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BURN OUT

RECOGNIZING THE SYMPTOMS





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Letter from the Editor

“NEW YEAR, NEW ME!”

This phrase inundates social media at the beginning of the year. It seems people are seeking to change their lives and turn into better versions of themselves. People make lofty New Year’s Resolutions, and attempt to hold themselves accountable by sharing them with the world. We all know that inevitably (and usually around, let’s say—March), these resolutions, intentions, and goals may break down.

While I am not advocating being void of ambition or drive, I do see the importance of making realistic promises to yourself. It is never a positive experience to fail at a personal goal. But sometimes we set ourselves up for failure.

In this issue of WillEd, we are diving into the topic of wellness with regard to our work and personal lives. Our hope is that after you read these articles, you will be able to apply some of the things you learn to your own quest for a healthy work-life balance.

In Natalie Grigg’s article, you will learn about the impact of a poor work-life balance. Work-life balance is a difficult concept to master, and it takes effort every day. Natalie also shares a few ways for you to improve this balance. In Marissa Yaker’s article, she writes about common indicators of an unhealthy work-life balance. Jacqueline Comeau’s article is all about burnout – what it is, how to recognize it, and suggestions on preventing it. Michelle Garcia Gilbert’s article is about what lawyers and Tibetan Monks have in common. Curious? Read on to find out how!

Julia Keys’ article takes us to places we can go to relieve stress. Try adding some of these into your routine and see how they impact you. Eric Sencer’s article also talks about stress and how we can eliminate it in the workplace. The section



called “Make Their Day,” which discusses the impact that a small gesture can have on your employees, resonated with me. Sonya Brown’s article gives us some tips and tricks to manage stress in our personal and professional lives. Kayla Gooding’s article will provide you with four tools to manage your travel anxiety.

Finally, we have two of our wonderful regular articles—“Lessons from the Road” by Sally Garrison, and our “Ten Things to Know About” column by Lauren Thurmond. If you ever travel for work, Sally’s article is a must-read on ways to realistically stay well and happy on the road. This edition’s “Ten Things to Know About” column is about Justice Elena Kagan. I won’t spoil them, but will say that these facts make her an incredibly relatable figure.

We hope you enjoy this issue and that it helps you get and stay well this year. New Year - less stressed, more balanced us! 🍷

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jillian H. Wilson".

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WELLNESS


BY: SALLY GARRISON, MANAGING MEMBER
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Glad to see you back for more in 2020! I've been asked to write on wellness and, although I am surrounded by wellness options, it's something I've never been good at. My first obstacle to wellness is the fact I am a middle child; I don't like to rock the boat. Consequently, I struggle with speaking up for myself or imposing my needs and preferences on a group. I also find great comfort in my relationships and being with my friends. So, unless we are all going to get well as a codependent group, my #FOMO will often get in the way. I am also not a morning person. Lots of road warriors get up before the sun to work out and get a jump on the day. I've even heard about people who wake up to meditate. (Is that like when you wake up and decide to go back to sleep?) That said, maybe I can crack the code in #2020. I am nothing if not unreasonably optimistic.

To me, wellness is about taking care of yourself and creating a nurturing environment for yourself. It also means that you are in charge of recognizing what you need to be the best you - on the road or at home. Establishing those habits and boundaries can be a challenge in a herd environment, which is what many conferences are. We eat and drink together. We attend sessions together. We participate in excursions together. There is not a lot of room to schedule your personal self-care unless you opt out of the regularly scheduled program...and that can feel like cheating.

Working out



Yeah, yeah, yeah. We know. We are supposed to. We get it. Get off our backs already. #RealTalk: I don't want my colleagues and clients to see me post workout. Some women look healthy and happy after a workout. I'm not one of them. I look like I've been drug through a shrub back-assward on a hot summer's day. And when am I supposed to do this? Oh, yeah, 5:30 a.m. because I still have hair and makeup after a workout. That said, maybe I don't have to make workouts a personal challenge on the road. Maybe I can just make someone from my #TravelFamily take a yoga class with me. Maybe we could make a group effort out of it. Pretty sure it would be worth the price of admission. The trick is to get it scheduled in advance. Workouts don't just happen at conferences. You have to create space for them and make it part of the agenda. #BeIntentional.

Eating Right

I've seen people commit to all varieties of diets on the road: Keto, Carbless, Whole 30, Weight Watchers, Clean Eating, Vegetarian, and the list marches on into infinity. It is possible. The best advice I have for dieting on the road is plan your trip with your limitations in mind. Keep approved snacks on your person, at all times, as an emergency back-up system. Neither room service nor the hotel convenience store has diet-friendly snacks at 2:00 a.m. And that, my friends, is when bad decisions occur.

