

B L A C K B I R D

WELLBEING PUBLICATION OF THE UWA BLACKSTONE SOCIETY 2019

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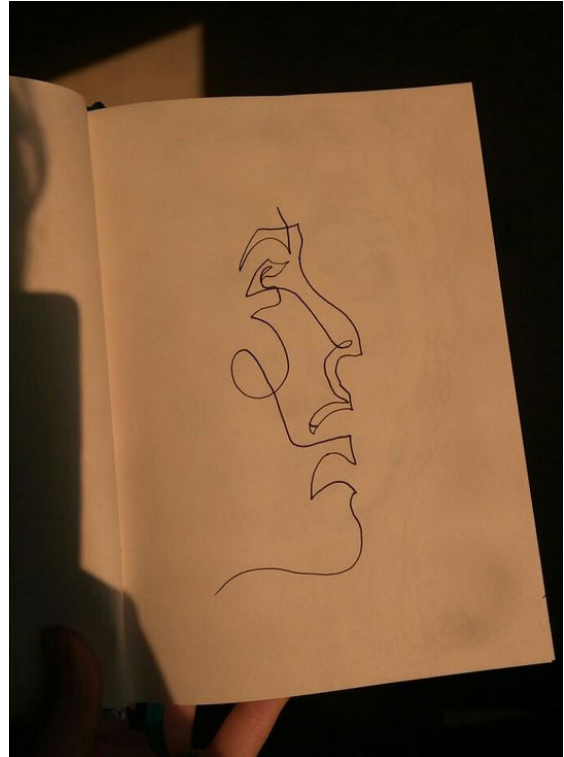
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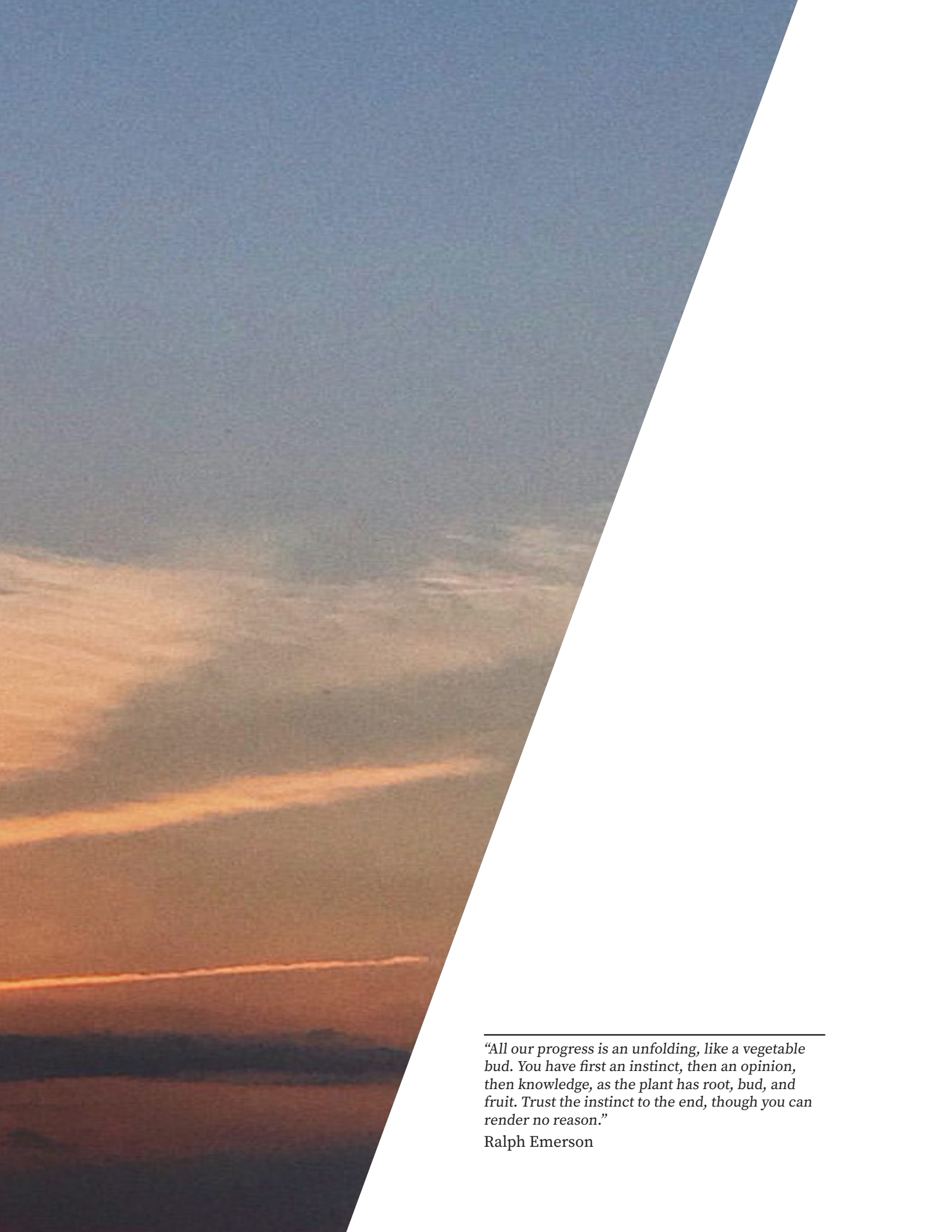
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Letter from the Editor

Wellness encompasses a broad scope, and its definition will change depending on who it is applied to. My philosophy is that every single person has something special to offer the world that another cannot. In light of this, every Law student's pathway will be different – it will reflect who you are and what you think is important. If you are true to yourself and your inner compass, you can be sure that you are exactly where you are meant to be, at the time you are meant to be there.

This journal has been crafted to approach 'Wellness' in a practical and pragmatic way. As Law students, we are often told how to treat the symptoms of our anxieties and stressors, but not the causes. This can be absolutely invaluable in mitigating your circumstances when you find yourself embroiled in difficult times. However, an equally important question to ask, is how we can avoid or minimise these situations before they happen. This journal seeks to address both sides of the Wellbeing 'coin,' and I hope that you will find it useful in your path through Law school and beyond.

Samuel Bartlett
Editor



“All our progress is an unfolding, like a vegetable bud. You have first an instinct, then an opinion, then knowledge, as the plant has root, bud, and fruit. Trust the instinct to the end, though you can render no reason.”

Ralph Emerson

CHAMELEON

By Michelle Harries, Acting Assistant Director and Lecturer, College of Law

Chameleons have always intrigued me. We know that some species are capable of camouflage to protect themselves. I think this is a good metaphor for the idea that we are empowered to make changes to our working life for our own protection, that is our wellbeing.

I graduated from UWA in 1996 and worked in legal practice in WA from then on. It was only when I decided to start a career as a College of Law Lecturer in 2017 and attended a wellbeing in practice workshop at the College that I first thought about how important it is to live your life in accordance with your values. It wasn't something I had learned about at University. As I have aged I have come to realise that for me, health and happiness in life sits above all else. Positive psychology tells us that when we live our life in accordance with our values, we experience a sense of authenticity which allows us to flourish. But it is only when we are clear about our values that we can try to act in accordance with them.

So can I recommend that you think about what is important to you? Try and strip away what others expect of you, or perhaps what you expect of yourself, and dig deep to discover what really matters to you. Is it that you want to help others, travel, make good money, have a good reputation, act with integrity, be a stay at home parent, explore your religion, have a stable relationship?

If you were asked to name the top 5 most important things of value to you what would they be right now? Then ask yourself are you living your life in a way that accords with your values? I did very little of this over my career. I never consciously thought about what my values were, though I suspect that

subconsciously my core values guided my decisions. Looking back this wasn't enough.

As I suspect you did, I generally performed well academically at school. I loved debating, writing, constructing arguments, and I loved to watch criminal law TV shows. So it was my first desire to be a Legal Aid lawyer. I did my articles and restricted practice at Legal Aid WA and worked there for another 4 years after that. Before I left Legal Aid I asked for leave without pay for 6 months. My partner and I travelled around Australia and I picked up some casual waitressing jobs along the way. I feel like I was pretty on track with living my life in accordance with my values at this point. Then along came marriage, a mortgage, and kids. Full time work as an advocate was tricky. My employers were amazing. I was able to stay in practice through flexible working.

So I was a traditional part time working mum (and still am). But these days working flexibly can encompass so many other options. Flexible working can include part-time or full-time work. Here are some ways of working flexibly: working from home or remotely; different start and finish times; extended leave (eg: purchased leave); job-share; condensed working week; time off for special events or sporting commitments; accruing time in lieu.

With developments in technology the ability to work flexibly is enhanced. Flexible working is associated with improved mental health in the workplace. Our new grads tell us that they are worried about getting a job and so in that context very few think about how they might be able to enjoy the practice of law by working flexibly because it is a question they don't feel comfortable to ask.

During our workshops we talk about, and practice, how to have difficult conversations in the workplace.

There is a growing awareness of the importance of addressing mental health in the practice of law. The WHO has identified “inflexible working hours” as one of the key risks to mental health in the working environment. The Australian Human Rights Commission has indicated that “Flexible working options are probably the most effective strategy for meeting the workplace needs of workers with mental illness.” My experience was that flexible working certainly helped me to remain involved in my children’s lives, for example, attending assemblies or sports carnivals. However, the risk is that whilst trying to achieve in every area of our lives to a very high standard, there is very little left for ourselves.

This is where knowing our values is critical. My values changed over the course of my career. Once my children were born, my priority was to be a mum. In the end that recognition manifested in a physical illness because I couldn’t sustain the unusual (yet very flexible) working hours and demands of legal practice as an advocate and achieve what I truly wanted at my core - which was to be a mum who could drop off and collect my children from school most days.

So I turned to teaching. I was going to be a school teacher and along the way, gratefully, found my way to the College of Law. Teaching law grads is completely rewarding for me. By sharing some of my experiences with students I feel almost parental as I hope to help guide students in a way that I would have guided myself if I knew then what I know now.

I feel like a Chameleon who has made a change for my own protection, the most important thing to me, my wellbeing. I hope that over the course of your career you think about your values, and consider how they change over time. Be prepared to work like a Chameleon. I think that this means aiming to work at the intersection of your talent, your passion and your values. Wishing you all the best in your future careers and we hope that we get to work with you at the College of Law during your PLT.

MATTER IN MIND

By Robyn Carroll, Professor at UWA Law School

Robyn Carroll teaches Remedies, Contract and Family Law. Her research has included the importance of apologies in the resolution of legal disputes. She is the co-founder of the International Network for Law and Apology Research, and has authored a number of legal resources on the subject.

I attended a funeral today. I hasten to say it was a funeral for a 93 year old woman who lived a full life that included a career, a family and who had a fierce determination to advance the welfare of people with intellectual disabilities. Why do I begin my short piece this way? First, as a reminder of what we can achieve through social advocacy and activism. And to suggest to you that all of us can inspire others, often without trying.

This woman, let me call her Benita, knew I was a law student. She knew of my belief that the law is an instrument to eliminate, rather than perpetuate social inequality. We talked about the challenges facing parents who have a child with a disability who is likely to outlive them but who will never be able to live independently. Benita and her husband had a Downs Syndrome child.

I grew up in a family that did not face the legal uncertainties faced by a family and a person with an intellectual disability. Benita challenged me to think about the ways that the law might help, rather than hinder the efforts of parents to ensure that their child would live a dignified and supported life, especially once they were no longer able to care for them. I began 'babysitting' their child from time to time during my third year of law.

