



## **OSB Solo & Small Firms Section**

*presents*

*Opening Up About Opening Up:  
Coping with the transition back to  
social engagement*

**July 21, 2021**  
**12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.**



### **Presenter:**

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Attorney Counselor  
Kyra M. Hazilla, JD,  
LCSW

Oregon Attorney  
Assistance Program

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**ZOOM  
Webinar**

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520 SW Yamhill St., Suite 1050  
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## How We Help

We help lawyers, judges, and law students develop the skills they need to meet the demands of their professional and personal lives in a healthy way.

Call or email us – we offer hope and help.

- ✦ Well-being and stress
- ✦ Anxiety or depression
- ✦ Problem substance use
- ✦ Compulsive and challenging behaviors
- ✦ Career and lifestyle
- ✦ Relationships
- ✦ Challenging times
- ✦ Planning for retirement



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## About the **OAAP**

We provide CONFIDENTIAL and free counseling assistance to lawyers, judges, law students, their family members, and members of the legal community. We can help with your concerns about your well-being, or the well-being of someone you care about. We offer short-term individual counseling, referral to other resources when appropriate, support groups, workshops, CLEs, and educational programs. Most of our programs and services are free. Our program is managed and funded by the Professional Liability Fund (PLF) ([www.osbplf.org](http://www.osbplf.org)).

## Confidential Assistance

**All communications with the OAAP are completely confidential and will not affect your standing with the Professional Liability Fund or the Oregon State Bar.** No information will be disclosed to any person, agency, or organization outside the OAAP, without the consent of the person accessing the program. Contacts with us are kept strictly confidential pursuant to ORS 9.568, PLF Policies 6.150 - 6.300, Oregon State Bar Bylaws Article 24, Oregon Rule of Professional Conduct 8.3(c) (3), and Judicial Code of Conduct for United States Judges Canon 3B(5). The only exceptions are: (1) to avert a serious, imminent threat to your health or safety or that of another person and (2) to comply with legal obligations such as ORS 419B.010 and ORS 124.060 (child abuse and elder abuse).

## **OAAP** Attorney Counselors

**Our experience as practicing lawyers gives us a strong foundation for understanding the situations that you face. Our training and experience as counselors provide us with the ability to listen and help you navigate toward solutions.**



**Douglas S. Querin**  
JD, LPC, CADC 1

practiced law for over 25 years, before becoming a licensed professional counselor. Working at the OAAP since 2006, he provides individual counseling on issues including stress management, anxiety, depression, relationship challenges, career satisfaction, and retirement planning. Doug is in long-term recovery and frequently provides counseling and support for lawyers dealing with substance use issues. Additionally, he facilitates work-life balance and healthy habit workshops for lawyers.



**Kyra M. Hazilla**  
JD, LCSW

first started working at the OAAP as an attorney counselor in 2014. She provides individual counseling and facilitates groups on trauma; building resilience; mindfulness; parenting; depression, anxiety and other mental health conditions; career transitions; recovery; and support for trans law professionals. Kyra's previous counseling experience includes crisis intervention and helping survivors of family violence. Her legal career has focused on the practice of juvenile law.