Regrouping

This one is the hardest for me. Like I said before, I find incredible joy and comfort from being around my #TravelFamily. But, I also find the large conference, loud venue, constantly upbeat, constantly engaged, in-your-face events taxing in the extreme. Sometimes, I need to take a minute, by myself, to recharge. This isn't true for everyone. So, it is tempting to try to keep up with someone who thrives in those environments; inevitably it will wear me out. My struggle is #FOMO based. I don't want to miss anything. That said, if you attend something and you are not on your A-game, is it really worth slogging through it? Maybe. Maybe not. But, if you keep doing it, you are going to burn out. Sliding into home face first is not a good look. Give yourself permission to retreat and regroup. The world will keep spinning.

Calendar management

This is another area where I have room to improve. I like being invited to events. It is a cheap source of affirmation for me, and declining invitations feels like something #MeanGirls Regina George would do. Consequently, my calendar looks like a hazing crime and contributes to my general exhaustion. I have developed a few coping protocols. First, I am good at directions, and one of my #BFFs is good at calendars. We crowd source our skill set. It takes alignment and trust, but it works for us. Second, I have started defensive scheduling. I mindfully and intentionally block off time that I need to be home or in the office. If there is an event that intrudes on that time, the default position is that I cannot accept. This has helped me avoid over-committing or double booking – which might feel like popularity at first, but will eventually make you feel like a failure. Finally, you don't have to stay for the whole event if it isn't healthy for you. Do what you are able to do comfortably, then bounce.

Community

Here is where the magic lives. Your #TravelFamily is going to show up for you and help take care of you. Tell them your weak spots, your goals, your limits. Let them in on your needs. They can help you avoid your own poor decision making and help you recover your footing when you don't avoid the poor-choice landmines. Not because they control you, but because, as a #Community, we are in this together in #2020. Let's take care of each other. **W**



10 Things to Know about United States Supreme Court Justice *Elena Kagan*

BY: Lauren Thurmond, Partner, Hutchens Law Firm LLP
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1. Justice Kagan was born in New York City in 1960 to a lawyer father and teacher mother.¹
2. Justice Kagan has never married and is the eighth Jewish United States Supreme Court Justice.²
3. Justice Kagan graduated summa cum laude from Princeton University in 1981, and earned her Master of Philosophy in Politics at Oxford University in 1983.³ She graduated magna cum laude from the Harvard Law School in 1986 and was supervisory editor of the Harvard Law Review.⁴
4. Justice Kagan served as Associate White House Counsel for President Bill Clinton from 1995 to 1996 when Abner J. Mikva, who she had clerked for from 1986 to 1987 when he was a Judge on the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, was White House Counsel for President Clinton.⁵
5. In 2003, Justice Kagan became the first woman to be Dean of Harvard Law School.⁶
6. In 2009, Justice Kagan became the first woman to be Solicitor General of the United States.⁷ In this position, her client was the United States government and her job was to defend acts of Congress and executive actions that came before the United States Supreme Court, and to decide when to appeal lower court rulings.⁸
7. Justice Kagan is the fourth woman to serve as a United States Supreme Court Justice and when she joined the Court in 2010, it was the first time there had been three sitting women justices.⁹

¹ "Kagan's a not-so-leftist liberal". Los Angeles Times. ISSN 0458-3035. Retrieved January 7, 2020. Elena Kagan Fast Facts". CNN. Retrieved January 7, 2020.

² Jilian, Fama; Wiersema, Alisa (March 23, 2013). "Supreme Court Justices' Marriages Aren't All That Traditional". ABC News. Retrieved January 7, 2020. Scherer, Michael (May 10, 2010). "Court Nominee Elena Kagan: Let the Scrutiny Start". Time. Archived from the original on September 15, 2010 by Wikipedia. Retrieved January 7, 2020.

³ Who's Who In America (2008). "Elena Kagan – WhosWhoInAmerica.Com". Marquis. Archived from the original on February 4, 2009 by Wikipedia. Retrieved January 7, 2020. Elena Kagan Fast Facts". CNN. Retrieved January 7, 2020.

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⁷ Elena Kagan Fast Facts". CNN. Retrieved January 7, 2020.

⁸ Barnes, Robert (May 13, 2010). "In Elena Kagan's work as solicitor general, few clues to her views". The Washington Post. ISSN 0190-8286. Retrieved January 7, 2020. Elena Kagan Fast Facts". CNN. Retrieved January 7, 2020. Obama picks Kagan for Supreme Court – Supreme Court". NBC News. Associated Press. May 11, 2010. Retrieved January 7, 2020.

⁹ Elena Kagan Fast Facts". CNN. Retrieved January 7, 2020.