This experience sparked my interest to learn about ways the law helps and

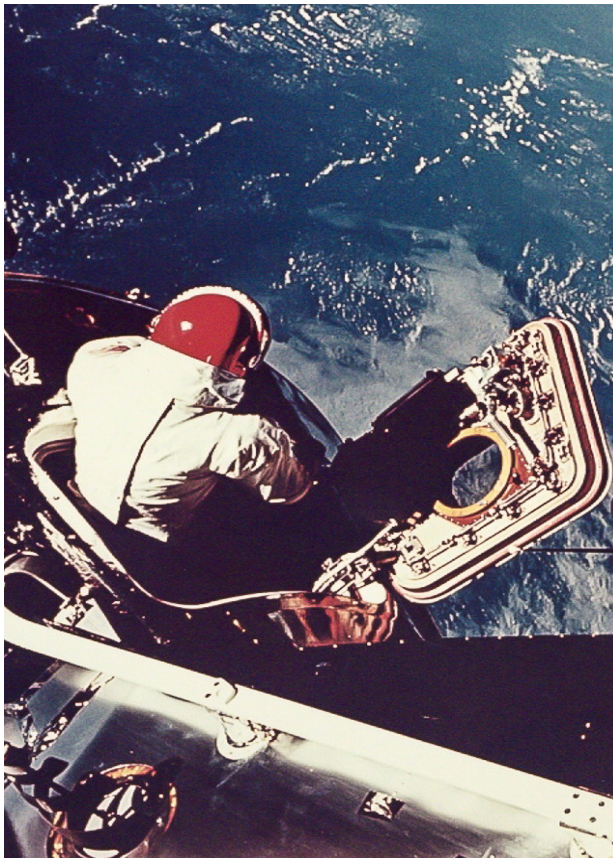


hinders parents, their children and family members in these circumstances. With encouragement from law school academic and supervisor Peter Johnston ('PJ') (after whom the e-moot court is named) I wrote my B Juris Honours thesis on an evaluation of the extent to which the laws of WA relating to a person with an intellectual disability facilitate that person living in the community. At that time institutional care was often the only option for people who did not live with their family. I concluded that there were many ways that the law could support rather than hinder integration of people with intellectual disabilities in the community and recommended that some WA laws to be changed for this to occur.

In the years that followed I had a few opportunities to promote these recommendations but mostly I proceeded on a path that took me into general legal

practice. For a short while. The call to further studies and following that my academic career were strong and soon afterwards I left practice to pursue these passions while raising a family. Twenty years later I successfully applied to become a part-time member of the Guardianship Board of WA who appointed guardians and financial administrators for people with intellectual and other decision making disabilities. Around this time my focus in teaching and research shifted away from corporate and commercial law and remedies (which I taught for more than 15 years) to family law, dispute resolution and apologies in the law. In this sense my future followed my past. I was fortunate to have the opportunity at the Law School to pursue my enduring interest - that the law can promote equality and methods of resolving legal conflict that takes account of people's social experiences and psychological needs.

Why do I share this story with you in a law student journal that promotes wellbeing? Mostly to share my belief that what we care about matters and it matters what we care about, which includes the law. It matters for us, and importantly, for others. And to pay forward what Benita shared with me. And to share my belief that each of us has the capacity to inspire and make a positive difference, big or small, for others.



TAKE YOUR OWN STEPS

LIFE AFTER LAW SCHOOL

By Jessica Kerr

*“The art of walking upright here
is the art of using both feet.*

*One is for holding on.
One is for letting go.”*

- Glen Colquhoun

My first year Law and Society students this year walked in to find a whiteboard list of things to do with a law degree. It spanned the obvious (law firm practice; clerking for a judge), the glamorous (an LLM scholarship to the States; working with swanky barristers in London), the decidedly unglamorous (legislative drafting; professional proofreading; heaven forbid, law teaching), the altruistic (community law and public defender services), the mildly hazardous (money laundering investigations in a tax haven; can I say law teaching again?), and the plain unlikely (a criminal judge; a special advisor to a President). It took the students a few minutes to realise that this was a sample of jobs I’d done since leaving law school. And I’m younger than I look.

You have decided to get a law degree, and I salute you for it. But that decision is not your life. You’re not locked into this. And nor are you locked in BY this. Your law degree will not define you. You’ve probably heard that. Know what else doesn’t define you? Your first law job. Or your second, or your sixth. This isn’t a one-shot game.



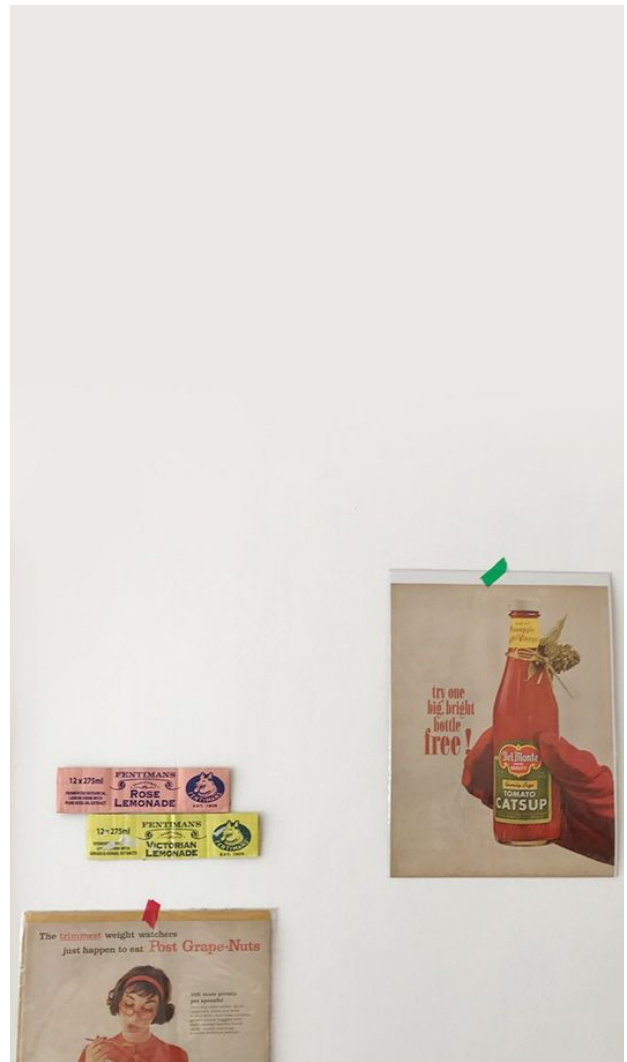
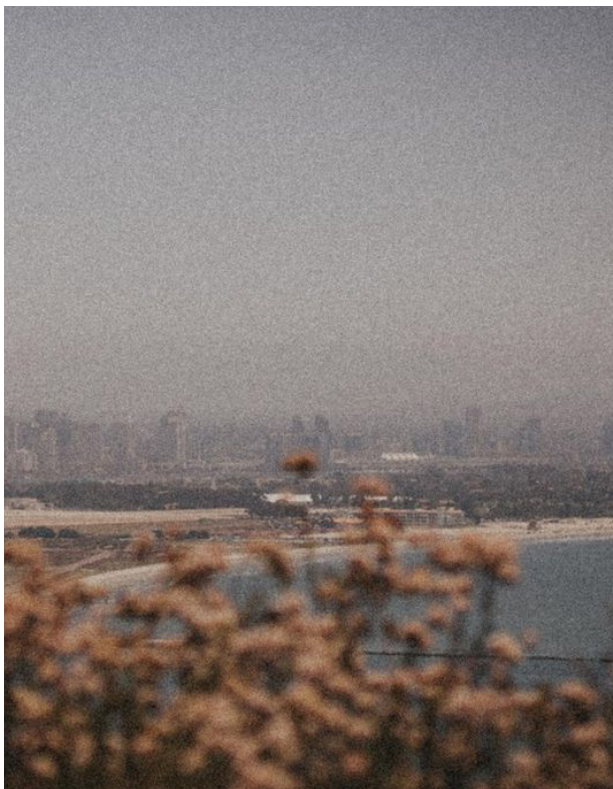
Remember that it’s in the interests of the firms and others recruiting straight out of law school to ramp up the significance of your first employment decision. These recruiters want to get you into their system, before you get a taste for anything else. And they want you to think that continuous, single-

track employment of a particular kind is the only path to success in the law – ultimately because it makes their own lives, and their profit-generating models, less complicated.

I have seen this kind of thinking take an awful toll on friends two or three years out of law school, who just cannot get their heads around the possibility of “quitting” a job that they took because they felt pressured to, or that’s made them miserable, or that they’ve simply outgrown. The kind of people who study law aren’t normally quitters. We love to live up to others’ expectations (meaning we hate to disappoint) and oh, we are superstars at comparing ourselves unfavourably to peers. I wish I could say this ends with graduation.

I still remember the discomfort I felt when a really trusted mentor sketched his 10-year plan for me. I was about five years into practice, recently back from a year overseas doing postgraduate study and community work, trying to fit back into the government litigation role that I’d loved before. He saw me making a decade’s worth of strategic career choices to manoeuvre myself towards the bench. I’d always dreamed of

being a judge. But the picture he painted made me feel physically ill. My mind had never worked in that instrumental, objectively ambitious way. I admired those that did, and often envied their certainty (and bank balances) – but deep down I knew that my choices had to be differently motivated. I spent two more happy years in that litigation role. Just as I was about to be promoted, my long-term relationship came to an end. I left the job, and the country, and travelled the world before taking a minimum wage position as the only foreigner in a developing judiciary on a tiny island in the middle of the Indian Ocean. I got that job by sending an unsolicited email (true story) which began “Dear Mr Chief Justice of the Seychelles, I am interested in coming to support your work.” My mentor, bless him, never got over it. I’ve never been prouder of myself. And I ended up a judge.



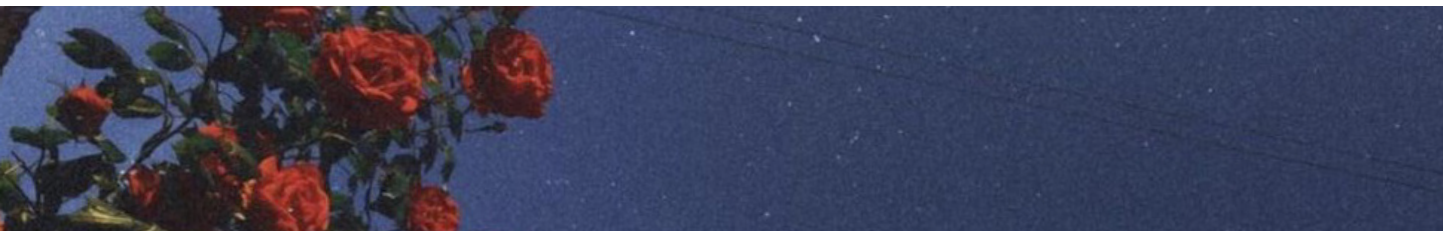
Wellbeing in the legal profession, in my experience so far, is above all about being honest with yourself about what your practice is doing for you (or to you) at this point in your life, right now. Everything changes with time: your mind, your body, your boss, your babies, your goals, your finances, your pet hates. If you are lucky enough to find yourself in a graduate job that keeps on feeling satisfying, and interesting, and whatever else you want from it, even as your own circumstances change – then that’s fabulous. You may not realise how unusual you are.

I’m not recommending change for change’s sake alone – unless that’s what drives you. There’s no point denying that a CV as patchwork as mine is off-putting to some employers. The direct consequence of some non-traditional choices is that certain doors will close. As Mother Superior used to say, though, for every door that closes somewhere there is a window that opens. There are many employers, and that number is growing, who value a professional background that includes honest, principled experiments and changes in direction. I have to say that Australia and New Zealand are ahead of the curve in this regard – luckily for us all. And it is incredible how a change – whether that be a new team, a new volunteering stint, a new country, even a year off – can open your eyes to professional opportunities that you might have thought out of reach. Those opportunities don’t disappear after graduation, whatever recruiters may want you to think. I am a firm believer that things happen for a reason, though

I couldn’t claim to know why that is so! And my own patchwork has cohered over the years to an extent I hadn’t predicted.

My strategy, for what it’s worth, is to be prepared to make time to have unflinching conversations with yourself. Do this not in your darkest moments, but during a reprieve – a long weekend away, a break between big files – when you have a little intellectual and emotional reserve to draw on. Ask yourself what you’re doing, and why you’re doing it, and what you might be doing instead, and why on earth you’re not doing that. And try to be honest about the reasons – avoid the temptation of living up to your own internalised expectations. The first time I did this was on a beach – on a big log of driftwood, that I still remember – in the summer between my first year of drama school and what would prove to be my first year of law school. One morning I just woke up and knew there was something I hadn’t managed to tell myself. It turned out to be that the law was calling. (Nerd alert, as my father put it).

Will I ever know if I made the right decision that day? No – who could possibly tell me that? – and I’m not immune to self-doubt or envy or regret, none of us are. But my decisions then and since have been mine: not my employers’, not my mentors’, not even my wonderful parents’. And I am healthier, and I really think more successful, for that. Life in the law is long, and from time to time the conversation with yourself needs to be had. Don’t be afraid of it. You are an amazing UWA graduate-to-be, and you will always be able to make the change you need.



IN A HIGH-STRESS PROFESSION, HOW DOES ONE STAY MENTALLY HEALTHY?

By Nathan Hepple, Co-Founder & Director, HBA Legal



Mental health challenges don't discriminate. I know this firsthand. I have seen colleagues battle, I have seen friends battle and I have battled myself.

