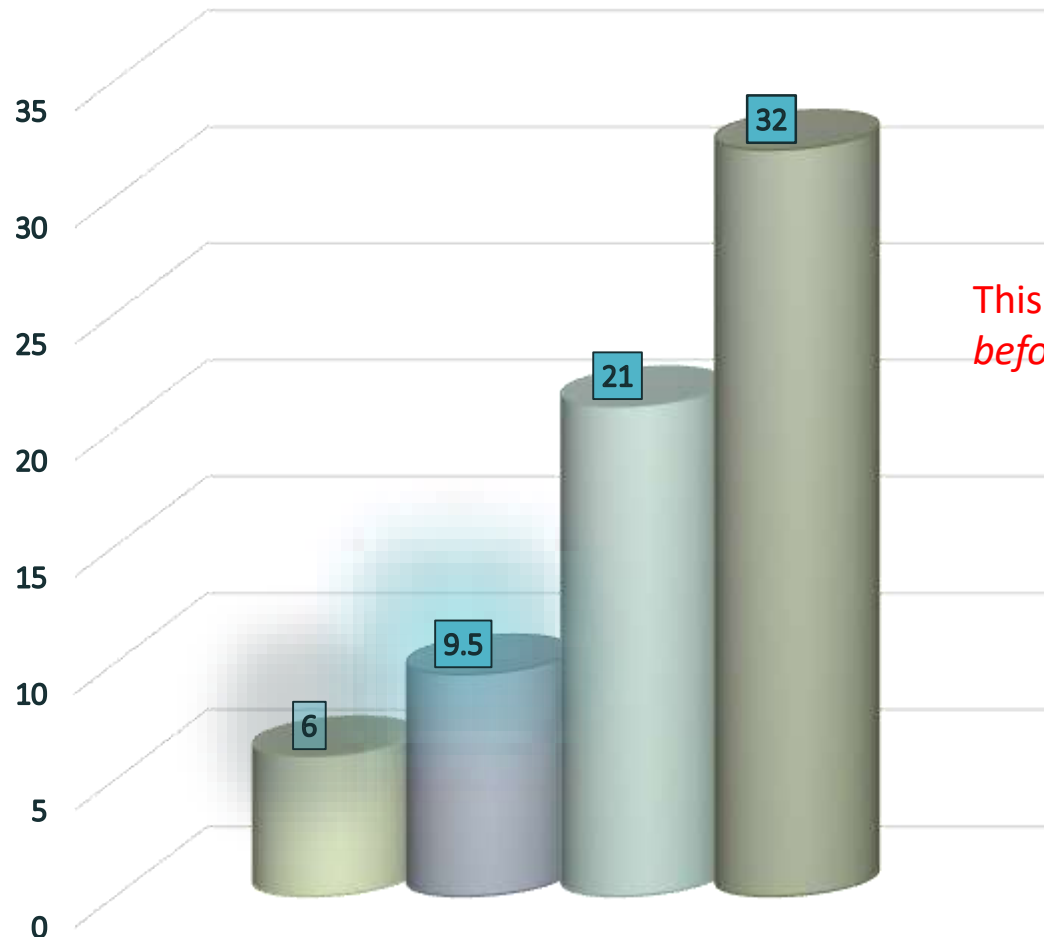
Consequences of Chronic Stress

Reduced personal and professional performance

Health problems (mental and physical)

Dangers of increase in alcohol use and other unhealthy coping mechanisms

Alcohol Use



This graph uses data from *before* the pandemic.

"Problematic Drinking" = hazardous, possible dependence

■ General U.S. Population ■ Judges ■ All Attorneys ■ Attorneys under 30 years old



Alcohol Use Disorder

a **primary, chronic disease** with **genetic, psychosocial,** and environmental factors influencing its development and manifestations. The disease is (often) **progressive and fatal.**

It is characterized by continuous or periodic: **impaired control** over drinking, **preoccupation** with the drug alcohol, use of alcohol despite adverse consequences, and distortions in thinking, most notably **denial.**

Signs of Impairment

Personal

- Change in appearance or behavior
- Distorts truth, overreaction

Professional

- Production
- Attendance
- Procrastination and emergencies

Is It a Problem? CAGE test

Have you ever felt you should *Cut down* on your drinking, use, or behavior?