8. Justice Kagan had no prior experience as a judge at the time she joined the United States Supreme Court and was the first person appointed to the Court without any prior experience as a judge since Justice Rehnquist and Justice Powell joined the Court in 1972.¹⁰ She was a law clerk for Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall from 1987 to 1988 and his nickname for her was “Shorty.”¹¹

9. Retired Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor wrote a Time magazine article about Justice Kagan in 2013 as part of Time's 100 Most Influential People in the World annual list which described Kagan as having what it takes to be a “highly influential Supreme Court Justice” because she is “an incisive legal thinker” and “excellent communicator with the kind of crisp and direct style that will make her persuasive not only among her colleagues but also among the Court's broader audience.”¹²

10. Before joining the Supreme Court, Justice Kagan was known to play poker and basketball.¹³ She has been characterized by her former Harvard colleagues, teachers, and friends as having “a razor sharp mind...matched by a bright sense of humor, graciousness, thoughtfulness, and patience, along with a love of sports.”¹⁴ **W**

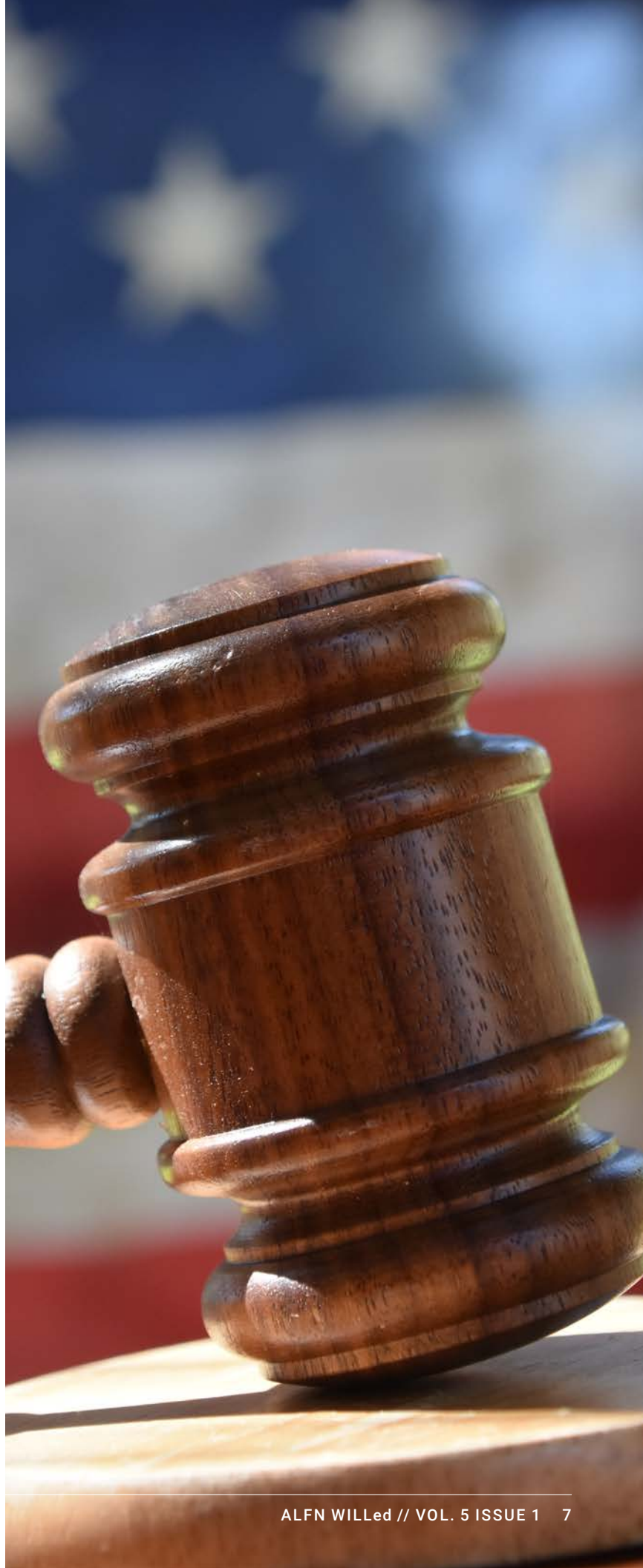
¹⁰Baker, Peter (May 2, 2010). “Obama Is Said to Choose Elena Kagan for the Supreme Court”. The New York Times. Retrieved January 7, 2020. [Obama picks Kagan for Supreme Court – Supreme Court](#). NBC News. Associated Press. May 11, 2010. Retrieved January 7, 2020.

¹¹Justice Marshall was 6'2 and Justice Kagan is 5'3. [Elena Kagan Fast Facts](#). CNN. Retrieved January 7, 2020.

¹²O'Connor, Sandra Day (April 18, 2013). “The 2013 TIME 100”. Time. ISSN 0040-781X. Retrieved January 7, 2020.

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¹⁴Kraft, Brooks (August 5, 2010). “Colleagues recall Kagan's years at Harvard”. Harvard.edu. Archived from the original on July 20, 2018 by Wikipedia. Retrieved January 7, 2020.



BURNOUT

RECOGNIZING THE SYMPTOMS

WHAT IS BURNOUT?