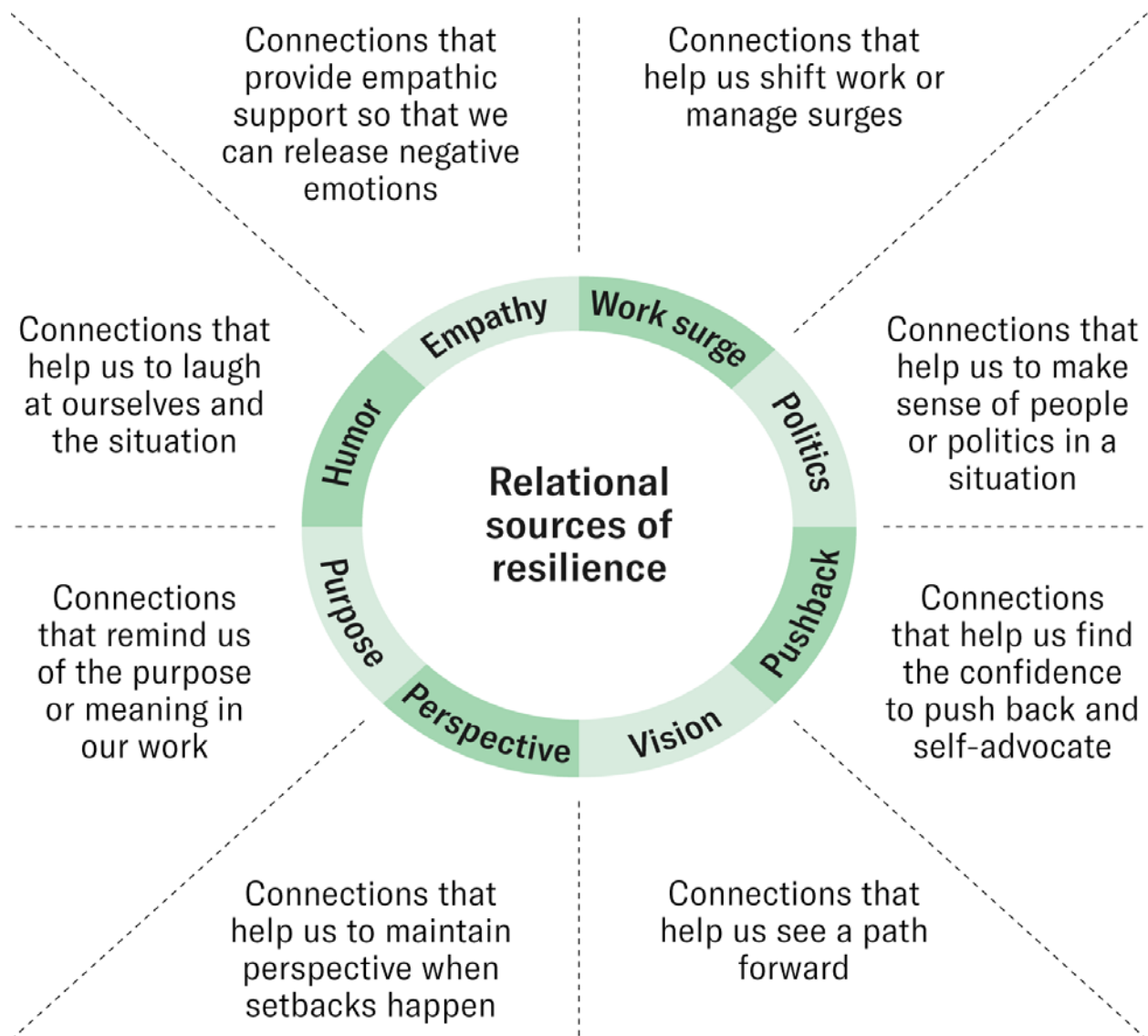


**Bryan R. Welch**  
JD, CADC 1

practiced family law before joining the OAAP in 2015. He is in long-term recovery and provides counseling for issues including problem substance use, career satisfaction, ADHD, and stress management. Bryan also facilitates workshops and support groups for lawyers practicing law with ADHD; with anxiety and depression; while experiencing divorce; or who are seeking greater career satisfaction.

# What Are Your Top Relational Sources of Resilience?

A well-developed network of relationships can help you rebound from setbacks. Identify the spheres that are most important to you. Are you falling short in some categories?



Source: Rob Cross, Karen Dillon, and Danna Greenberg



# **The Mental Health Factor: Accounting for the Emotional Toll of the Pandemic**

**Keys to a successful return-to-the-office plan include flexible choices, robust resourcing and resilience training with an eye on mental health.**

**Laura Mahr**

Considering the emotional toll and post-traumatic stress of the pandemic on your workforce will enable your firm to make available new resources.

If your firm is contemplating how to gracefully and seamlessly bring your workforce back to the office, it's in good company. Law offices and other businesses across the country are navigating copious issues—from practical to legal—while planning the reintegration of an in-person workforce. Bringing your team members back to the office as the pandemic winds down will be as novel of a process as sending them home. As surreal as working from home might have felt a year ago, many people have become accustomed to it. Oddly enough, returning to in-office operations may now feel both unfamiliar and uncomfortable. Each phase of the pandemic has presented unprecedented uncertainties, and this phase is no different; once again, there are new issues to navigate and no playbook to follow.

## **The Role of Mental Health**

While no one has a map that can circumnavigate all return-to-office planning errors, we do have insight into one key area that would be remiss to overlook in your firm's plan: mental health. In addition to exacerbating pre-existing mental health issues, the pandemic caused increased chronic stress, anxiety, depression and trauma, research shows. Therefore, in addition to planning the logistics of a safe return to the office, also think about the impact of the past year on your workforce's mental health. Considering the emotional toll and possible post-traumatic stress of the pandemic on your workforce will enable your firm to make available new resources. Targeted resources will support all team members in their performance efficacy; they will also provide additional help for those who may be struggling to integrate yet another change.