On the surface, what did I have to feel down about? I started my own law firm at the age of 30 (with my business partner) and it continues to be a great success. HBA Legal has been growing continually for eight years and is going from strength to strength. Since our firm was born, my business partners and I have started two related (but non-legal)

offshoot businesses to create the HBA Group. I've been married to a 'superstar' of a woman for close to 12 years (no mean feat when many of our friends who married around the same time have fallen apart. Marriage takes work – who knew!). I have a beautiful house in a solid neighbourhood, and I have two gorgeous little people. But I have been through times where it felt that the dark clouds were building and it can be hard to clear them away.

Make no mistake, I am a "high functioning" person. I go to work every day and kick legal and business goals despite my internal challenges. But sometimes, the whole thing feels hard. To say that life feels hard is probably an understatement and I think it is really important to talk about it and say that this is normal. I choose to talk to our team about these challenges because I feel "owning it" and asking for help when you need it is important in ending the stigma attached to mental health challenges.

I think one of the biggest misconceptions about mental illness is that it's often assumed that if a person is affected it equates to them being "down" all the time, 24/7, and completely debilitated from engaging in normal life. This is not the case. And because this is not the case, it is hard for those around you to see what is happening (that can be a good and a bad thing of course). When you are in business and you employ people, you have a responsibility to take care of them as best you can (at least I think so). This is something I've always believed in and I take very seriously. Work is such a big part of most people's lives. So, it's probably fair to say, a great workplace is pretty important to most of us.

So why am I telling you my story? You are university students, getting close to being out in the workplace. So, I'm saying: choose your employer carefully. Culture within a workplace is really important to one's overall wellbeing.

If you work at a place that ticks all the culture, flexibility and work/life boxes, plus your work is fulfilling, you are respected, and get great mentoring from those who are more experienced than yourself, then you are going to be streets ahead if you ever find yourself feeling challenged to maintain good mental health. Let me be clear: an ideal workplace is not going to prevent a person from developing mental health challenges necessarily, but if you do find yourself faced with mental health struggles, a great supportive workplace is going to significantly aid you getting back on track.

At HBA Legal, we tick the boxes on paper (as most law firms would) with all the right policies and procedures. But these are just words on a page and don't necessarily equate to employee happiness, fulfilment or engagement. One of the things I am really proud of that we have created at HBA is our 'OneHBA' business model. We follow NewLaw principles pivoting on flexibility, accessibility and innovation. Our 'One HBA' business model removes borders to draw on the skill and experience of our people across the country, wherever they sit in relation to the client and regardless of which partner they "report" to. There are no partner or team 'silos' at HBA. Our people love this because it gives them a richer experience at work. When you are starting out your legal career, learning from a whole bunch of people rather than just the one partner who you happen to "report to" gives you so much more value in terms of personal growth.



When we moved offices in Sydney recently, we opted to tear down the walls. No more offices. We have gone open plan: everyone, Partners included. This was met with much scepticism because it's a big change and people are generally uncomfortable about change. But six months in and I can, hand on heart, say everyone loves it. It has created a real team comradery, even stronger than before. In some cases, people have even picked up their game in regards to their legal work and I put that down to the fact they have an improved sense of wellbeing when they come to work. Happy people are more productive and efficient people. When you put people in closer proximity where they actually have to talk to one another, it's



quite incredible what happens. By 5.30pm our offices have mainly cleared out. I am proud of this. Keeping workloads in check to allow this to happen is obviously key to this. That's not to say there are not times when things require a little extra effort, but it's the exception rather than the rule.

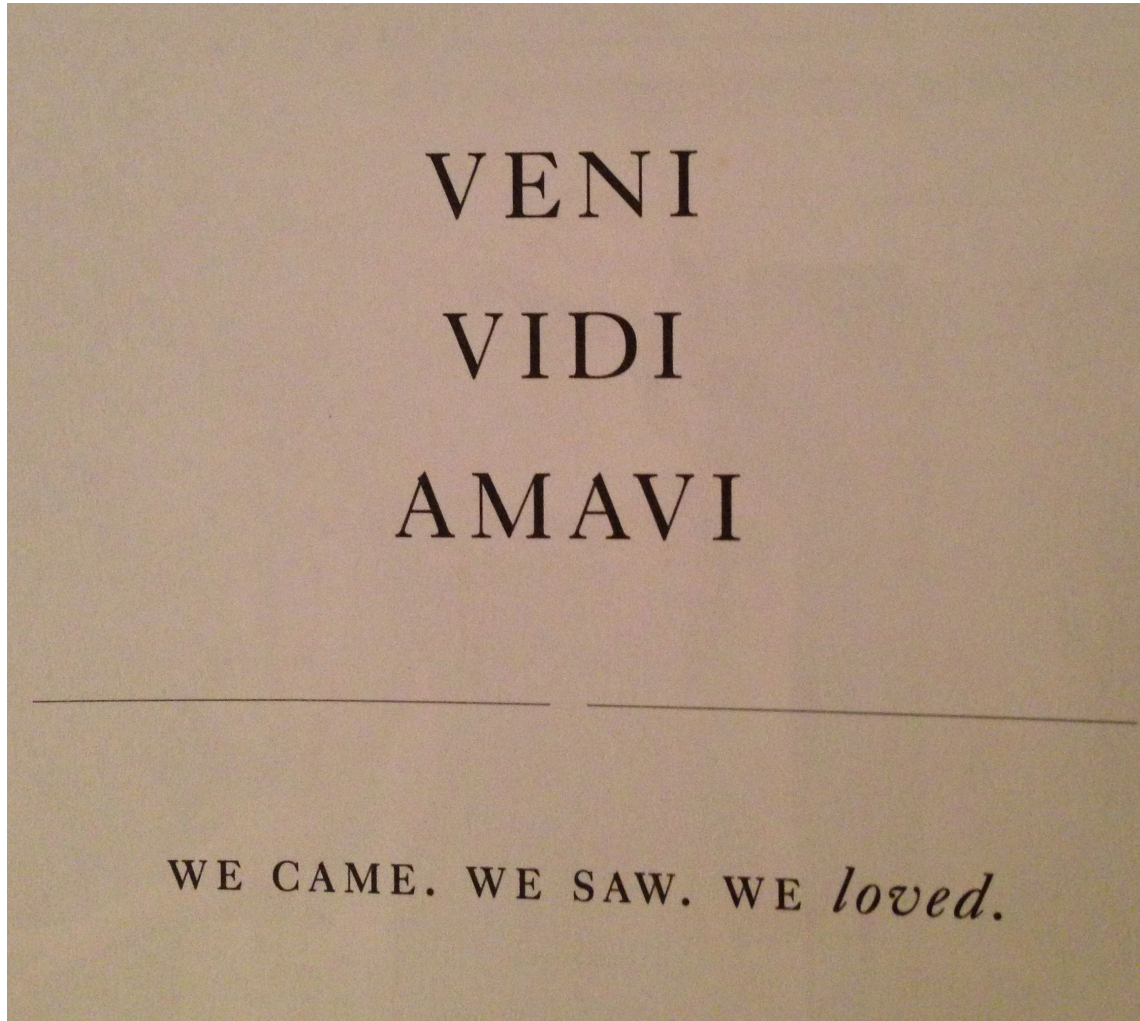
At HBA, we have a whole host of people who work part-time, remotely, and flexibility for all kinds of reasons (both solicitors and support staff). Some have returned part-time after having a family; some were the best person for the job at the time we advertised but their home is nowhere near any of our offices; others want to be their young family during the day and are happy to work non-traditional hours (ie evenings) in order to

keep participating in the workforce but still get the job done. We have a genuine open mind when it comes to how people want to work in today's world. Why would we want to close ourselves off to the best talent by having traditional views around these things?

There was a very interesting article in The Australian recently (Google 'why Sunday night is the new Monday morning and workers are miserable'). It basically talks about how some people like to get a jump start on their week on Sunday night (because that makes them feel better), which inevitably leads to various emails being sent to colleagues. And while there's no expectation that the emails will be responded to on a Sunday, for those receiving the emails it starts the anxiety about all the things they have to tackle in the week ahead. That equates to an interrupted weekend for no good reason.

At HBA, we are contemplating whether our IT system should hold all the emails on a weekend, store them and then auto-send them come Monday morning. This would mean no one is having their weekend interrupted just so one person can feel better about getting a jump start on their week.

As a business owner I have certain responsibilities to the people I employ. But individuals must also take responsibility for themselves. As you start your legal career, be honest with yourself and don't be shy or afraid to seek professional help if you need it. It does not make you a basket case! It makes you strong for 'owning it'; taking action; not being a victim; and standing up saying "I will beat this" (even if you don't want to verbalise this to anyone but yourself). You may well be surprised when you open up to a colleague that they will tell you their story of struggle and how they worked to overcome it. Trust me, try it out!



HOW TO FLOURISH

By Rachael Offer, Lawyer and Philanthropic Entrepreneur

Life can be challenging, especially when you are pursuing a legal career. It's competitive, intense, the stakes are often high and on top of that you have clients who expect you to work miracles in record time! Here are some positive psychology tips to help you live your best life in and outside of work.

Cultivate Positive Emotions

Part of the job of a lawyer is to consider the 'worst case scenario' and then take steps to prevent or mitigate its occurrence. It's easy for this focus on the downside to invade the rest of your life. Practice positive emotions as an antidote. Gratitude, humour, love, hope and awe build resilience and improve relationships. Focus on the positive. Ignore the negative. Start the day with 'I'm grateful for....' or 'I'm so lucky that....', naming a particular thing for which you are grateful. There's nothing like counting your blessings every day to increase your level of happiness.

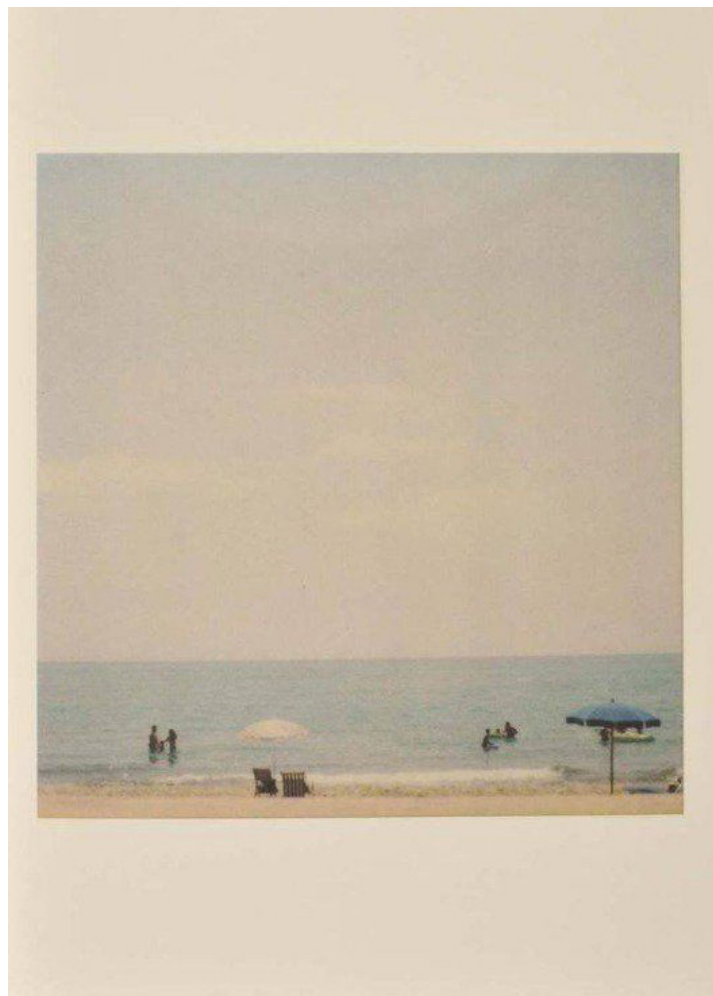
I recently met a young person who had left her job as a dental therapist and was studying to be a primary school teacher. She was a beautiful example of living with gratitude. Her conversation was peppered with “I’m so lucky...” including:

“I’m so lucky I only had three wisdom teeth needing removal.”

“I’m so lucky my teaching prac is at Gosnells – the kids are gorgeous!” and

“I’m so lucky, in the year my boyfriend [now husband] and I were apart, he lost 30 kilograms and became a fitness fanatic!”

End the day with ‘What Went Well’, naming three good things that happened during the day and why they happened. Even if it’s “I really enjoyed my coffee from the Tenth State this morning. I had time to order it because I was running early for my tute.”



Remember funny things or events that made you laugh. Watch a comedy. Do something outrageous from time to time. Double up on the happiness generation by doing all of these with friends. Love someone: human, animal or both. Tell and show them your love... often. Take time to look closely at and study the beauty of nature around you. Stop and smell the orange blossom.