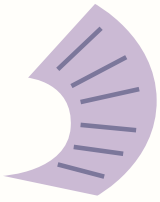
Burnout is a familiar term used by most people, but until recently, burnout has not been formally recognized by the medical community. The World Health Organization (“WHO”) defined burnout broadly as a “state of vital exhaustion” under the classification of “Problems related to life-management difficulty” in the International Classification of Diseases for Mortality and Morbidity Statistics, Tenth Revision (ICD-10). Medical providers use ICD to communicate, invoice, and receive reimbursement for illnesses.

In 2019, WHO redefined burnout and listed it under “Problems associated with employment or unemployment” in ICD-11 as: “Burn-out is a syndrome conceptualized as resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed. It is characterized by three dimensions: 1) feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion; 2) increased mental distance from one’s job, or feelings of negativism or cynicism related to one’s job; and 3) reduced professional efficacy. Burn-out refers specifically to phenomena in the occupational context and should not be applied to describe experiences in other areas of life.”

WHO does not classify burnout as a medical condition; however, it refers to it as “phenomena in the occupational context,” and for the first time, the expanded definition links burnout specifically to the workplace environment.

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CAUSES OF BURNOUT

Stress is experienced, processed and managed uniquely by each person based on their unique life circumstances, and there is no single cause of burnout that applies to every situation and every person equally. However, possible contributors to burnout include:

WORK-RELATED CONTRIBUTORS⁽²⁾:

- The feeling of no control over work
- Lack of recognition or reward for good work
- Unclear or overly demanding job expectations
- Monotonous or unchallenging work
- A chaotic or high-pressure work environment

TECHNOLOGY-RELATED CONTRIBUTORS:

- Never disconnecting from work mobile devices. Always accessible.
- Failure to recognize and respect proper boundaries when communicating (after-hours or vacation contact for non-critical requests, etc.).
- Lack of human/social connection due to email/texts
- Access to endless information results in distractibility and information overload.

LIFESTYLE CONTRIBUTORS:

- Working too much, without enough time for socializing or relaxing
- Lack of close, supportive relationships
- Taking on too many responsibilities, without enough help from others
- Lack of sleep

PERSONALITY TRAITS CONTRIBUTORS:

- High-achieving, Type A personality
- Perfectionistic tendencies; nothing is ever good enough
- Derived much of identity and meaning from work
- The need to be in control; reluctance to delegate to others

Adapted from: helpguidewp. (2018, December 27). Burnout Prevention and Treatment.

THE STAGES OF BURNOUT SYNDROME SYMPTOMS

Knowing the symptoms of burnout and paying attention to the physical, cognitive, or emotional indicators that burnout is developing is critical to prevention.

Burnout occurs on a continuum, and the range of symptoms can morph with each stage of severity. In other words, burnout is not like having the flu. No one goes to bed healthy and wakes up in the morning with burnout. Further, recovering from burnout is a long-term process. It doesn't go away after a lazy weekend at home, sleeping, indulging in comfort food and watching endless hours of the latest binge-worthy Netflix show. Often, the symptoms creep up on the unsuspecting victim who overlooks, minimizes, or dismisses the warning



signs unknowingly. The symptoms are increasingly disruptive, and failure to act early in the process results in greater physical, emotional, and life impact, and therefore, a longer recovery period.

Ambitious, driven, 'perfectionist' personalities are especially susceptible to burnout because they ignore the signals the body and mind are sending. They dismiss the symptoms as temporary, increase pressure on themselves to "toughen up" and perform, convince themselves it will be better "when...[insert justification here...when the project finished, or the new employee gets trained, etc.] and then double down on work by taking on more projects and working longer hours to avoid disappointing themselves or others. This denial and lack of action allow burnout to seep deeper into their life over weeks, months, and years until they hardly recognize the person they've become.

SYMPTOMS OF BURNOUT

So how do you know if you are experiencing burnout? Consider these symptoms of burnout and how they may present in your environment. These symptoms will not exist in isolation. A person experiencing burnout will generally have multiple symptoms overlapping in various categories and varying in severity.

FATIGUE AND EXHAUSTION SYMPTOMS:

- Lack of energy and regularly feeling tired evolving to physical and emotional exhaustion, feeling drained and depleted. Difficulty waking up and a sense of dread starting the day.
- Disrupted sleep patterns and, despite feeling exhausted, have difficulty falling and staying asleep, increasing to a more persistent state of disruption, possibly insomnia excessive sleeping.

COGNITIVE SYMPTOMS:

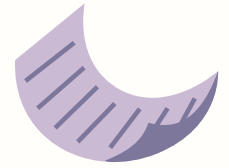
- Impaired decision-making, forgetfulness, difficulty concentrating, inability to focus, causing a decline in productivity, quality, or performance.

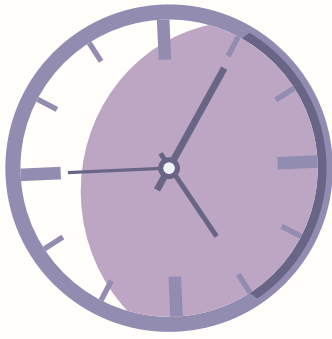
PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS:

- Chest pain, heart palpitations, shortness of breath, stomach pains, lightheadedness, headaches, and skin issues (breakouts).
- Change in eating habits causing weight gain/loss.
- The frequency and severity of illnesses increase, and recovery takes longer.