It should be noted that healing from trauma—feeling physically and/or emotionally overwhelmed without enough resources to feel safe—takes time and often professional help. When we have experienced trauma, including the direct or vicarious trauma associated with the pandemic, it doesn't just “go away” when the traumatizing event is over. Some on your team may need specialized help to recover. Time will tell how the collective trauma of going through

a pandemic impacts our families, workspaces and communities, so the kinds of help needed will undoubtedly change over time.

## **Lawyers, Too?**

If you are reading this and thinking, “Lawyers can think their way out of difficult situations; didn’t the pandemic impact them less than most people?” or “Lawyers’ jobs are full of stress; shouldn’t they be prepared to deal with the additional stress of returning to the office?” No, is the likely answer to both questions.

The way lawyers think and our ability to separate ourselves from our emotions may make it more difficult for us to make a rapid recovery from the setbacks associated with the pandemic. We may find it challenging to process difficult emotions, think optimistically about change and work toward a rapid recovery plan. As attorneys, we are taught to issue spot and plan for the worst to mitigate loss for our clients.

The skill of staying vigilant for real or imaginable dangers may impact both team members’ resilience and their optimism about a successful return-to-the-office plan. Your attorneys, including those on your management team, will easily discern the risks associated with returning to the office. While on one hand, this glass-half-empty thinking may be useful to prevent loss and avoid unnecessary mistakes, it may also lead to “paralysis by analysis,” putting up unnecessary roadblocks to reuniting in person and preventing a smooth transition.

Most of us went through the pandemic with a great deal of emotional disorientation—not understanding what was happening to us or to the people around us. In my experience, most attorneys act as if we have it all together, thinking that something is wrong with us if we feel overwhelmed or confused. We believe we are alone in our experience. An important part of recovering our resilience and coming back to the office stronger is understanding what happened to us, knowing that how we feel is normal and realizing that others are experiencing the same.

## **Surge Capacity**

The first key to success is to recognize that returning to the office will be different for different people. In the same way that some people have adapted and fared well through the pandemic while others have struggled, some members of your workforce will transition with ease back to the office while others will require effort. When talking with team members about returning, it’s helpful to talk with them about and gauge their “surge capacity.”

In this context, the concept of surge capacity relates to an individual’s capacity to adapt to survive a short-term, intensely stressful situation. For example, when the pandemic began, your surge capacity likely helped you to shift the way you socialize, work, connect with others, shop and exercise. You may have felt capable of making changes because you felt energized for a short-term shift.

However, as the year went on and the pandemic persisted, your surge capacity likely diminished. You may have felt fatigued by all the changes and lacked enthusiasm or patience for keeping them up for the long haul. At some points you may have pushed yourself emotionally and psychologically to keep up with the modifications. For most of us, our surge capacity was depleted by months of intense stress. After such a long haul with no respite to the stress, many of us may still be depleted and ill-prepared for the strain of returning to the office.

I discussed the concept of diminished surge capacity in remote resilience and burnout prevention trainings last fall. The concept resonates for many attorneys and firm managers. As lawyers, we “get” surge capacity: We use it to mobilize and push through when preparing for big trials or other urgent matters under pressure. After the matter is resolved, there is generally a moment to reset. Pandemic-related stress, however, has been relentless, and numerous attorneys share that they are struggling to understand why they are so exhausted now when they were going strong a few months back.

Many are searching for tools to rebuild their stamina so they can return to the office clear-headed and motivated. Some training participants shared their experience of diminished surge capacity due to the isolation they felt working at home. At first, they found the isolation novel and turned their solitude into productivity—cleaning the basement, doing online exercise classes, connecting with loved ones and the office over Zoom. Over time, however, these makeshift ways of engaging in life and connecting with others became less interesting and even exhausting.

Other participants—often those who were already experiencing chronic stress, teetering on the edge of burnout or going through a personal crisis prior to the pandemic—shared that they went into emotional collapse at the beginning of the pandemic. Their surge capacity was already low, and the shock and stress of the pandemic pushed them into overload right away. Some of the attorneys who collapsed early on are still struggling; they shared that they are exhausted from trying to stay physically well, emotionally afloat and financially stable this past year. Their surge capacity may be at an all-time low, and they may feel put upon to have to return to work and draw on nonexistent inner resources.