Find Engagement

Remember when you were a kid and you spent hours engrossed in your hobbies? Getting into a state of flow where time passes unnoticed increases well-being. Set aside time for your hobbies, or take up a new one. Do more of what you enjoy.

Believe me, you can find engagement at work when you have uninterrupted time on a task, whether it be drafting those pleadings or reviewing that document. It’s ok to shut your office door or take yourself to a quiet space in your open plan office so you can get into ‘flow’ and away from the interruptions of others and technology. It’s impossible to achieve when your colleague is

reliving highlights from grand final day or when you're distracted by your inbox.

Build Good Relationships

Work to live but don't live to work. Be ruthlessly efficient, but only from 8am to 5pm weekdays. Staying late and working weekends is a measure of inefficiency, not diligence. Spend meaningful time regularly with your family and friends. Listen more than you talk. The best lawyers have this skill. When you do talk, engage in active constructive responding. Google it, if you don't know what that is.

Do Something Meaningful

Being a lawyer is something you do, not who you are. Your profession does not define you as a person. Make a contribution to something bigger. Give your treasure, talents, time and ties to a charitable cause that resonates with you. If you don't have any treasure yet, give your talents and time.

Accomplish Some Goals

A sense of accomplishment builds well-being. Write down 100 things you would like to achieve in your life, categorising them under areas that are relevant to you, like 'Career', 'Friends', 'Family', 'Financial', 'Travel' or 'Community'. Get out some paper and do yourself a one page strategic plan for the next five years. Plan what steps you're going to take to achieve some of those 100 things and put timeframes around the steps. Stretch goals are fine, but not the unrealistic 'I'm going to make partnership in three years!' Pin your plan-on-a-page up where you can see it every day.

Make sure you include some travel goals in your plan and consider working overseas. Travel broadens your horizons: not everyone shares your worldview. You won't

learn this working for a law firm on the Terrace. Recognise your achievements: tell yourself you've done well when you have. Celebrate achieving a goal.

Look after Yourself

Life is short. Look after your body and Exercise regularly. Adopt the Nike slogan and ... "Just Do It!" Get enough sleep. Eat and drink in moderation. Your colleagues will not forget the Christmas party where, after one too many James Squires, you ran naked through the sprinklers and across the greens at Lake Karrinyup Country Club.



DUTY OF (SELF) CARE

Ashleigh Workman is the Wellness Vice President of the UWA Blackstone Society. Shared with us are Ashleigh's top eight strategies for maintaining mental wellness.

1 Prioritise sleep! As a naturally extra sleepy person I find sleep is really important in helping me to function throughout the day. Sleep affects your metabolism, memory, mood and cardiovascular health so having a good sleep routine is really important and going to bed at the same time each night can help this.

2 Aim to exercise a set number of times each week. Exercise is beneficial to brain function, mental health, sleep and energy levels to name a few. I find setting a goal to exercise a certain number of times a week keeps me motivated, feeling good and is a way to de-stress. Exercising with friends whether it be through social sporting teams or walking with a mate can make it more enjoyable.

3 Learn to say 'no.' One of the biggest challenges of law school is often balancing uni, work, family life and a multitude of extracurricular or social activities. All of these can be demanding at times and as someone who hates to let anyone down it is often hard to say 'no' to a commitment. However, this is really important in order to take care of yourself and prioritise what is most important. Consider saying 'no' more often.

4 Make time for things non-study related. Often it is hard to make time for things non-study related and sometimes I feel guilty doing so. However I think it is still really important to have a balance and do things you enjoy, particularly to avoid brain fatigue and burnout.

5 Eat a balanced diet. Admittedly I have a very bad sweet tooth and like any Law student, a potential caffeine problem. However this doesn't provide me with the energy to get through the day whereas a diet of carbohydrates, protein and fat does. Not only does a diet high in minerals and nutrients help improve your immune system but it can also boost your mental health. So don't put down the chocolate but maybe consider an apple with it...

6 Talk to your friends & be available. I don't mean this as a cliché, but I think sometimes people are so preoccupied with achieving throughout their degree that they become socially isolated or even worse, the 'bad friend'. Your friends can be a really good support system and are probably even facing similar problems to you, so why not talk about it? Aim to be the 'good friend,' who listens, communicates, and reciprocates.

7 Be positive. Sometimes it is really hard to be positive, particularly when you're under a lot of pressure or have recently received a lousy grade. However don't forget you still have a lot to be grateful for and things can only get better. Negative situations are often good learning opportunities.

8 Seek help if you feel you need to. If you or someone you know is struggling with mental health, there is always help available. UWA offers free confidential counselling and psychological services for students and staff. A list of these services can be found next to the table of contents page, at the beginning of this journal.



RESILIENCE WHAT IT MEANS AND HOW TO BUILD IT

Sunili Govinnage is a Course Manager for Piddington PLT; she has been involved in campaigning to improve emotional and psychological health in the legal profession since being part of TJMF and the College of Law's resilience@law project in 2010. She started her legal career as Research Associate to Justice Owen at the Supreme Court of WA and has worked at top tier law firms, community legal centres, and as a consultant in the international human rights sector. Thank you to 2019 Piddington PLT graduates Richa Malaviya (Law Access) and Vuma Phiri (Cullen Macleod) who provided valuable assistance in preparing this article, and constant moral support throughout this year.

It's been a decade since the Sydney University's Brain & Mind Research Institute and the Tristan Jepson Memorial Foundation (TJMF) (now Minds Count) released the report, *Courting the Blues: attitudes towards depression in Australian law students and legal practitioners*. The study found that there was a high level of psychological distress and risk of depression among law students, and legal practitioners, when compared to tertiary students and professionals in other fields.

Campaigns around Mental Health Week and "RUOK Day," including activities, events and conversations about well-being are spaces that engage with young lawyers focus on encouraging good mental health. One part of the legal profession's approach to improving these issues is the concept of "resilience". In 2010, TJMF, the College of Law, and five major law firms collaborated on a project called resilience@law, which focused on the objectives of awareness and education, removing the stigma surrounding mental illness, self-care strategies, and support and resources for mental health concerns. This has been updated through a collaboration with the Black Dog Institute and artist Matthew Johnstone in a series of videos titled *Staying Well in the Law*, as well as the Legal Profession Mental Health Toolkit.



Over the last decade, we've been hearing a lot about how important it is for young (and less young) lawyers to be "resilient" in the face of difficult, high pressure situations. A legal career can be all-encompassing and all-consuming. It comes with long hours, seemingly never-ending workloads, and the constant striving for perfection. The nature of the work we do, particularly where our actions can directly affect the livelihoods (and, in the case of human rights and social justice work, the literal lives, of our clients and broader social issues) brings significant emotional burdens.

It's important to note that "resilience" is only one aspect of addressing the factors that lead to too many lawyers being emotionally and psychologically distressed (and to too many our colleagues no longer practicing as lawyers). One key problem with focusing on "resilience" and "self-care" is that it puts the burden of "staying well in the law" on individuals, without addressing the structural issues that lead to emotional and psychological distress for lawyers – and over the last few years, The Piddington Society has been looking into broader issues about whether constant long hours, seemingly never-ending pressures, and the constant striving for perfection are necessary, fundamental, and unalterable aspects of legal practice.

Resilience: "I do not think it means what you think it means"

Since we can't fix those structural issues right-this-second, it's still useful to think about things we might be able to control. In this resilience-branded era, we might as well make sure we are at least using the

word properly. Working with definitions are a key part of a lawyer's skillset, and it's useful to think more deeply about a term we constantly bandy about – the process of legal interpretation shows us that a deeper dive into the meaning of words can be practical and important in providing greater understanding about difficult issues.

In the classic film *The Princess Bride*, as bumbling conman/kidnapper Vizzini keeps saying "inconceivable" to describe things that keep happening, his colleague and revenge-enthusiast Inigo Montoya notes, "You keep using that word; I do not think it means what you think it means."

Over the last decade, we have potentially been doing the same with the way we think about resilience. Having been in the original *resilience@law* project in 2010, and staying as updated as possible about the resources for better mental health in the legal profession since then, I've noticed everyone keeps talking about "resilience" in the headlines without discussing the concept in much detail.

It seems to have resulted in a profession-wide expectation that "resilient" lawyers are better at mental-healthing, while HR departments and senior practitioners who made partner during the in the golden era of corporate litigation in their 3rd year out of law school are basically telling us all: listen up, kiddies, if you want to make it in this lawyer-caper, it is an inherent requirement of the job be tough enough to cope with it all. I'd suggest this misunderstanding is reasonably understandable given lawyers' and law students' propensity to demand unquestionable levels of excellence and

perfection from ourselves (which is, both incidentally and ironically, one of the key risk factors to developing anxiety, depression, and psychological distress).

Resilience is generally described as the ability to bounce back in the face of challenges or trauma. Challenges and difficult situations are a reality of being a human, and resilience is about going through the process of healing and recovery that allows one to emerge from the other side, stronger, wiser and more aware as a result. If you think about it a little deeper, the fact resilience means being able to “bounce back” inherently also means being resilient has nothing to do with infinite endurance and perfect infallibility. The definition relies on the idea that difficulties in life happen, and those difficulties will affect us – because we are human people. As a corollary, it’s worth noting this means it is impossible to be resilient if you don’t get affected by those difficulties: you can’t “bounce back” if you never fall (or fail, struggle, and maybe not be going so great from time to time).

Thinking about resilience this way is an important reminder that being in this profession is not about being a perfect lawyer. The huge responsibilities that come with being a legal practitioner mean that we will experience difficulties. We will make mistakes. We will have to work really hard and often be weary and exhausted. At various points in our careers, we will experience failures. It is from those failures that we will develop resilience. It’s vital to remember that resilience is not measured by constant putting up with (and, accepting) terrible situations. Lawyer and author

Jerome Doraisamy explains that resilience and coping are two different things. Resilience is about how you overcome obstacles and difficulties (which actually leads to learning how to become a better person). Coping, on the other hand, means accepting bad behaviours and unreasonable situations without ever complaining – and the reality is that’s impossible.

Resilience does not mean that you will not get upset, or overwhelmed, or confused, or sad in response to challenges that may come before you. Being resilient does not mean you are the toughest person who can withstand constant and unrelenting demands. Being resilient does not mean you will always be the happiest person in the room and the firm’s #1 billable-hours champion all the time.

Adaptation and Collegiality

A core aspect of being resilient is having the ability to adapt to adversity, challenges and sources of stress. It also requires having the capacity to rest and recover from setbacks, as well as having enough awareness of your boundaries to know when enough is enough. A resilient individual will adapt to a challenging circumstance, know when they’ve reached their limits, then take an appropriate break, and rebound.

As a lawyer, as an advocate, and as a legal professional, one of your primary duties is to adapt to the situation before you. This may be something as simple as listening to your client’s instructions, analysing the possible outcomes, and responding accordingly. If and when something does not work in the way you originally thought it would: you adapt, and you try again. The most fundamental

thing to remember is that this process of adaption, problem-solving and growth will never happen in isolation.

While the unrealistic processes of academia may have conditioned us to think we have to figure everything out on our own, here's a spoiler alert for soon-to-be lawyers: the practice of law is a team sport. You will NEVER really have to do anything by yourself (and actually you absolutely cannot do anything by yourself; the regulatory regime that governs legal professionals requires law

graduates and restricted practitioners to be appropriately supervised for their first three years), and you will ALWAYS have people around you to ask for help.

Resilience isn't built in a vacuum – it grows in a community of colleagues who know that collaboration is better than competition and teamwork produces better results than hard work. Together, we can be more resilient, and by taking care of each other, we can be even healthier than if we just focussed on taking care of ourselves.



THE MELTDOWN™

By Kate Offer, Law Lecturer



Audrey Hepburn, Breakfast at Tiffany's, 1961.

Kate Offer lectures in Torts, Evidence and Education Law. As Director of Disruption at UWA she is a major proponent of legal innovation in the Law School.

This article is very different from the one I thought I was going to write. When first asked to contribute to the Blackbird journal, it was going to be all 'hey, there's a connection between humour and well-being' and 'did you know that the body has a positive physiological response to laughter? and I don't want to do a ScoMo here but HOW GOOD IS HUMOUR?!' Because here I was thinking that wellness was important but kind of an abstract concept and that I clearly had it all sorted out. Absolutely sorted. Yes. Sure, Jan.

And then I had The Meltdown™. (It was so epic that I was legally required to trademark it.) A head in hands, tears dripping on the desk, a river of (rookie mistake) non-waterproof mascara streaming down my face. Sounds effects. The whole bit.