PERSONALITY/MENTAL STATE SYMPTOMS:

- Increasingly chronic anxiety, tension, and worry.
- The onset of depression, sadness, hopelessness, feelings of guilt, or worthlessness.
- Demonstrating increased irritability, impatience, moodiness, or frustration progressing to anger and outbursts.





EMOTIONAL SYMPTOMS:

- Sense of failure and self-doubt
- Feeling helpless, trapped, and defeated
- Detachment, feeling alone in the world
- Increased feelings of negativity or cynicism related to work;
- Experience apathy, emotional numbness/dullness, loss of enjoyment. Avoiding activities/interactions related to work/job that begin with work but eventually expand to other areas of life, such as family, friends, and hobbies.
- Change in attitude to pessimistic, negative self-talk, feeling that others are not reliable or trustworthy.

BEHAVIORAL SYMPTOMS:

- Loss of interest in social interactions resulting in isolation. Stay home, decline invitations, arrive at work early/leave late, or shut office door to avoid interactions.
- A general feeling disconnection from others or the environment. May call in sick often, stop returning calls and emails, or regularly come in late.
- Loss of confidence and feeling of accomplishment. Feeling ineffective, unimportant, useless, and an increasing sense of inefficiency.
- Lack of productivity, poor performance, reduced quality, incomplete projects, missed deadlines, and feeling as though to-do list will never be completed, despite increased hours spent working.



WHERE DID THE TERM BURNOUT ORIGINATE?⁽¹⁾

Psychologist Herbert Freudenberger coined the term ‘Burnout’ in his book “Burnout: The High Cost of High Achievement”, published in 1974 and born from his own experience. Freudenberger worked 12-hour days in his practice and then traveled to his clinic where he treated drug addicts often until early morning hours. Over time, this relentless schedule incapacitated him mentally, emotionally and physically. The condition reminded him of the drug addicts he treated at his clinic that would have blank stares on their face while holding cigarettes until the cigarette literally burned out in their hand.⁽¹⁾ Freudenberger went on to outline 12 stages of the Burnout Symptom Cycle as indicators of the stage or severity of a person’s burnout syndrome.

12 STAGES OF BURNOUT SYNDROME SYMPTOMS¹

1. The Compulsion to Prove Oneself; demonstrating drive and excessive ambition. Tends to hit the best employees, those with enthusiasm who accept responsibility readily.
2. Working Harder; an inability to switch off. Take on more work and fail to say 'no' or delegate.
3. Neglecting Their Needs; work continuously and neglect other areas of life. Put their own basic needs aside, insomnia/erratic sleeping, poor eating habits (skip meals, eat on the run, overeat, crave sugary foods) and lack of social interaction.
4. Displacement of Conflicts; problems are dismissed, physical symptoms may emerge like feeling threatened, panicky and jittery. Realize something is wrong but cannot identify what it is.
5. Revision of Values; work is the only focus. Become emotionally numb or dull. Values are changed, loss of interest/priority in friends and family, lose interest in hobbies.
6. Denial of Emerging Problems; become intolerant, cynical and aggressive; begin to see collaborators as stupid, lazy, demanding, or undisciplined, social contacts become draining and difficult. Problems are viewed as caused by time pressure and work, not because of life changes.
7. Withdrawal; social life small or non-existent, need to feel relief from stress, alcohol/drugs.
8. Odd Behavioral Changes; changes in behavior obvious, friends and family concerned. Relationships may become strained.
9. Depersonalization; seeing neither self nor others as valuable, and no longer perceive own needs. View life on 'auto-pilot'.
10. Inner Emptiness; feeling empty inside and to overcome this, look for activity such as overeating, alcohol, or drugs; activities are often exaggerated.
11. Depression; feeling lost and unsure, indifferent, hopeless and exhausted, future feels bleak and dark. Life loses its meaning.
12. Burnout Syndrome; can include total mental and physical collapse; time for full medical attention.



PREVENTING BURNOUT

Forming and maintaining healthy habits and boundaries will help to protect against burnout. Actions that can guard against developing burnout symptoms may include:

Recognizing and reacting to warning signs of burnout and act promptly.



Listening to trusted friends, family, or colleagues that express concern since they are most likely more objective.

Set boundaries that are reasonable and consistent. Get comfortable with saying “no,” “not now” or “no thank you.”

Introduce physical exercise.



Do not sacrifice sleep.

Participate in a hobby of a charitable organization.

Pick one day a week as unstructured ‘me’ time and guard that time diligently.

Unplug! Do not check your phone until at least an hour after you wake up in the morning and stop checking it at least one hour before bed, including social media.