Some who collapsed at the outset may actually experience their surge capacity stronger now than it was a year ago. The pandemic may have been an opportunity for them to focus their attention on their mental health and get the support they needed. Attorneys who had a positive mental health shift during the pandemic share that they are concerned about losing their new edge by returning to old unhealthy habits when they go back to the office. They feel leery about an in-person setup, as they have adjusted well to a work-at-home routine. It is likely that your team members whose surge capacity for isolation waned will feel enthused to return to the office. Attorneys and staff who thrive on in-person connection shared that they are eager to re-engage in person, socialize with colleagues in the hallways and see clients face to face. Other team members whose surge capacity for working at home diminished due to the challenges of making their home environment appear professional may also be relieved. These team members might have been overwhelmed by their dining room tables becoming desks or having to stay vigilant to the mute button to block out crying children or barking dogs. They may look forward to a clearer boundary between work and home, and not have the reminder of work in their living space.



In addition, some working parents may be relieved to return to the office where they can focus and be free from splitting their attention between legal matters and parenting.

## **Everything Is Not "Back to Normal"**

As your workforce returns to the office, on the outside it may appear that little has changed. In-office operations may even look and run “normally” on the surface. But don’t let outward appearances deceive you; a lot may be going on under the surface. No one went through the past year of the pandemic—and the accompanying social and political strains—without experiencing additional stress. Many people’s nervous systems and mindset will not yet be recovered from a year of uncertainty, loss and change. When implementing a return-to-the-workspace plan, firm managers should not only account for the fact that people may still be experiencing varying degrees of post-traumatic stress, but they may also have undergone a life perspective shift that impacts their motivation to work the way they used to. Many lawyers’ and employees’ outlook on life, including their values, goals and aspirations, have shifted over the past year.

For example, many attorney-parents shared that, after spending extended daytime hours at home with their families, they realized they spent too much time away from home pre-COVID. They felt sad about missing out on important moments in their children’s lives. Other attorneys noted that they liked working alongside their significant others and felt happier overall doing things together. These attorneys may now lament the loss of close connection with their families. These feelings may impact their motivation to work long hours.

Other attorneys and business staff shared that they experience decision-making fatigue and are exhausted from navigating hundreds of micro-choices each day about staying safe from an invisible virus. These individuals may be overwhelmed by the thought of returning to work—including having to make another round of decisions regarding vaccines, work travel and child care. This increased anxiety may impact their ability to focus on work and meet deadlines as they return to the office.

Additionally, firm managers should consider that most team members have conditioned themselves to stay physically distant from acquaintances and colleagues this past year. By forming this new habit, their nervous systems likely developed an aversion to being physically close to those outside their “pods.” Even the sight of friends hugging on television made one of my clients’ body tense up and unconsciously feel like the characters were doing something “wrong.”

The proximity of co-workers in office workspaces may feel unnaturally close and even threatening to your workforce’s nervous systems, even with additional space between workstations. This aversion to physical closeness may trigger neurobiological defenses and cause team members to consciously or unconsciously withdraw both physically and socially at work. This impulse to withdraw may impact in-person collaboration, fostering of workplace morale and looking relaxed during in-person meetings.



## A Clear, Flexible Plan

A clear plan, flexible choices, robust resourcing and resilience training are additional keys to a successful return to the office. Whether team members are excited or reticent about returning to the workspace, most people will have some amount of uncertainty about going back to the office. Many will wonder if it is truly safe and what will be required of them. Feeling anxious about transitions is normal, especially when a person doesn't have enough information about the transition plan to feel safe. If your firm hasn't yet thought through the return-to-office policies—including your firm's expectations regarding vaccinations—do so before communicating with your workforce about returning to the workspace.

That said, don't wait too long to create and discuss a plan with your team members: One tactic that quells anxiety about transitions is to communicate as much information about the plan as soon as possible. Provide written material about the firm's back-to-the-office plan. Lay out what will be the same and what will be different. List the things for which you don't yet have answers and acknowledge the challenges being faced; identifying what isn't yet decided but is in the works can also calm anxiety.

Another approach that can quiet an anxious nervous system is reassurance and appreciation. When possible, when communicating about the back-to-office transition, reassure your workforce about job stability during the transition, and share verbal and written appreciation for your workforce's flexibility in adapting to so many changes. Firm managers should also relax by remembering that it's all right for management to not know the answers to everything—remember there is no playbook written for returning to the office after a pandemic.

Giving your team members options can help calm agitated nervous systems. The pandemic left many people feeling like they are out of control, and as a result they may still be experiencing increased anxiety or depression, which, unmitigated, can impact work performance and client satisfaction. Offering team members choices is a practical way to help them recover and regain a sense of control over their lives.

Depending on your firm's specific circumstances, when possible, offer options such as a staggered return to the office or a hybrid setup such as half days or a partial week in office for the first few months to help people slowly acclimate. Management may also want to consider offering the option for employees to continue to work at home; some people actually performed *better* at home. Team leaders may have noticed who was particularly productive during the pandemic.