It's been ages since I'd lost it like that and there are probably many reasons it all got

too much but basically, I think I a) had taken on WAAAAY too much (a lesson I am sadly still learning in my 50s), b) was getting increasingly tired and overwrought about it all and c) was expecting myself to do things perfectly and was getting frustrated when that wasn't happening. (Does ANY of this sound familiar to you, Law Students?) And then something really minor happened. I overreacted then I felt TERRIBLE. Cue ugly sobbing, as the dam that had held for a few weeks well and truly burst.

Frankly, a good cry did me the world of good and I wish I'd had one earlier. It was completely therapeutic. And, speaking of therapeutic, once I got home, so was one of those Korean sheet masks, my PJs and a Tofu Pad Thai. No explanation needed. (Or maybe there is. In my experience, tofu can be divisive). And my ridiculously embarrassing Spotify 'Shameful Favourites' playlist also got a bit of a workout for the

next few days. (Extensive side note: This playlist is not called Shameful Favourites for nothing. Obviously I am not at liberty to divulge the song titles of the indulgently horrendous music contained therein but let me just say it works magic on a bad mood. An upside to this is that the algorithms just can't work out which demographic I belong to. They have variously suggested 'Pride Dance Party 2000', 'Finnish Death Metal' and 'Apres Ski Classics' as playlists I might like. Kate - 1, AI - nil.)

The other thing that helped was talking about it. This was a lunchtime meltdown and before I could head home, I had a class to teach. As I was talking to a group of students, I had the sudden realisation that mascara could well be spread not only around my puffy eyes but streaked, zebra-like, across the breadth of my face. Since there was no opportunity to check whether I looked like I had just come off army reserve training, I thought I should probably explain why I might look like I

had. And that group were SO NICE and SO UNDERSTANDING and SO KIND that I shared it with every other student group in the class. I was struck by our shared sense of relief at being honest about how hard things can be sometimes. Everyone got it because everyone's been there. I'm so glad that my embarrassment over having had a meltdown was outweighed by fear of looking like a panda because otherwise I never would have experienced the kindness I did.

Meltdowns happen to us all, especially when you've I an intense environment like Law. And so I would add: in addition to post-Meltdown™, pyjama-wearing, Pad-Thai-eating, daggy-music-listening, Korean-sheet-mask frenzies, find a nice person or two (or thirty. Thank you, my Legal APPtitude unit) to talk to. As the geniuses from High School Musical sang, 'We're all in this together' and we can be each other's greatest support when things get overwhelming.



WELLNESS IN STRESSFUL TIMES, HOW? JUST C·A·R·E

By Alessandro Silvestri, Law PhD Candidate & HDR Law Representative

The legal profession has a mental health problem. Mental health is still the unspoken truth of millions of human beings who fear the stigmas of society, the ‘inconvenience’, a label that cannot be washed away. This truth, unfortunately, crystallises in the world of legal practitioners and Law students more than it does with anything and anyone else. Courting Blues: Attitudes towards depression in Australian law students and legal practitioners presents the staggering numbers of this truth, with Australian law students and legal practitioners facing higher levels of psychological distress and risk of depression compared to Australian averages. However, when it comes to opening up and seeking help, law students and legal practitioners revealed a profound reluctance in doing so, due to an intimate fear of discrimination and poor confidence in mental health professionals.

The frenzy of the globalised world has consolidated a restless pressure on society towards efficiency and effectiveness. A researcher in the 1970s could simply rely on the library’s availability of books and articles in his/her field, while a researcher in 2019 is overwhelmed by the endless possibilities and sources provided by the internet. For better or worse, we have been accustomed to a world where you cannot skip a beat to stay ‘competitive’, often inducing us to believe that personal sacrifices are mandatory in order to succeed. Law students and legal practitioners know the burden of long hours of study and work, endlessly postponing opportunities for some ‘me’ time due to the guilt of wasting time that could have been used to be productive. The consequences of this modus vivendi are visible in the physical and mental somatisations of accumulated piles of stress, likely resulting in mental health issues. So the question is – where is wellness in all this? Where are we, as a product of our emotions, in all this? It is already frightening enough to enter the world of mental health issues and discover miles of uncharted territory in emotional slippery slopes. What is even more frightening is that we are scared or unwilling to actively do something about these issues, despite the pain it causes on a daily basis.

As Edmond wittily described, “while the practice of law is inherently adversarial, issues of mental health must be dealt with in a unified manner” (Esposito, n.d.). The time has come for us to let go of all stigmas, fears, reluctance that we hold towards mental health and simply be open about it together. If a person, let’s name her Sarah, incidentally falls down from a pit and fractures her leg, nobody would question that Sarah might need time to rest and recover from her injury. Furthermore, nobody would even be surprised to learn that Sarah needed a doctor to perform surgery on her leg in order for it to heal properly. If she fell down from the pit and waited months with a broken leg, it is likely that infections would make her situation even worse. The same concept could and should be applied to mental

health. While not being physically visible like a broken leg, mental health issues are the result of people who 'fall down' in different ways and need time and help to recover and heal properly. Accordingly, we should not be afraid to seek professional help to ease the process of healing, just like Sarah did when she needed a surgeon to operate her leg. Finally, if we continue ignoring our emotions and feelings, then it is likely that they will make us feel even worse in the long term, just like Sarah's untreated leg. Wellness is something we are entitled to, sure, but it is also something we need to entitle ourselves to in the first place in order to achieve it. The question is, then, how do we entitle ourselves to wellness? Simply C·A·R·E.

Courage. The first paramount step that we need to do is to keep ourselves accountable for the courage to own our battles and seek or, if and when possible, provide help. Happiness and wellness cannot be founded on either excessive pride or fear to seek help. There are professionals whose job is to help people suffering from mental health issues and equip them with the right tools to embrace a path to healing.

Awareness. The second, simple, step that we could use to our advantage is the realisation that we are not alone. In all likeness, there are many people around you who are facing similar issues, and it could be beneficial to be united in this journey. Billy Joel wrote in a song "they're sharing a drink they call loneliness, but it's better than drinking alone". Accordingly, everyone is entitled to sharing his/her burdens with no 'ifs' or 'buts.' We can and will all feel better for it.

Respect. This third recommendation cannot go overstated. Sarah would not be afraid of discrimination because of a broken leg. So shouldn't we for experiencing mental health issues. Wellness is also a product of comfort with your environment and respecting yourself and others is the first step to feel comfortable. Mental health issues are completely normal and do not define anyone as a person, therefore there is nothing to be ashamed of and no discrimination is allowed.

Exhale. While I will concede that I was overthinking about a word that could encompass this concept, I believe that 'exhale' is the perfect word to indicate how we should entitle ourselves to some 'me' time and, in other words, exhale. Everyone needs an opportunity to blow off some steam and recharge in a safe space. While this will not come as a surprise, I want this to come as a reminder, because stress and our perfectionist self-imposed demands to do more and do better can easily make us forget that we are people, not machines. So enjoy, spend time in your hobbies or search for one if you do not have it, do what you like, meditate, and give yourself some 'me' time.

Mental health issues are truly complicated and so personal that it is so hard to address them at the aggregate level. They can take a severe toll on our lives. However, I believe that we are all entitled to wellness and I know that if you C·A·R·E, then you can entitle yourself to some relief and then, one day, wellness.

CONFETTI

THE ANSWER TO THE MODERN LAWYER'S PROBLEMS?



By Clarissa Rayward

Clarissa is the owner of the Brisbane Family Law Centre. She is the author of 'Happy Lawyer Happy Life - How to be the Happy in Law and Life,' and runs a weekly podcast by the same name. Clarissa also coaches Lawyers nationwide on Wellness and Wellbeing in the Legal Profession.

Confetti and law are perhaps not words that often appear in a sentence together but I am starting to wonder if perhaps they should a whole lot more! Last week I had the pleasure of presenting at the annual Wellness in Law Forum in beautiful Melbourne and I took the opportunity to tackle something new for me, inspired by a few things that seem to be consuming my thoughts at the moment.

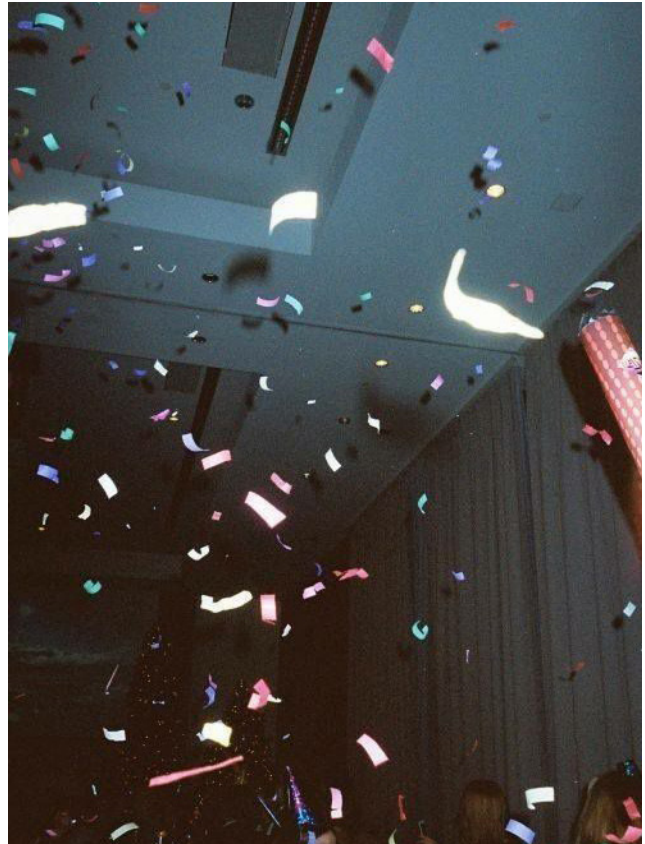
Wellness and the law is a topic I am deeply passionate about. Having myself had to overcome what I call 'unhappiness,' I now spend a lot of my time exploring wellness, happiness and even joy in legal practice. Having researched the science of happiness and published my book 'Happy Lawyer Happy Life' I have come to learn that with some thought and effort there are things we can all do to be 'happier' in law. However, much of my work to date has focused on the individual – what you and I can do, when we may not have the ability to change our organisation or our structures, to make our individual lives in the law that bit more manageable.

But what about the collective? Lately thanks to 3 very different influences in my life I have begun to explore what our legal lives might look like if we as a collective of professionals began to re-think the very core of how we do what we do. So colliding in my life right now are these 3 things:

Marie Kondo! Yes! Somehow mindfully folding your clothing will change your legal life! Trust me! If you are a little like me and have been binge watching Marie Kondo's hit Netflix show, then there is a good chance you have been clearing out your wardrobe too! I have been transfixed watching the sense of calm that has come over her guests as they transform ever so gently, one piece of 'joyful stuff' at a time.

How on earth does this relate to law you ask? Well for that you will have to read on.

The second significant influence on my thoughts at the moment is the most beautiful book penned by American designer, Ingrid Fetell-Lee- 'Joyful- the surprising power of ordinary things to create extraordinary



happiness'. I was introduced to Ingrid last year when a dear friend shared with me Ingrid's amazing TED talk. Ingrid has travelled the world exploring the idea that joy exists all around us but more importantly, that by purposefully choosing to do, be, say or see certain things, we can create more joy everywhere.

And finally my many hours of talking 'Happiness' with lawyers all over the Country. Through my book, my podcast and my now 'side hustle' Happy Lawyer Happy Life, I spend a good part of my week hanging out with lawyers just like you- learning more and more about just what makes our profession

great but also the many things that need some work and it is those things, the not so great parts, that I think it is time we tackle together.

My mind is full, as you can tell, of mindfully folded Kondo wardrobes, joyfully coloured scenes and much happiness in amongst the usual life in the law. It is in these thoughts that I have been hatching a bit of a plan!



But Before I Go On! What are the 'Modern Lawyer's Problems?'

Law is an inherently stressful job. I am not sure that this can ever really be changed, but I do think some of the drivers of our 'lawyer problems' are well within our collective control to better manage than we are. Long work hours, high billable targets, sensitive and sometimes even traumatic content are just part of the job for most of us. There is an oft unspoken challenge of 'the other lawyer'. Our adversarial system has somehow developed into a deeply conflictual landscape where sometimes even colleagues in the same office can barely trust each other, for fear of missing out on that important promotion, the pay rise, or that next client

file. 'The other lawyer' is your colleague, and your opponent has fast become one of the biggest drivers of unhappiness in law.