Charge your phone in a room other than your bedroom to help yourself unplug.

**Change the language you use to justify working extra hours. Substitute the words “I have to...” with “I choose to prioritize...” and “I can’t..” with “It’s not a priority for me.”
It’s a powerful way to check what you ‘have to’ do.**



Do not check email after 7:00 PM. After hours urgent matters warrant a phone call. By responding immediately to every email, regardless of urgency, productivity is impaired, and it blurs the line of priorities.

If you are a manager, be considerate and respectful of employee’s after-hours time and avoid communicating with them about work unless necessary.

Establish clear lines of reporting to ensure the appropriate person handles requests.



Take a real vacation and disconnect from devices or dedicate one or two people who have access to you and can be trusted to limit contact to emergency matters only.

Talk about concerns with a qualified doctor or specialist.

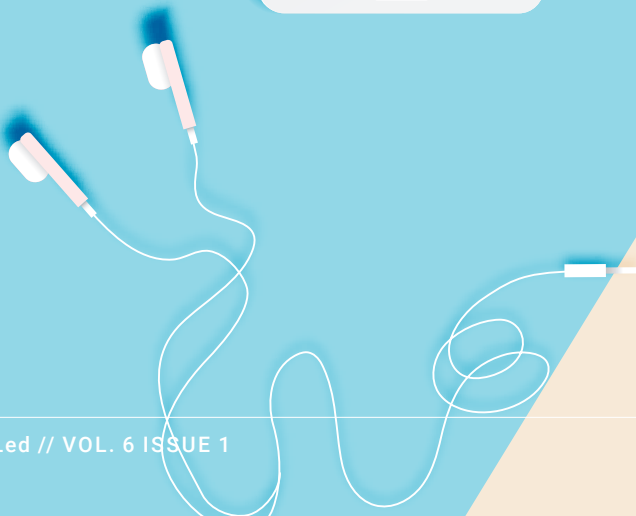
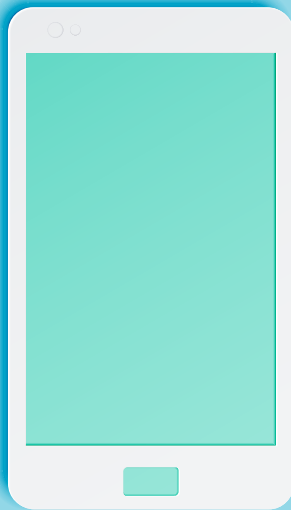


Preventing burnout is far easier than recovering from it, so pick a few habits you can implement in the first quarter of 2020 to help guard against burnout sneaking in and wreaking havoc. ^W

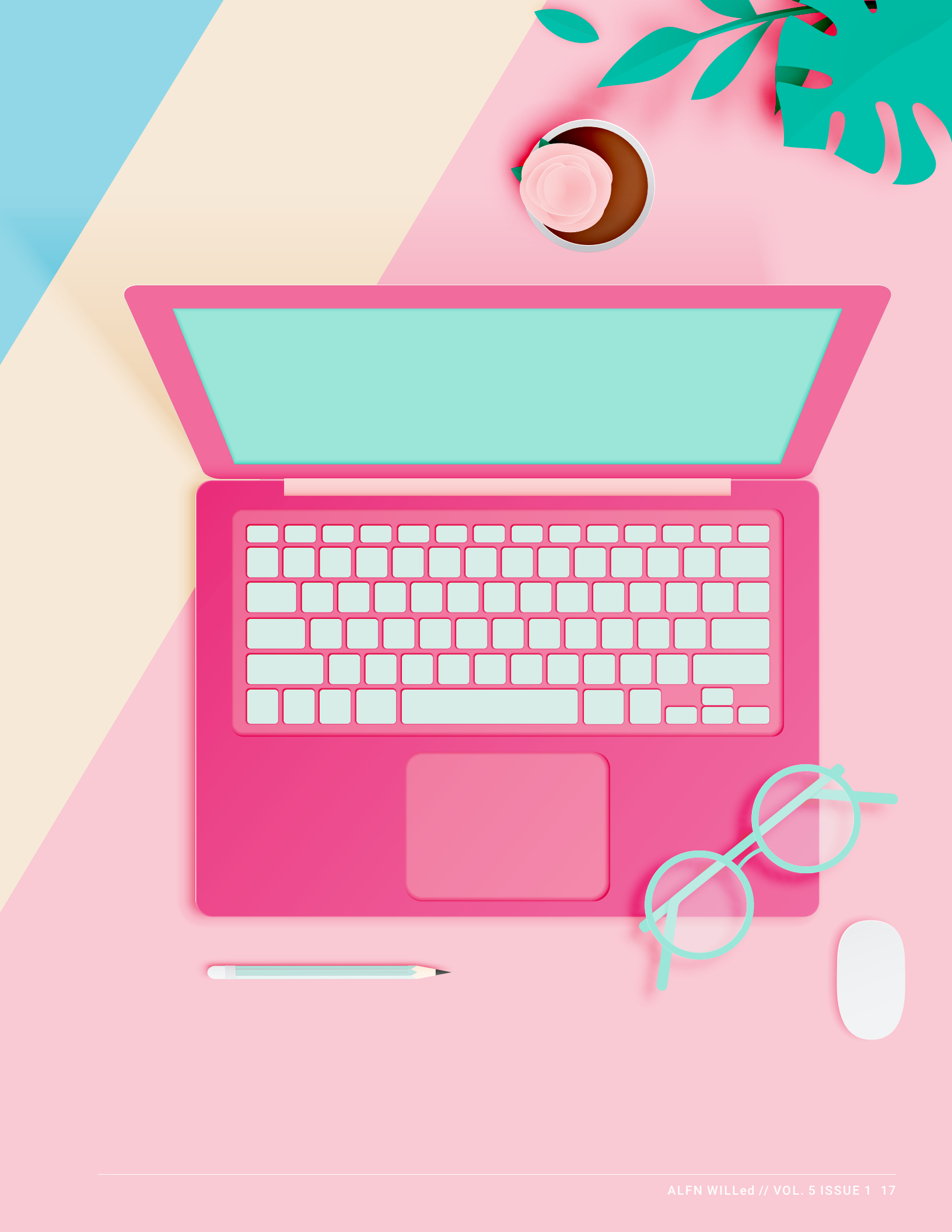
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4 Ways to Manage Travel Anxiety and Stress