If you notice that certain team members are resisting returning to the office, speak to them directly about their concerns. Discuss firm resources, offer options and ask them if they need additional help. Take into consideration that some people, especially those experiencing post-traumatic stress, may need to move more slowly back to the office than others.

Offering firm-wide resources targeted toward mental and physical well-being is imperative to replenish team members' drained surge capacity and help them orient to a post-pandemic workplace. These include any program or materials that support your workforce to recover from

stress and trauma, build resilience and foster healthy coping skills to deal with general or post-pandemic-specific stress. Offering programs targeted toward well-being creates new ways for people to connect upon returning to the office.

For example, many firms are planning to launch well-being task forces to provide programming for stress reduction or are conducting firm-wide needs assessments to determine the kinds of resources needed. (If your firm conducted a needs assessment pre-COVID, know that your workforce's needs may have shifted during the pandemic and it's now timely to conduct a new one.) Other firms are expanding and customizing their employee assistance programs to provide one-on-one health and finance coaching or are contracting with private resilience coaches. Resilience coaching allows participants to learn the core concepts of resilience-building in group trainings and then tailor the tools for their personal situation in one-on-one sessions.

Firms may be able to build on at-home well-being momentum that emerged during the pandemic. For example, numerous people started exercising more, eating lunch and getting outside. These simple activities support both mental health and lawyering skills such as creative problem solving and cognitive functioning. Think about ways to encourage mental and physical health breaks during the workday at your office, such as a lunchtime walking club, yoga classes or meditation breaks. Encourage people through your office culture to eat lunch away from their desks by having a "lunch club" that meets outside, or continue to do Zoom lunches to virtually connect colleagues in multiple locations.

## **Creating a Surge Capacity Toolkit**

Focus firm-wide training and CLEs on resilience education and on creating a surge capacity toolkit. Well-being resources and programming can be small things that don't have to cost a lot of money. The key to building resilience and rebuilding surge capacity is what I refer to as "mini-moments of well-being"—infusing small but consistent spurts of wellness throughout the workday.

It dawned on many law firms during the pandemic that their lawyers were lacking the proper education about how to stay resilient and replenish their surge capacity in general, and especially during a prolonged crisis. Resilience training can be effective using a neuroscience lens, providing both the theory regarding our neurobiological response to stress along with simple, scientifically researched resilience tools that can be practiced in one-minute increments during the workday.

Short, simple practices help people refuel their surge capacity, build their resilience and improve their cognitive functioning. In short, they feel better and lawyer better. Many find that the blending of scientific theory and short, targeted stress-reduction tools works well for our lawyer brains. Armed with theory and a simple resilience toolkit, lawyers who are looking for support are quick to implement the skills and reap the rewards. If your firm offers resilience training that is tailored to lawyers and support staff as you ramp up back to the office or upon returning, it will address two things: helping your workforce recover from the trauma of the pandemic *and* building lifelong skills that prevent burnout and increase productivity.

## **Moving Through the Next Phase**

As we move through this next phase of life after the pandemic, know that we are still navigating a lot of unknowns, and there are still many choices to be made. If you are wondering what to do to support your workforce's mental health, assume that others are wondering too. None of us has all the answers, and no firm is totally prepared or completely confident about its path forward. Reach out for advice from outside experts or other firms on how to best move forward. The pandemic may shift our legal culture from feeling uncomfortable talking about mental health to normalizing it as a necessary part of lawyering well. Imagine what it would be like to provide training for team leaders on talking to team members about post-traumatic stress.

Incorporating offerings that support mental health and grow both resilience and surge capacity is a cutting-edge way of doing business. It is also a more productive and effective way to run your firm. Be clear with your policies, as flexible as you can with return-to-office options and as generous as you can with resourcing. Through this process, your team can orient to what's happening now, make a solid plan and move forward with greater confidence. A firm that is mental-health-informed and unites to implement mini-moments of well-being throughout the workday is best prepared to traverse the uncertainties of the now and those to come.

### **Laura Mahr**

#### **Founder**

Laura Mahr is a North Carolina lawyer, an Oregon lawyer and the founder of Conscious Legal Minds LLC ([consciouslegalminds.com](http://consciouslegalminds.com)), providing mindfulness-based wellness coaching, training and consulting for attorneys, law offices and bar associations nationwide. Her work is informed by 13 years of practice as a civil sexual assault attorney, 25 years as a student and teacher of mindfulness and yoga, a love of neurobiology and neuropsychology, and a passion for resilience. She is author of the "Pathways to Well-being" column for the *North Carolina State Bar Journal*, and the "Mindful Moment" column for the North Carolina Lawyer Assistance Program *Sidebar* publication. [info@consciouslegalminds.com](mailto:info@consciouslegalminds.com)



## Stress Management Tools and Tips

1. **Breathing** – There are many different ways to do this. The most important part is to breathe slowly and deeply. It is the fastest and best way to communicate with the nonverbal part of your brain.