Law is a Serious Job

Law IS a serious job. And so it should be. The Rule of Law is the central backbone of our civil society and is not to be taken lightly. But by serious, do we really mean devoid of emotion? Devoid of humanity? Devoid of care, compassion, kindness? When we travel back in the history books a few hundred or so years and really consider just where lawyer life began, we were more than anything a helping and healing profession. To this day, what drives so many great lawyers to law is the desire to make a difference in the lives of others. What has them racing fast away from the profession only a few years in is the deep disconnect between that desire — their purpose — and the daily practice of law. In 'lawland' as I like to call it, we have come to reward the overworked, the difficult, the serious and above all, the fight. In my mind none of those terms are associated with 'helping.' Calmness, consideration, kindness and compassion for me are needed if we ever intend to genuinely help anyone, anywhere in life.

So is there a Place for Happy Lawyers?

A few years ago I found myself called 'The Happy Family Lawyer' thanks to a blog I started by chance one Saturday night. I never set out to become a 'happiness advocate.' I had just found myself on the edge of a steep (virtual) cliff in deciding whether law really was for me. I was tired, stressed and confused and could not see a place for me — a person who values kindness, care, calm and compassion, in an industry that only seemed interested in 'the win.' But fast forward 5 years and I have come to learn there are many 'happy lawyers' all around the world



and that they, like me, are quietly creating a wave of change in 'law land,' one little piece of 'legal confetti' at a time. Happiness in life is a feeling, a sense of contentment, of joy. But to be 'happy' there are a few simple things we all need a lot of the time. Health is key, but for most of us, happiness is deeply connected to moments of passion, purpose, colour, creativity, learning, fun, play and laughter. All of which can feel very scarce in the daily grind that can be the modern practice of law.

We can't change how we feel if we keep thinking the same way and doing the same thing. We need to change what we think and what we do if we want to feel differently. I suspect the feeling most have when it comes to the enormity of the task in changing legal culture is much the same as the participants in Marie Kondo's show. As she leaves their home on that first day having tossed all of their worldly belongings in a giant pile in the middle of their bed, I am certain they stop and ask why? Why bother 'sparking joy' in all of that mess. But I sense we lawyers can

all learn a lot from Marie on what to do next. We don't need more surveys, more research, or 'wellness committees' touting lunch time yoga. That part is done. We know that lawyers experience psychological ill-health at rates far beyond the average population. It is time to grab the rituals of the past, toss them in piles on the bed and pick them up, one at a time, mindfully asking 'does this really spark joy?' Perhaps 'sparking joy' is setting the bar a little too high, but if we just ask the simple question — 'does this still serve us? This way of working? And how does it serve our clients?' We may start the task of purposeful change. Whether you call it joy, happiness, or a sense of contentment, I think there are many things we can all do to effect change in our profession. Long working days, rigid daily structures and combative practice styles are slowly being replaced by their opposites.

So, Confetti then?

This is where the confetti comes in. Find me a person that doesn't smile at the idea of confetti. All of those little colourful paper wheels floating to the floor- a reminder of celebrations, of fun and happy times in our lives. Now I am not suggesting that Court rooms suddenly embrace the confetti canon on a daily basis (although that could be a fun way of signalling a successful appeal!) but rather that we as a profession embrace some of what confetti stands for, to lead the change that is still needed.

Confetti is known for its rainbow of colour hues. Law is known for the opposite. If law was a colour it would be brown, black, or better still, grey. Grey is the ultimate 'non-colour.' The perfect mix of black and white (and I would suggest not really a colour at all). When I think of law I think of grey. And I suspect our clients do too. But what might law life be like if we let a little bit of colour in? What if the next time you send

that advice, it goes as a colourful one-page mind map rather than a twenty-page black and white, impossible to read, pdf? What if our workspaces, our offices, our Courts were suddenly infused with tones of pink, yellow and blue instead of grey, black and brown?

I began my life as a designer, spending a year at university studying colour theory and learning just how the use of different colours in our surrounds can change human behaviour. Thanks to my summer reading of Ingrid's book over Christmas I have been transported back to those design classes, to my colour wheels and paints and reminded of the power colour plays on the human psyche. There is no better example of this than Brisbane's own Banco Court. The most stunning space full of natural light and hosting a wall size pastel mural by Cape York Indigenous Artist Mirdidingkingathi Juwarnda (Sally Gabori). Next time you are in town I encourage you to step into that room and tell me just how it makes you feel. I suspect you will tell me the space commands your attention, it speaks to the importance of the work conducted in it, however that mural, those colours and the streaming natural light also create a serenity and calm that I have never known in the otherwise plain courtrooms I visit. Our surrounds, everything around us impacts on how we feel even when we don't think it does.

Last week I arrived in Melbourne late thanks to a cancelled flight. Without looking and in my state of haste I sent my taxi driver to the wrong university! I have since concluded it was meant to be. As I walked the halls and rode the lifts of the Melbourne Law School, trying to find my way to the conference that wasn't even there, I could hear the most amazing music playing from a piano placed in the foyer. Why is a piano in a law school foyer? I have no idea but wow I am so glad it was. As that music took over, I felt my

body relax, I stopped worrying about being lost and paused for a small moment and smiled. That piano in a split second changed my mood, my behaviour and my actions and in that moment I felt joy. Colour, music and confetti are associated with fun, play and the frivolous parts of life and do not currently sit well with the serious world that is life in the law. But I have been wondering what law life might look like if we allow a few more murals, a little more day light and even some music into our surrounds.

Life is Important but not Serious

As I finished speaking about confetti and joy last week, Merv Neal took to the floor to share his work infusing laughter into hospitals and workplaces all now known to improve mental health outcomes. Merv wisely said 'life is important but not serious,' and it had me thinking that perhaps the same should be said of a life in the law. It is important, but it doesn't need to be serious in the 1980's television interpretation of a word filled with grey suits, adversarial practice and a purposeful avoidance of all human emotion. Instead, life in the law is important and requires compassion, understanding, and a considered, purposeful intellect. There is so much we lawyers can all do to change our workplaces and our profession for the better. I wonder if changing our mindset, embracing a little colour and revisiting the parts of our work and workplaces that really can spark joy might be the next phase that is needed. So yes, I say confetti, not in its actual form but rather all that it stands for, could well hold the answer to sparking the change that is needed in our profession. Confetti, to reduce the unnecessarily high rates of poor mental health outcomes, of burnout and unhappiness and to ensure the health and wellness of lawyers and our clients for many decades to come.

TACKLE THE TENSION

THREE PLAYLISTS FOR YOUR EARS ONLY

Perfect Pop



1. Dreams (The Cranberries)
2. Call it What You Want (Taylor Swift)
3. Dream Girl (Jack River)
4. Summer Days (ARIZONA)
5. Lovers (Anna of the North)
6. Subway Car (Marc E. Bassy)
7. Heart of Glass (Blondie)
8. California (Grimes)
9. Perfect Day (Hoku)
10. Warm Blood (Carly Rae Jepsen)

20th Century / Classical Crossings



1. Plus tôt (Alexandra Streliski)
2. Solfeggio in C minor (CPE Bach, Eugen Cicero)
3. Beethoven's Piano Sonata No. 8, Pathétique (Hiromi)
4. Invention No. 13 in A Minor, BWV 784 (JS Bach, Charl du Pleiss Trio)
5. Concerto pour clavecin n 1 BWV 1052 en Ré Mineur (Bach, Jacques Loussier Trio).
6. Valse in C-Sharp Minor, Op. 64 No. 2 (Chopin, Eugen Cicero)
7. Improvisation, 8 Pièces brèves, Op. 84 No. 5 (Fauré, Valjarevic)

Calming Country / Folk



1. Small Town Heroes (Hurray for the Riff Raff)
2. Butterflies (Kacey Musgraves)
3. Wildflowers (Tom Petty)
4. Over the Rainbow (Eva Cassidy)
5. My Church (Maren Morris)
6. Crash into Me (Dave Matthews Band)
7. Twin Thing (Pixie Geldof)
8. Dusty Trails (Lucius)
9. Sister Golden Hair (America)
10. Should Have Known Better (Sufjan Stevens)

WOMEN AND THE LAW

By Bre Shanahan, UWA Student Guild Women's Officer

Gender equity is something that should matter to all of us. From contributing to a more peaceful society to boosting economic growth, gender equity brings benefits across all facets of society, and represents one of the world's largest untapped resources. As the saying goes, the world will never realise 100% of its goals if 50% of the world cannot realise their full potential.

The position of Women's Officer exists to advocate for issues affecting women and non-binary students on campus. Integral to my role is the capacity to speak out about issues affecting these students on campus and push for real change, both institutionally in the structures and processes at UWA, as well as addressing harmful behaviours and attitudes that are prevalent in our community. So, where has this taken me?

Countless times this year, I've been called "pathetic." I've been asked "Why isn't there a Men's Officer?" on many an occasion. I've been told there is no good reason for the Women's Department to exist, that being a feminist and advocating for equality is promoting "totalitarian hatred," and that I should just shut up and get back in my box. I've been told that my "inability to manage my emotions is shockingly indicative of how far Australian university education has fallen at the hands of ideological indoctrination." But this is why I speak up.

As a university student, I am three times as likely to experience sexual assault than any other age group. At UWA, I may join the 7% of students who were sexually assaulted. I am already part of the 51% that have been sexually harassed.



When I graduate from law in three year's time, I can expect to earn \$5000 per year less than my male counterparts. This is a pattern that will persist throughout my career: eventually I will face a gender pay gap of 26.2%. As I move through my career, opportunities to progress will be limited. While women make up two-thirds of law graduates, they fill less than one-quarter of senior roles and fill only one in 10 senior counsel and Queen's counsel positions. I will find there are fewer women running top Australian companies than men named John, or Peter, or David. And after my career, I can expect to retire with 47% less superannuation than men. On average, this is the equivalent of \$90 000.

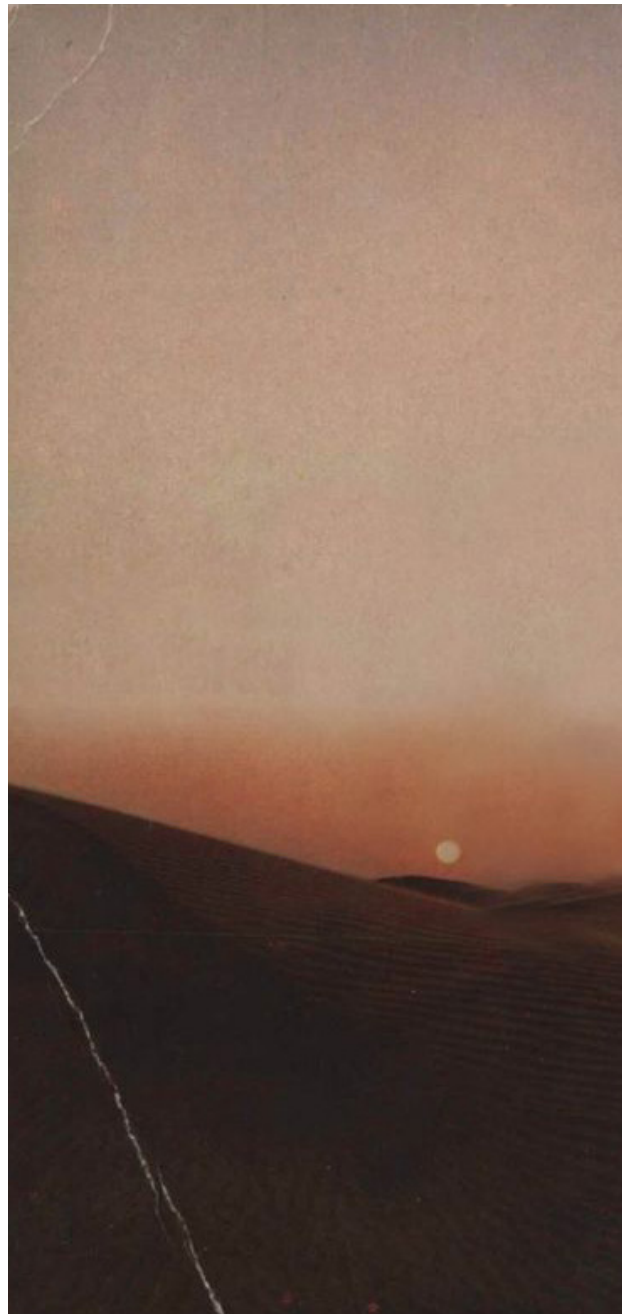
But during this time, it's not a wage gap or retiring without sufficient superannuation or the lack of opportunities for growth that represent the most concerning issue. The

biggest threat once I turn 25 is domestic violence. This causes more illness, disability, homelessness and death than any other risk factor for women of working age.