Have people *Annoyed* you by criticizing your drinking?

Have you ever felt bad or *Guilty* about your drinking?

Have you ever had a drink first thing in the morning to steady your nerves or to get rid of a hangover (*Eye opener*)?

Mental Health and the Legal Profession



ABA Mental Health Data

28% met the criteria for depressive disorder

18% met the criteria for an anxiety disorder

11.5% had considered suicide.

These data are pre-pandemic.



Depression

A loss of interest in normally pleasurable activities

Impaired ability to concentrate, remember and decide

It occurs in stages:

1. Emptiness
2. Hopelessness/helplessness
3. Malaise
4. Suicidal Ideation

It's not just a blue mood that can be wished away

Time element

In a colleague, look for *changes* in behavior.



Depression: From the Outside

Gloomy

Pessimistic

Cynical

Negative

Moody

Irritable

Complaining

Brooding

Anxious

Critical



Is there a Problem?

In the last two weeks have you:

Been feeling very tired, sad, blue, irritable or depressed?

Lost interest and pleasure in things you usually care about?

Had difficulty concentrating, remembering or deciding?

Felt unusual panic or worrying?

Considered suicide?

Ethical Considerations



It's an Ethics Issue!

Anxiety results in an ethical sinkhole

We act rashly

In our own self-interest

Trauma  Avoidance

The rules:

Rule 1.1 – competence

Rule 1.3 – diligence

Rule 5.1 – supervisory

Rule 1.4 – communication

Rule 8.3 – reporting requirement



1.3 Diligence

Comment 2: “A lawyer’s workload must be controlled so that each matter can be handled competently.”





Reaching Out

Expression of concern from a colleague

- Contact LCL for coaching

- Provide LCL information

LCL response

- Direct outreach

- Intervention

- Crisis Response

Stages of Change

Precontemplation

Contemplation

Preparation

Action

Maintenance



Offering Help

I care

I see

I feel

Listen

I want

I will

What Happens?

Before

High Functioning and Miserable

Failing/Superficial Relationships

Depressed

Anxiety Ridden

Felt Like a Fraud

Constant Sense of Dread

After

Personal & Professional Fulfillment

Improving Relationships

Confident and Content

More Capable of Dealing with Ups and Downs

Journey not destination





A continuous process in which lawyers strive for thriving in each dimension of their lives:

CULTURE

Cultivating personal satisfaction, growth, and enrichment in work. Financial stability.

Engaging in continuous learning and the pursuit of creative or intellectually challenging activities that foster ongoing development. Monitoring cognitive well-being.



Developing a sense of meaningfulness and purpose in all aspects of life.

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.

Developing a sense of connection, belonging, and a well-developed support network while also contributing to our groups and communities.

Striving for regular physical activity, proper diet and nutrition, sufficient sleep, and rejuvenation. Minimizing the use of addictive substances. Seeking help for physical health when needed.



Boundaries

Clients

Colleagues

Personal

Safe, reasonable, permissible



Ikigai: Reason for Being

- What is your reason for getting up each morning?
- Amalgamation
 - What you love
 - What you do well
 - What you can be paid for
 - What the world needs



Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers

Who we help –

Lawyers, judges, law students, other legal professionals and families

What we help with –

Substance use and mental health, cognitive, stress, burnout

Communications are **confidential**

Services or Referrals –

Licensed professionals

Group support

Peer support

Education and public awareness



Partnership with AllOne Health (formerly The Sand Creek Group)

Up to 4 free counseling sessions; referrals

Legal professionals and their families

Resource website

www.allonehealth.com

Click on “Member Support Page”

When registering use the Company Code “lawyers”

Contact AllOne Health directly at

651-430-3383 or toll-free: 1-888-243-5744



LAWYERS CONCERNED FOR LAWYERS
2250 University Avenue West, # 313N
St. Paul, MN 55114

(651) 646-5590

Toll Free: (866) 525-6466

Website: www.mnlcl.org E-mail help@mnlcl.org



Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers

THERE IS
HELP *and*



THERE IS
HOPE



Go raibh maith agat
Merci
AITAH
Shukren
Spasibo
спасибо
Gracias
grazie
DANK
σας ευχαριστώ
謝謝

Thank You!

DANK U

cảm ơn bạn
ALIQUAM
hvala
təşəkkür edirəm
ありがとう