<http://www.drweil.com/drw/u/ART00521/three-breathing-exercises.html>  
<http://cdn.marksdailyapple.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/NPRDeepBreathing.mp3>

**APPS- Breathe2Relax**
2. **Meditation** - It rewards your brain and changes your brain’s wiring in positive ways that to tend toward contentment.

[http://www.nmr.mgh.harvard.edu/~britta/SUN\\_July11\\_Baime.pdf](http://www.nmr.mgh.harvard.edu/~britta/SUN_July11_Baime.pdf)  
<http://palousemindfulness.com/selfguidedMBSR.html>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iZljDtHUsRO>

**APPS – Insight Meditation Timer, Buddhify, Headspace, Zazn**
3. **Avoid isolation; connect with family and friends** - Social connectedness is vitally important. It helps to reduce the effects of stress on brain and body; Good hormones (e.g., oxytocin) are released.

<http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-living/stress-management/in-depth/social-support/art-20044445?pg=2>
4. **Exercise** – It’s good for your body: it helps reduce stress, combats anxiety and depression, improves cognitive functioning, improves memory, and enhances mood. Good hormones (endorphins) are released – aka “the runner’s high.” *Spark: Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain*, John Ratey (2013)

<http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-living/stress-management/in-depth/exercise-and-stress/art-20044469>
5. **Take a fun class** – Learn something new, exercise the creative side of your brain; have a scheduled time for your class, prepay for it; E.g., Guitar Lessons, Dog Agility Class, Knitting Class, Tai Chi, Toastmasters, Poetry Writing. Something that is new, different, and that you look forward to - especially with a friend! No homework!

<http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2014/11/06/crafting-knitting.aspx>  
<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/mental-downtime/>
6. **Volunteer** – It lowers stress, contributes to a sense of well-being, and improves physical health as well!

<http://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/volunteering-may-be-good-for-body-and-mind-201306266428>

7. **Power song** – Taking breaks is really important for your brain. You can use listening to a song as a meditation or to pump you up! (Choose “We Will Rock You” not “Who Let the Dogs Out.”) Join a choir. It does awesome things for you!  
<http://www.cnn.com/2013/04/15/health/brain-music-research/>  
<http://www.unr.edu/counseling/virtual-relaxation-room/releasing-stress-through-the-power-of-music>  
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/health/news/10496056/Choir-singing-boosts-your-mental-health.html>
8. **Humor break** – Breaks are vitally important and if you can combine that with some laughter, you have provided your body and your brain with some much needed feel-good time. Laughing stimulates many organs, activates your stress response, and then relaxes your body systems. Laughing also strengthens your immune system.  
<http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-living/stress-management/in-depth/stress-relief/art-20044456>  
<http://www.healthsystem.virginia.edu/pub/feap/work-slife/newsletters/Humor%20and%20Stress.pdf>
9. **Spirituality, religion, and connecting with nature** - Spirituality, organized religion, or just communing with nature can help to foster a sense of meaning and purpose (and offer perspective when you are wrapped up in the minutiae of torts, trademarks, or taxation). Being in nature or at least looking out a window at some nature is great for your brain. Light increases serotonin – one of our neurochemicals that helps mood and fights depression. Benefits of being outside: increased attention, focus, and memory; lowered stress, and reduced brain fatigue.  
<http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-living/stress-management/in-depth/stress-relief/art-20044464>
10. **Pets** – if you have pets, try to maximize your interactions with them; this increases our feel-good hormones, lowers stress levels, and lowers blood pressure. If you don’t have pets, you can volunteer to walk dogs at the Humane Society or go visit someplace with a fish tank!  
<http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/education/story/2012-05-13/dogs-stress-relief-on-campus/54921444/1>  
<http://hyper.ahajournals.org/content/38/4/815.full>
11. **Commitment & accountability** – We are more likely to do pretty much everything if we have another person we feel accountable to. So, get a gym buddy, a walking or running partner, a meditation buddy, a movie break buddy. You get the point!  
**APPS-** <https://www.stickk.com/>
12. **Read-** Reading for pleasure can help relax you and reduce stress.  
<http://www.takingcharge.csh.umn.edu/tips-change/reading-stress-relief>