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we all imagine how much fun it would be to travel the world; to meet new people and experience new cultures that we have never encountered before. So, what tends to hold most of us back? Like with every new endeavor, our minds tend to be flooded with a million different possibilities and questions; some rational while others not so much. What if I miss my flight? What if I get lost? . . . What if I forget my toothbrush? You know those nagging what-ifs about everything that could potentially go wrong as you travel. These may seem small but for some it can lead to a sense of stress and anxiety that hinders their willingness to go anywhere new. But whether your stress derives from actually traveling or what will happen when you get there, good news! – there are ways to become a less anxious traveler. Here are four tips to get you started. .

1

Make a Checklist. It's simple. If you write it down, you will not forget it. Taking the time to write out a packing or 'must haves' list will alleviate the stress of possibly leaving important items behind. I have come to learn that seeing is believing. For example, if your fear is leaving your I.D. at home, being able to double-check that box gives you comfort that it's most definitely in your purse. This will help you pace yourself properly instead of panicking over packing and losing composure when the clock strikes time to go. Validation will bring you a sense of confidence needed to travel at your best.

2

When You Can, Book in Advance. There are so many aspects of traveling that we must think and plan for when making the decision to explore somewhere unknown. Making accommodations for housing, transportation, and even events to enjoy can sometimes be overwhelming. A little practical planning beforehand can take some of the weight off to ease your stress and elevate your experience to the next level. For instance, booking your hotel weeks in advance can ease your mind by knowing you have a definite place to stay and one less financial burden during your visit.



3

Do your Research – Map it out! Anxiety often stems from feeling like you are not in control, so one way to negate this feeling is to plan out details of your upcoming trip. When making the decision to travel, I begin with a Google search. Surprisingly, planning ahead of time doesn't come naturally to everyone. But if your worries stem from unfamiliarity, then researching and reading about some basic travel logistics may go a long way. Knowing things like the travel time between the airport and your hotel, what foods to enjoy (and those to avoid), or even the weather, brings a sense of preparation needed for any newcomer. By focusing on each step, you can feel more empowered to overcome your anxiety.

4

Trust Yourself. Remember that only you know your limitations. For many people, the key is to break down your fears, examine them, and then combat them with facts. Anxiety leads to irrational thoughts and will forever have you worrying about the worst-case scenario. So, it's up to you to remember that it's okay. I have found that by acknowledging that things might go wrong is really the first step in making sure that they don't. Remember, each obstacle you successfully overcome demonstrates your ability to be a great traveler. **a**

BEING IN THE MOMENT

HOW LAWYERS AND TIBETAN MONKS CONNECT



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It is said what is old is new again, and this is true for the practice of mindfulness. The practice truly dates back thousands of years to the Hindu and Buddhist religions, going back more than 4,000 years ago and around 400- 500 BC, respectively.

A famous example of a mindfulness disciple is the Dalai Lama, the leader of Tibetan Buddhism, who teaches the path to enlightenment. In fact, mindfulness, or Sati in Buddhism, is the first step to enlightenment. At least one Buddhist monk scholar claims that mindfulness is the English translation of the Pali language word Sati.¹

Eventually, mindfulness, or simply awareness of life in the present moment, coalesced in the United States (and eventually to the legal profession) via Professor Jon Kabat-Zinn, who founded the Stress Reduction Clinic at the University of Massachusetts Medical School in 1979. Kabat-Zinn used Buddhist teachings to develop a program he named “Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction” (MBSR), and began using scientific testing to gauge the impact of this process.