Gender equity in my lifetime is fighting systemic barriers at every stage to survive. Gender equity is about constantly challenging harmful attitudes and raises, some subconscious - to be told that I am too emotional or that I don't know what I'm talking about (quote a man named Russell who asked me what I know about being a woman). Gender equity is knowing when I graduate I will be paid less than my male counterparts; gender equity is knowing I'm three times more likely to be sexually assaulted than men; gender equity is walking through the parts of campus I know have more lighting, holding my keys between my fingers as some form of protection, locking the doors of my car as soon as I enter - but knowing that, even if

I take all these measures it still may not be enough. I'm still unsafe because I'm most likely to be assaulted by someone I know.

Gender equity in my lifetime won't be achieved - we're 200 years away. There is no one cause or symptom of these challenges and there isn't one easy fix across the board. It is only by continuously challenging harmful attitudes and beliefs that we can achieve progress for the benefit of all.



FINDING THE PERFECT FIT

THE IMPORTANCE OF TAILORING YOUR CAREER TO YOUR PERSONALITY

By Pia Castelli, Lecturer at The College of Law Western Australia

Throughout our years at university we are consistently surrounded by the message that our career prospects begin and end with a graduate position at a top-tier international law firm. We fear that our careers will be over before they have begun if we don't get a top-tier offer on offers day. As people who have been drawn to pursue a career in the law, we are likely competitive, perfectionistic and a classic 'Type A personality'. As such, for many of us, there is often a high level of value and self-worth tied to our jobs and no position has more prestige than that elusive top-tier graduate position.

But before putting so much pressure on ourselves to secure one of these highly sought-after and pressure-filled roles, I encourage every law student to ask themselves whether it is the right role for them personally? If we pressure ourselves to fit into a role and culture that does not align with our own personality and values, the chance of us having long term success and career satisfaction is likely to be far lower than it otherwise would be.

Like most law students, in my penultimate year I did my round of vacation clerkships, testing a variety of legal environments

and roles. I tried a large commercial firm, a mid-tier firm, a boutique firm, a community legal centre and a government department. I tried commercial law, criminal law, personal injuries law and insurance law.

At the end of these clerkships, I walked away knowing only one thing - that I did not want to work for a large commercial firm. I had learned a lot from this particular clerkship, but for some reason I had not enjoyed it as much as my other clerkships and I had finished that clerkship feeling more drained and less enthusiastic and inspired than I had felt after my other clerkships. But why? This was the type of job I was supposed to want. This was the type of job I was feeling immense pressure to compete for and secure. This was the type of job that was supposed to be the foundation of the amazing career I would have ahead of me.

When I sat down to analyse why I was feeling so much discontent about pursuing a role at a top-tier international firm, I realised that there were a number of things I was looking for in a role that I would not likely get (or not for some time at least) if I were to work for a large commercial firm. Firstly, it

was important to me that I was acting for a person rather than a company. Secondly, I wanted to be able to develop a relationship with my clients and feel that I was helping them. Thirdly, I did not want to spend my days working only on discovery and due diligence. Lastly, it was important to me to achieve a work-life balance as I knew that I could not sustain 60+ hour work weeks.

So, when graduate recruitment dates came around in my final year I did not apply to a single commercial firm. I knew that my application would be disingenuous and that should I somehow manage to lie well enough to convince the firm that I was the best person for their job, their job would not be the best position for my life and my personality. I know that for me, pursuing a career in a role that did not fit with my personality traits would likely bring me stress, career dissatisfaction and cognitive dissonance which would possibly cause me to be miserable and prematurely leave the law.

Whilst this career decision may not have brought me the same income and prestige as pushing on with a career at a top-tier firm, I believe that this one decision brought me more professional joy and pride than any other could have. The fact that I was happy in my work allowed my skill and passion to shine. Without this, I would never have gone on to establish myself as a human rights lawyer, researcher and educator. And I am not alone in this. As Harold Weinstein, Chief Operating Officer of Caliper Corporation reported, “[people] who are working in roles that are consistent with their personality, values and interpersonal characteristics generally outperform those who are less well matched—by a ratio of two-to-one.”

I have also seen similar things in my friends from university. Of my friends who started

their career in the law in a role that did not align with their personality, at least half of them have since left the law entirely. Yet, for those of us who tried from the outset to align our careers with our values, we have gone on to establish careers in the law that have, for the most, part been fulfilling and enjoyable almost eleven years on. For one of my friends, beginning her career at a top-tier firm was the right move for her. She went on to be named a finalist in the Lawyers Weekly 30 Under 30 Awards and is now Corporate Counsel at a mining company. For another very social friend, starting her career at a vibrant mid-tier firm that put a lot of importance on collegiality and business development was a match made in heaven and just last month she was made partner of that same firm.

I know it can be a big challenge to really sit down and work out who you are and want you want from a rewarding career, but the payoff will be well worth it. And remember during the stressful application and offer process, that job applications and interviews are not only the time for you to show the firm that you are right person for the job, but it is your opportunity to work out whether the firm is the best job for your personality.



THE 'YIN AND YANG' OF MENTAL HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE

By John Poulsen,
Principal of People, Passion & Performance.



Yin-yang refers to a concept originating in ancient Chinese philosophy where opposite forces are seen as interconnected and counterbalancing. It is commonly represented by the yin-yang symbol, a circle made up of black and white swirls, each containing a spot of the other.

I have always believed that it is possible to create a high-quality law firm, which does great work for great clients, delivers value, looks after and empowers its people and where people have fun. To achieve this vision, a holistic approach has to be taken by the firm, which I will address below. More recently, I have come to the view that an even better way to achieve that vision is to marry together what the firm should do in a holistic way to create a mentally healthy workplace (the Yin); and people in the firm should do to keep themselves mentally healthy (the Yang)

The Yin: What should a Firm do to create a Mentally Healthy Workplace?

I am a strong believer that organisations and especially law firms have an obligation to create a mentally healthy workplace. The Tristan Jepson Memorial Foundation (TJMF) guidelines provide a fantastic road map to help firms to take a holistic approach in this regard.

Tristan Jepson was a young lawyer who worked in Sydney, suffered from severe depression and ended his life. His parents set up the TJMF over 10 years ago and developed the TJMF Guidelines for Psychological Best Practice. The Guidelines are intended to raise awareness of mental health issues in the workplace and enable leaders of firms to understand the methods of management that assist in the creation and maintenance of psychologically fit and supportive workplaces. The Guidelines recommend that firms focus on the following 13 factors.

Organisational culture: One where there is trust, honesty and fairness.

Psychological and social support: supported and able to get help when needed

Clear leadership and expectations: they know what to do in their work as well as how their efforts contribute to the overall goals of the organisation.

Civility and respect: they are treated with respect and courtesy

Psychological competencies and requirements: they have a good job fit

Growth and development: they are encouraged and supported to develop personally and professionally

Recognition and reward: they are acknowledged appropriately in a timely manner and appreciated appropriately for the work they do

Good involvement and influence by staff: they are included in discussions about their work and are able to participate in how decisions are made.

Workload management: they are given the time and resources necessary to complete their work successfully

Engagement: their work is meaningful

Balance: they have choices and opportunities for flexible working arrangements to accommodate their work, family and personal priorities.

Psychological protection: it is safe to speak up and that appropriate action will be taken and protection provided

Protection of physical safety: their physical safety is protected.

Whilst all the major law firms in Australia and many other professional services firms became signatories to the TJMF Guidelines, I don't think that many have actually put in place all of the things that need to be done to create mentally healthy workplaces. When you boil it down, creating a psychologically and fit workplace is really about developing and living by a set of values which in turn ensure people are treated fairly and with respect. What I tried to do in my 12 years as a law firm leader was to take a holistic, values-based approach to law firm management which included compassionate leadership, developing and living values which leads to empowering and trusting everyone in the firm to be the best they could be, embedding flexible working arrangements, driving for diversity and inclusion, delivering value to clients, communicating openly and honestly and giving back to the community. I deal with each of these briefly below.

I. Leadership and Flow of Success Model

Leadership is critical. The culture of a firm starts from the top and a firm can only have a culture of being a mentally healthy workplace if that is the vision of and aligns with the purpose mission and values of the firm's leader, so leadership becomes very relevant to creating the right culture.

So if leadership is critical in respect to creating successful firm that is also a mentally healthy place to work, what then is that type of leadership? In my view a leader is someone who is highly aware of his or her own emotions and uses positive energy with compassion. A leader is someone who to inspires, empowers and motivates others to be the best that they can be. This is done in an ethical way, and in accordance with the relevant strategic direction the firm is seeking to go.

A leader then has to be relentless and unstoppable in implementation. Over my period as a law firm leader I developed what I call the 'Flow of Success.'

The model has four simple elements (or areas of focus), puts ‘people first,’ and is all about doing everything you can to have the right people of the right cultural fit on the right seats on the bus and then empowering them to be the best that they can be in an ethical way in accordance with our strategic direction. If that happens then the bus will find its way. The second element is around clients with the nub being building relationships of trust through communication and delivering value. The third element is about organisational wellbeing. It's about having the best governance, systems and processes in place. The last element is about finances (profit). It comes last on the basis that if you get the first three right, the last one will look after itself. Most professional service firms would turn this model on its head with every decision being made around the finances. Trust me, it works!

II. Values

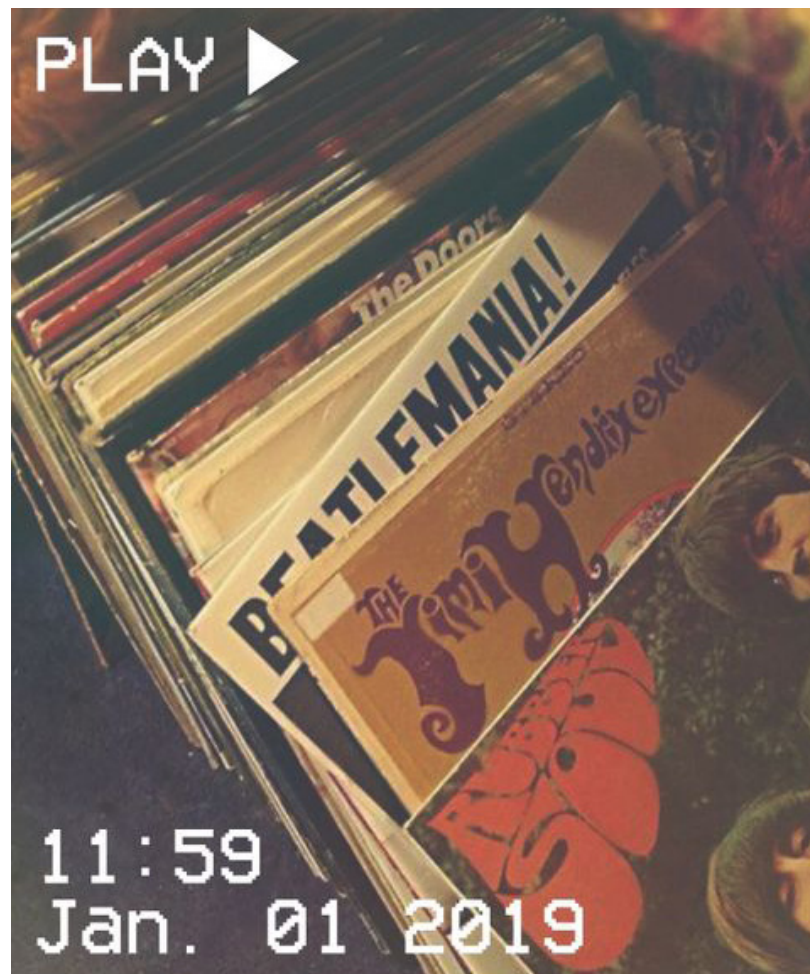
In my experience, if a firm develops values with input from everyone and embeds those values into everything it does (including remuneration, progression and induction of new people) then the firm can be run on an ‘empowerment and trust’ model, rather than a ‘command and control’ model. The values and the behaviors that are required to live the values will result in people in the firm self-regulating, rather than being told what to do.

Of course, this means that people who do not comply with the values should be dealt with swiftly. There is no point having values if, say, your best performer pays no regard to them. Values are not something that can just be delivered from the top. From my experience, they need to develop from a bottom-up and top-down approach with a significant amount of consultation.