13. **Intimacy** – Healthy intimate relationships can be a huge source of support in high stress times; physical contact with other people (even something as simple as a hug or a pat) releases oxytocin in our brains (that’s good) and reduces stress and anxiety (that’s also good).  
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=128795325>  
<http://psychcentral.com/blog/archives/2014/03/10/the-surprising-psychological-value-of-human-touch/>
14. **Gratitude** – It’s good for our well-being to make a practice of appreciation. It is also a state of being that increases our social connections.  
<http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/pdfs/GratitudePDFs/2Wood-GratitudeWell-BeingReview.pdf>  
[http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how\\_gratitude\\_can\\_help\\_you\\_through\\_hard\\_times](http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how_gratitude_can_help_you_through_hard_times)
15. **Savoring practice** – Our brain has a *negativity bias*. Bad experiences stick in our memories while positive experiences flow through like water through a sieve. You can shift your brain toward positivity by savoring a positive moment for just 10-30 seconds. This attention to the positive cements those moments in our memories just like the negative moments.  
[http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/10\\_steps\\_to\\_savoring\\_the\\_good\\_things\\_in\\_life](http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/10_steps_to_savoring_the_good_things_in_life)
16. **Diet** – Quick Tips: (1) Hunger hurts Concentration → eat breakfast (oatmeal is a natural brain food); (2) Good Foods = Alertness → spinach, broccoli, and beans are great alertness foods; (3) Good Glucose = Good Memory → complex carbs (e.g., green veggies, whole grains, beans, lentils, peas and potatoes) provide steady source of glucose, avoiding sugar spikes. Comfort foods (chips, candy bars, pastries) work ok in the moment, but can cause blood-sugar fluctuations that can increase stress and mood swings.  
<http://www.helpguide.org/articles/diet-weight-loss/emotional-eating.htm>  
<http://www.webmd.com/food-recipes/healthy-foods-eat-brain-power>  
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-science-willpower/201111/stress-sugar-and-self-control>
17. **Sleep** – Sleep deprivation and elevated stress hormones tend to be related. Healthy Tips: Stick to a sleep schedule; develop a relaxing pre-bedtime ritual; exercise daily; avoid alcohol/drugs, tobacco, caffeine, and heavy meals before bedtime; have a bedroom that is cool, quiet, and dark. Sweet Dreams!  
<http://sleepfoundation.org/>  
<http://www.webmd.com/sleep-disorders/guide/tips-reduce-stress;>  
<http://consumer.healthday.com/encyclopedia/stress-management-37/stress-health-news-640/sleep-deprivation-and-stress-646063.html>

18. **Self-Awareness** – Our daily lives are filled with innumerable things, people, obligations, and responsibilities competing for our attention. Add to this the demands of practicing law, ( or studies and preparation for a Bar Exam) and you quickly realize that our self and our thoughts, feelings, and emotions are often totally ignored. Practicing self-awareness simply means stopping and taking time to inwardly reflect on ourselves and what is going on within us in the present moment. For example, are we angry, tired, anxious, fearful, or sad, etc.? When we practice self-awareness, in a compassionate, non-self-blaming way, we are more likely to avoid unwanted stress-induced behaviors and reactions, more likely to regulate our emotions in a healthy way, and more likely to develop an understanding of ourselves and our thoughts, feelings, and emotions. Meditation, mindfulness, yoga, journaling, and Tai Chi are practices that people often use to increase their self-awareness.  
<http://www.rebeccaanhalt.com/self-awareness-and-stress-relief/>  
<http://www.turn-stress-into-bliss.com/self-awareness.html>
19. **Listen to your body** -- Do a *self-care body scan*: check in with yourself. Are you experiencing any aches, pains, or other discomfort? If so, your body may be telling you something like: get some exercise, eat something, cut down on the caffeine, take a time out, or call a friend? Listen to your body!  
<http://www.mindful.org/the-body-scan-practice/>
20. **Structure and schedules** – Develop regular daily habits and routines for activities that are repetitive (e.g., going to bed, getting up in morning; work times, meal times, social times, self-care times, zoning out times, etc.). Perhaps even keep a simple log, journal, or calendar to record your success in maintaining your schedule and routine; for some, a visual track record of accomplishments tends to reinforce success. Having a regular daily schedule reduces the need to make minor or routine decisions and choices. This practice: (1) eliminates needless decision-making, preserving the brain’s energy for higher level tasks (like practicing law); (2) creates a sense of control and empowerment; (3) encourages planning one’s day; (4) encourages the creation of healthy self-care habits, like exercising and visiting with family and friends.  
<http://www.rebeccaanhalt.com/schedule-more-and-stress-less/>
21. **To-Do Lists can be two-edged swords** – For some to-do lists are helpful and stress-relieving, for others they are stress-producing. The longer the list, the less likely you are to get things done. If you make a to-do list, keep it simple and relatively short (eliminate low-priority items), and don’t jump from one task to another – try to complete one item at a time. If you really like lists, consider including a “done list” at the end of the day to celebrate your accomplishments. All lists of things to do should include one or more healthy self-care activities.  
<http://www.jillkonrath.com/sales-blog/quickly-reduce-your-to-do-list>
22. **Avoid relationship drama** – If you have personal relationships that are occasionally volatile, respectfully inform the other person that all your energies right now must be focused on your self-care and you will not engage in any relationship drama – and stick to this rule. This is called *maintaining healthy boundaries*!  
[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jennifer-twardowski/6-steps-to-setting-boundaries-in-relationships\\_b\\_6142248.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jennifer-twardowski/6-steps-to-setting-boundaries-in-relationships_b_6142248.html)



