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October 2018 Newsletter

Volume I | Issue II | New Hampshire Lawyers Assistance Program

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NH LCL Monthly Meeting

Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers is a monthly meeting on the
SECOND TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH
of NH lawyers, judges and law students who come together for
free, confidential peer support for any issue that interferes with
professional competence. Absolutely confidential.

October 9, 2018 6:00 p.m.

Airport Diner, 2280 Brown Ave, Manchester

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Ann Bradford's Well-Being Toolkit

The ABA, through CoLAP, published its landmark work regarding lawyer well-being in the “National Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being: Creating a Movement to Improve Well-Being in the Legal Profession” (2016). This report makes 44 separate recommendations to all stakeholders in the legal community to target areas where concrete steps to change the culture of our profession can readily be made. To make this even easier, LAP directors called for a tool kit which can be easily understood and implemented by legal employers. Ann Bradford, a former Big Law equity partner and founder of Aspire (a consultancy firm for the legal profession) rose to the challenge. Her tools kit breaks down both the need for creating a healthy legal work environment and an easy 8 step action plan to move forward in its creation.

Well-being, to boost productivity, “cannot be defined by the absence of illness but also [must] encompass a positive state of wellness.” A healthy workplace is not a singular ideal, but an adaption of basic principles which promotes individual organizational success. To determine the unique needs of a particular legal organization, the 8-step action plan will pave the way to a healthier, more productive work environment.

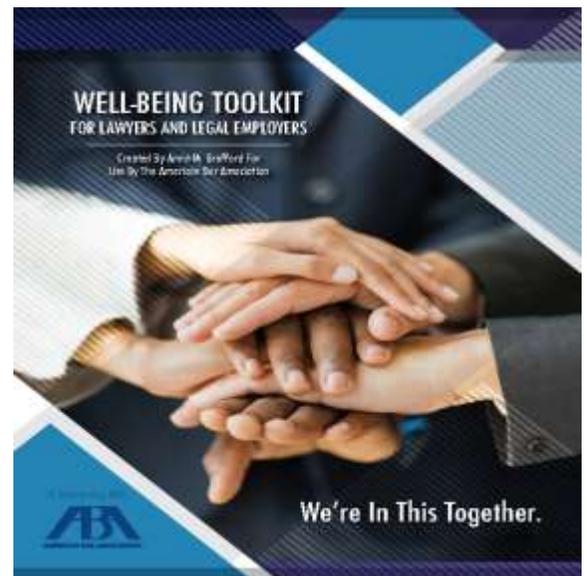
First, enlist leaders. Second, create a well-being committee. Third, define well-being in context.

“Organizational success depends on lawyer well-being, which is an important form of human capital.

Worker mental health and alcohol use disorders costs businesses’ billions.”

“We are happiest and healthiest when we adopt health work habits and lifestyle choices. Importantly, though, we won’t be successful on our own.

Well-being is a *team sport*.”



Fourth, conduct a needs assessment. What needs to change to create a healthier work environment and is it possible to create that change? Fifth, identify the priorities. Create a series of small attainable, tangible goals to create forward momentum. Sixth, create and execute a long-term action plan. Seventh, create a well-being policy that reflects both expectations and intentions. Finally, create a way to continually measure, evaluate and improve the action plan.

Real change does not come easy. Contact NHLAP to set up a discussion to implement meaningful change at your place of legal employment.

QUICK TIP

Sleep. Sleep. Sleep.

It's the fastest way to overall wellness and the easiest to overlook. Set reminder 15 minutes before your bedtime. Stick to it. Power down at least 1 hour before sleep. Keep to the schedule. Use an app like Deep Sleep, Rain Rain or Calm to establish a sleep routine. If you can't sleep or can't stay asleep, talk to your doctor. Quality sleep is the best way to ensure overall health and wellbeing.



WHAT IS NHLAP?

We are a confidential, independent 501(c)(3) non-profit to assist NH lawyers, judges and law students with any issue that may impact or impair the ability to practice law. Many lawyers think we only help with substance misuse. Although that is a very important part of NHLAP, it is by no means the sole focus of our work. We help with anything that has become problematic. Just some examples are depression, anxiety and other mental health issues; grief; cognitive limitations resulting from aging; eating disorders; professional dissatisfaction and burn-out; work-life imbalance and time management strategies.

We are here to help before consequences of these issues become problematic, public or both. We are not part of the NH court system nor the NH Bar. Because we are solely funded by a per attorney mandatory assessment, we are akin to an additional lawyer insurance policy- we can help individuals or legal employers understand the risks in ignoring these very real issues and point to concrete solutions.

We are your resource. We are here to help make your legal practice something you enjoy, not something you endure.

THE DIRECTOR'S CORNER

TERRI M. HARRINGTON, ESQ.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR NHLAP

Depression Help for Lawyers

Are you a lawyer, judge or law student with depression? You are not alone. According to a John Hopkins University study, lawyers lead the nation with the highest rates of depression. Lawyers also have the highest rates of suicide as a profession. An ABA Young Lawyers Division survey found 41% of female lawyers were unhappy with their jobs. There is help.

The Lawyers Depression Project (LDP), a group of attorneys who themselves suffer from depression, have launched a grassroots project aimed at addressing depression and other mental health issues in the legal profession. The group hosts a confidential forum at www.knowtime.com and weekly online peer-to-peer support group meetings, offering members the option of anonymity. To participate, members need only share emergency contact information with the group's founders (Joseph Milowic III & Aaron Kaufman, both attorneys who suffer from depression) to receive an anonymous knowtime email address for use with group meetings and to participate in the group's web forum. For more information, please contact Joe@knowtime.com.



“A word of encouragement during failure is worth more than an hour of praise after success.”- Unknown



“Storms make trees take deeper roots.” -Dolly Parton

CONFIDENTIALITY

Many have asked me about the limits of confidentiality with NHLAP. It's the most important piece of our success and the one thing I often forget to explain in detail. NHLAP was created by NH Supreme Court Rule 58 as an independent organization. NHLAP sought and obtained 501(c)(3) status as an independent non-profit agency. As part of the creation of NHLAP, Rule 58.8, we are barred from disclosing any information from any lawyer, judge or law student seeking our assistance. The only way I can verify participation or services is through a signed release or a court order.

The process works like this: Someone usually calls the office on their own and asks for information, but they are really seeking help. I make an appointment to sit down with that person and have a conversation. That conversation usually, but not always, leads to a referral for services.

Some referrals are not voluntary and come from the discipline system. Some referrals come from judges who have seen questionable behavior or from colleagues who are worried. In no instance does NHLAP follow up with whomever made a referral for any reason. We do reach out to the referee without disclosing who made the referral. Some are relieved we called, others refuse help. In all cases, we take confidentiality very seriously. Here in NH, we are very fortunate to have an independent LAP. About 1/3 of LAPs are a part of the State Bar. About 1/3 of LAPs are part of the court disciplinary system. In both cases, lawyers are suspicious that LAPs are not confidential. The suspicion is unfounded, but we are fortunate in NH that those who set up NHLAP were very cognizant that those who need NHLAP help not be hindered by any perception that confidentiality will be breached when it is needed the most. Confidentiality is truly our cornerstone.

Everyone involved with NHLAP is bound by confidentiality- the Board, the staff and the volunteers. There is no reason to fear asking for help.