III. Flexible work arrangements and work life balance

I believe that having truly flexible work arrangements available for all people in a firm is one of the biggest contributors to developing a mentally health workplace. In 2010, when I was the Managing Partner of Minter Ellison Perth, we won the 2009-10 National Work-Life Balance Awards for our flexible work arrangements policies and track record in making it happen.

The Centre for Work + Life, University of South Australia, included our story in their “Doing things differently: Case Studies of Work-Life Innovation in 6 Australian Workplaces” (March 2011).



IV. Diversity and Inclusion

The evidence speaks for itself – and so does the everyday experience of businesses across the world. Diversity and inclusion lead to more innovation, more opportunities for all, better access to talent, better culture, better business performance and a more mentally healthy workplace. I think there are five reasons why diversity and inclusion are an absolute imperative for any business. First, diversity and inclusion are quite simply the right thing to do. Secondly, It's good for business. If firms don't manage diversity properly, they will be get left behind. Diversity plugs the talent gap for businesses - and is also good for society. Finally, diversity and inclusion bring us all opportunities to learn from others and grow.

V. Communicating Openly and Honestly

Open and honest communication is a concept that almost all organisations claim to value, but very few truly achieve. The importance of an open business environment cannot be overstated; a company can survive without open communication, but very few organisations thrive without it.

Trust is key to a mentally healthy workplace and open and honest communication is a must if you want to build trust. All high-performing teams, whether in the sports arena or in the business world, are built on a solid foundation of trust. Trust grows over time and is based on individual members of a team making and keeping commitments, as well as being vulnerable with one another. These honored commitments are noticed by other team members, making them feel less vulnerable, which in turn opens the door to stronger relationships. Relationships are then built upon through continued open, honest communication.



VI. Community Investment

People want to be part of an organisation that is involved in the community and gives them meaning. It helps with recruitment and retention. It nourishes people. In its best form, it is where your people give their skills (not money) to community. So if you want to build a mentally healthy workplace, developing a culture of giving back to the community is a must. Find a focus that aligns with the firm's vision and values and stick with it. Make it part of what people do every day.

Taking a holistic approach to wellbeing of people does lead to great results. I'm really proud of what we achieved during my time of leading law firms. It resulted in increased engagement, decrease in turnover and significant growth in revenue and profit. From 2006 to 2018 the firm I led was one of the fastest growing law firms in Australia with revenue increasing by over 260% in that period.

The Yang: What should people in the firm do to keep themselves mentally healthy?

I. Understanding Ikigai

People need to find Ikigai in their work. Ikigai is composed of two Japanese words: iki, referring to life, and kai, which roughly means “the realisation of what one expects and hopes for.” Unpacking the word and its associated symbol a bit further, ikigai is seen as the convergence of four primary elements:

What you Love (your passion)
What the World Needs (your mission)
What you are Good at (your vocation)
What you can get Paid for (your profession)

The word ikigai, that space in the middle of these four elements, is seen as the source of value or what make one’s life truly worthwhile. In Japan, ikigai is thought of as “a reason to get up in the morning”. I think Ikigai is a great model to apply to yourself and your working life. I have added one more circle Which is all about ‘being supported to grow’. So, ask yourself - do I get Ikigai in my current role? If not then ask yourself, what can I do to get it? Or am I in the right role in the right organisation? This leads on to my next thought. As I have grown older, I have formed the view that we live much of our life in fear - fear of what has happened (leads to depression) and fear of what might happen (leads to anxiety), rather than living in the present and having inner peace.

II. Remaining calm under pressure

The ability to manage your emotions and remain calm under pressure has a direct link to your performance. Research undertaken

by Yale with more than a million people has found that 90% of top performers are skilled at managing their emotions in times of stress in order to remain calm and in control.

The Yale study, which found that prolonged stress causes degeneration in the area of the brain responsible for self-control. The tricky thing about stress (and the anxiety that comes with it) is that it’s an absolutely necessary emotion. Our brains are wired such that it’s difficult to take action until we feel at least some level of this emotional state. In fact, performance peaks under the heightened activation that comes with moderate levels of stress. As long as the stress isn’t prolonged, it’s harmless.

New research from the University of California, Berkeley, reveals an upside to experiencing moderate levels of stress. But it also reinforces how important it is to keep stress under control. The study, led by post-doctoral fellow Elizabeth Kirby, found that the onset of stress entices the brain into growing new cells responsible for improved memory. However, this effect is only seen when stress is intermittent. As soon as the stress continues beyond a few moments into a prolonged state, it suppresses the brain’s ability to develop new cells.

Besides increasing your risk of heart disease, depression, and obesity, stress decreases your cognitive performance. Fortunately, though, unless a lion is chasing you, the bulk of your stress is subjective and under your control. Top performers have well-honed coping strategies that they employ under stressful circumstances. This lowers their stress levels regardless of what’s happening in their environment, ensuring that the stress they experience is intermittent and not prolonged.

12 things you can do to keep yourself mentally healthy under pressure

While I've run across numerous effective strategies that successful people employ when faced with stress, what follows are what I think of as 12 of the best. Some of these strategies may seem obvious, but the real challenge lies in recognizing when you need to use them and having the wherewithal to actually do so in spite of your stress.

1 They Appreciate What They Have - Taking time to contemplate what you're grateful for isn't merely the "right" thing to do. It also improves your mood, because it reduces the stress hormone cortisol by 23%. Research conducted at the University of California, Davis found that people who worked daily to cultivate an attitude of gratitude experienced improved mood, energy, and physical well-being. It's likely that lower levels of cortisol played a major role in this.

2 They Avoid Asking "What If?" - "What if?" statements throw fuel on the fire of stress and worry. Things can go in a million different directions, and the more time you spend worrying about the possibilities, the less time you'll spend focusing on taking action that will calm you down and keep your stress under control. Calm people know that asking "what if?" will only take them to a place they don't want—or need—to go.

3 They Stay Positive - Positive thoughts help make stress intermittent by focusing your brain's attention onto something that is completely stress-free. You have to give your wandering brain a little help by consciously selecting something positive to think about. Any positive thought will do to refocus your attention.

When things are going well, and your mood is good, this is relatively easy. When things are going poorly, and your mind is flooded with negative thoughts, this can be a challenge. In these moments, think about your day and identify one positive thing that happened, no matter how small.

If you can't think of something from the current day, reflect on the previous day or even the previous week. Or perhaps you're looking forward to an exciting event that you can focus your attention on. The point here is that you must have something positive that you're ready to shift your attention to when your thoughts turn negative.

4 They Disconnect - Given the importance of keeping stress intermittent, it's easy to see how taking regular time off the grid can help keep your stress under control. When you make yourself available to your work 24/7, you expose yourself to a constant barrage of stressors. Forcing yourself offline and even—gulp!—turning off your phone gives your body a break from a constant source of stress. Studies have shown that something as simple as an email break can lower stress levels.

Technology allows for constant communication and the expectation that you should be available 24/7. It is extremely difficult to enjoy a stress-free moment outside of work when an email that will change your train of thought and get you thinking (read: stressing) about work can drop onto your phone at any moment.

If detaching yourself from work-related communication on weekday evenings is too big a challenge, then how about the weekend? Choose blocks of time where you cut the cord and go offline. You'll be amazed at how refreshing these breaks are

and how they reduce stress by putting a mental recharge into your weekly schedule. If you're worried about the negative repercussions of taking this step, first try doing it at times when you're unlikely to be contacted—maybe Sunday morning. As you grow more comfortable with it, and as your co-workers begin to accept the time you spend offline, gradually expand the amount of time you spend away from technology.

5 They Limit Their Caffeine Intake - Drinking caffeine triggers the release of adrenaline. Adrenaline is the source of the “fight-or-flight” response, a survival mechanism that forces you to stand up and fight or run for the hills when faced with a threat. The fight-or-flight mechanism sidesteps rational thinking in favour of a faster response. This is great when a bear is chasing you, but not so great when you're responding to a curt email. When caffeine puts your brain and body into this hyper aroused state of stress, your emotions overrun your behaviour. The stress that caffeine creates is far from intermittent, as its long half-life ensures that it takes its sweet time working its way out of your body.

6 They Sleep - I can't say enough about the importance of sleep to increasing your emotional intelligence and managing your stress levels. When you sleep, your brain literally recharges, shuffling through the day's memories and storing or discarding them (which causes dreams), so that you wake up alert and clear-headed. Your self-control, attention, and memory are all reduced when you don't get enough—or the right kind—of sleep. Sleep deprivation raises stress hormone levels on its own, even without a stressor present. Stressful projects often make you feel as if you have no time to sleep but taking the time to get a decent night's sleep is often the one thing keeping you from getting things under control.

7 They Squash Negative Self-Talk - A big step in managing stress involves stopping negative self-talk in its tracks.

The more you ruminate on negative thoughts, the more power you give them. Most of our negative thoughts are just that—thoughts, not facts. When you find yourself believing the negative and pessimistic things, your inner voice says, “It's time to stop and write them down.” Literally stop what you're doing and write down what you're thinking. Once you've taken a moment to slow down the negative momentum of your thoughts, you will be more rational and clear-headed in evaluating their veracity. You can bet that your statements aren't true any time you use words like “never,” “worst,” “ever,” etc. If your statements still look like facts once they're on paper, take them to a friend or colleague you trust and see if he or she agrees with you. Then the truth will surely come out. When it feels like something always or never happens, this is just your brain's natural threat tendency inflating the perceived frequency or severity of an event. Identifying and labelling your thoughts as thoughts by separating them from the facts will help you escape the cycle of negativity and move toward a positive new outlook.

8 They Reframe Their Perspective - Stress and worry are fuelled by our own skewed perception of events. It's easy to think that unrealistic deadlines, unforgiving bosses, and out-of-control traffic are the reasons we're so stressed all the time. You can't control your circumstances, but you can control how you respond to them. So, before you spend too much time dwelling on something, take a minute to put the situation in perspective. If you aren't sure when you need to do this, try looking for clues that your anxiety may not be proportional to the stressor. If you're

thinking in broad, sweeping statements such as “Everything is going wrong” or “Nothing will work out,” then you need to reframe the situation. A great way to correct this unproductive thought pattern is to list the specific things that actually are going wrong or not working out. Most likely you will come up with just some things—not everything—and the scope of these stressors will look much more limited than it initially appeared.

9 They Breathe - The easiest way to make stress intermittent lies in something that you have to do every day anyway: breathing. The practice of being in the moment with your breathing will begin to train your brain to focus solely on the task at hand and get the stress monkey off your back. When you're feeling stressed, take a couple of minutes to focus on your breathing. Close the door, put away all other distractions, and just sit in a chair and breathe. The goal is to spend the entire time focused only on your breathing, which will prevent your mind from wandering. They meditate - The science of meditation is now indisputable. It gives us a better grasp of how to work with situations, a heightened awareness of our emotions, and more space to respond. Meditation is a simple technique that, if practiced for as few as 10 minutes each day, can help you.

10 control stress, decrease anxiety, improve cardiovascular health, and achieve a greater capacity for relaxation. When our bodies are exposed to a sudden stress or threat, we respond with a characteristic "fight or flight" response. The "adrenaline rush" we experience is a result of the release of the hormones epinephrine (adrenaline) and norepinephrine. They cause an increase in blood pressure and pulse rate, faster breathing, and increased blood flow to the muscles. The relaxation response is a technique designed to elicit the opposite

bodily reaction from the "fight or flight" response -- a state of deep relaxation in which our breathing, pulse rate, blood pressure, and metabolism are decreased. Training our bodies on a daily basis to achieve this state of relaxation can lead to enhanced mood, lower blood pressure, improved digestion, and a reduction of everyday stress.

11 They Use Their Support System. It's tempting, yet entirely ineffective, to attempt tackling everything by yourself. To be calm and productive, you need to recognize your weaknesses and ask for help when you need it. This means tapping into your support system when a situation is challenging enough for you to feel overwhelmed. Everyone has someone at work and/or outside work who is on their team, rooting for them, and ready to help them get the best from a difficult situation. Identify these individuals in your life and make an effort to seek their insight and assistance when you need it. Something as simple as talking about your worries will provide an outlet for your anxiety and stress and supply you with a new perspective on the situation. Most of the time, other people can see a solution that you can't because they are not as emotionally invested in the situation. Asking for help will mitigate your stress and strengthen your relationships with those you rely upon.

12 Exercise. It reduces levels of the body's stress hormones, such as adrenaline and cortisol. It also stimulates the production of endorphins, chemicals in the brain that are the body's natural painkillers and mood elevators. Virtually any form of exercise, from aerobics to yoga, can act as a stress reliever. If you're not an athlete or even if you're out of shape, you can still make a little exercise go a long way toward stress management.

B L A C K B I R D

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