## Oregon Attorney Assistance Program

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23. **Inspirational reading, dream, imagine, visualize success** – Help your brain by doing things that encourage positive thinking.  
<http://www.wisebrain.org/TakingintheGood.pdf>
24. **Do something you love** – If there is an activity that you enjoy doing right now, make sure you do not lose that as part of your proactive self-care strategy.  
[http://www.sparkpeople.com/resource/wellness\\_articles.asp?id=1657](http://www.sparkpeople.com/resource/wellness_articles.asp?id=1657)  
[http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/a\\_better\\_way\\_to\\_pursue\\_happiness](http://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/a_better_way_to_pursue_happiness)
25. **Reach out for help: Oregon Attorney Assistance Program (OAAP)** – If you have questions, concerns, or simply need to talk with someone, call or contact the OAAP @ [www.aaap.org](http://www.aaap.org); 503-226-1057.

# Self-Care Inventory

How frequently do I do the following?

0	1	2	3
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often

## Physical Self-Care

- Eat regularly (e.g., breakfast, lunch, & dinner)
- Eat healthy foods
- Exercise regularly (3 times per week)
- Get enough sleep
- Preventative medical care
- Medical care when needed
- Take time off work when sick
- Get massages
- Dance, swim, walk, run, play sports, sing, or do other physical activity you enjoy
- Take time to be sexual
- Take vacations

## Psychological Self-Care

- Decrease stress in your life
- Make time away from demands
- Write in a journal
- Read literature that is unrelated to work
- Do something at which you are not an expert or in charge
- Let others know different aspects of you
- Be curious
- Say no to extra responsibilities

## Emotional Self Care

- Connect with others whose company you enjoy
- Stay in contact with the people that matter in your life
- Love yourself
- Laugh
- Cry
- Play with animals
- Play with children
- Identify comforting activities, objects, people, relationships, places and seek them

## Spiritual Self-Care

- Spend time in nature
- Find spiritual connection or community
- Cherish optimism and hope
- Be open to not knowing
- Sing

- \_\_\_\_\_ Pray
- \_\_\_\_\_ Spend time with children
- \_\_\_\_\_ Be open to inspiration
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have gratitude
- \_\_\_\_\_ Meditate
- \_\_\_\_\_ Listen to music
- \_\_\_\_\_ Engage in artistic activity
- \_\_\_\_\_ Yoga
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have experiences of awe
- \_\_\_\_\_ Be mindful of what is happening in your body and around you
- \_\_\_\_\_ Make meanings from the difficult periods
- \_\_\_\_\_ Seek truth

**Workplace or Professional Self-Care**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Take time to eat lunch
- \_\_\_\_\_ Take time to connect with co-workers
- \_\_\_\_\_ Make quiet time to complete tasks
- \_\_\_\_\_ Identify projects or tasks that are exciting/rewarding
- \_\_\_\_\_ Set limits with clients and colleagues
- \_\_\_\_\_ Balance your workload so that you are not "overwhelmed"
- \_\_\_\_\_ Arrange your workspace so that it is comfortable and comforting
- \_\_\_\_\_ Get regular supervision and consultation
- \_\_\_\_\_ Negotiate for your needs (benefits, pay raise)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Have a peer support group

*Adapted from "Compassion Fatigue Prevention and Resiliency," J. Eric Gentry, PhD, LHC, and from "Risking Connection: A Training Curriculum for Working with Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse," Saakvitne, K.W., Gamble, S., Pearlman, L.A., Lev, B.T. (2000). Baltimore, MD: Sidran Press.*

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**Three Things Exercise**  
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**1) What are three things I could do to improve my health?**

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**2) What are three things I could do to foster my social connections?**

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**3) What are three things I can do to develop my "positivity muscle"?**

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