Kabat-Zinn wrote this definition: “Mindfulness is the psychological process of bringing one’s attention to the internal and external experiences occurring in the present moment, which can be developed through the practice of meditation and other training.”²

Studies show that meditation, a mainstay of mindfulness, led to creation of new brain matter which contributes to improved learning, memory, self-awareness, compassion and introspection.³

What do lawyers have to do with Tibetan monks? Lately, more and more. In 2007, University of Miami law professor Scott Rogers offered one of the first continuing legal education programs that integrated neuroscience, mindfulness and the law. Entitled “Mindfulness, Balance and the Lawyer’s Brain,” it was one of the first CLE approved courses integrating mindfulness and neuroscience.⁴

Rogers advocates a “mindful” law school, citing rising rates of anxiety, depression and Suicide-ideation among law students.⁵ As many as 20% of practicing lawyers in America abuse alcohol, according to the American Bar Association. In theory, more mindful law students lead to mindful lawyers and a possible transformation of the legal community. It could start at the top: U.S. Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer practices mindfulness, and has done so for several years.

“I don’t know that what I do is meditation, or even whether it has a name. For 10 or 15 minutes twice a day I sit peacefully. I relax and think about nothing or as little as possible. And that is what I’ve done for a couple of years,” the Justice stated in 2011. He continued: “And really I started because it’s good for my health. My wife said this would be good for your blood pressure and she was right. It really works. I read once that the practice of law is like attempting to drink water from a fire hose. And if you are under stress, meditation - or whatever you choose to call it - helps. Very often I find myself in circumstances that may be considered stressful, say in oral arguments where I have to concentrate very hard for extended periods. If I come back at lunchtime, I sit for 15 minutes and perhaps another 15 minutes later. Doing this makes me feel more peaceful, focused and better able to do my work.”⁶

So, while lawyers may not exactly channel the Dalai Lama, there are a plethora of resources from which to choose a mindfulness technique or practice.⁷ And, as any advocate would say, the evidence supports the practice. So, find what works for you and do it, starting now! Happy mindfulness! **W**

¹http://www.vipassana.com/meditation/mindfulness_in_plain_english_15.php

²<https://www.umassmed.edu/cfm/about-us/people/2-meet-our-faculty/kabat-zinn-profile/>

³<https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2011/01/eight-weeks-to-a-better-brain/>


⁴<https://www.law.miami.edu/faculty/scott-l-rogers>

⁵Rogers, Scott L. (2012) “The Mindful Law School: An Integrative Approach to Transforming Legal Education,” *Touro Law Review*: Vol. 28: No. 4, Article 4. Available at: <http://digitalcommons.tourolaw.edu/lawreview/vol28/iss4/4>

⁶<http://thechart.blogs.cnn.com/2011/05/11/seeking-serenity-when-lawyers-go-zen/>

⁷<http://themindfullawyer.com/resources/index.html>

ELIMINATING STRESS IN THE WORKPLACE



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One of the chief responsibilities of great leaders in any industry is to ensure that their teams maintain a peak level of performance. Training and education, continual workflow analysis, proper procedures, and well-communicated goals are integral parts of ensuring that teams are able to perform at their highest potential. However, unless your teams show up healthy each day to work, none of that will matter.

Thankfully, many companies have invested an increasing amount of money and effort to ensure that their workplace promotes physical health. These days it's common for employers to offer such things as company sponsored on-site gyms or gym memberships, walking clubs, healthy foods options in cafeterias, on-site availability of a massage therapist and a barrage of literature and speakers touting a healthy lifestyle.

Yet, one of the greatest causes of poor health and absenteeism in the workplace is stress. Stress can be tied to headaches, heartburn, rapid breathing, increased risk of heart attack or heart issues, increased depression, insomnia, weakened immune system, high blood sugar, infertility, stomachaches, tense muscles and more. Further, stress can lead to high turnover, team dysfunction and irritability, higher amounts of internal errors and low overall productivity.

During my tenure in the loan servicing industry, I witnessed a myriad of causes for stress in the workplace. Some of the usual suspects are natural disasters, military conflicts, mergers and acquisitions, high rates of delinquency, unclear goals or understanding of success within a department, moving to a new facility, new management, changes in team distribution, new

procedures, new technology, and deadlines - I'm positive the reader can add more to this list as the causes are endless. You might be thinking: "This is nothing new, I get it. There's stress in the workplace, but what can I as a leader do about it?" I'm glad you asked.

Back in 1998, when mergers and acquisitions were at an all-time high in the banking industry, I happened to watch a video called Fish! Philosophy (there is actually a sequel called Fish! Sticks!) The video relays the story of the Pike Place Fish Market and their endeavor to become the World Famous Pike Place Fish Market. In the video the employees and managers at the market expound on the philosophy they created to help them become "World Famous." The philosophy (or Fish-osophy) contained four main tenets:

1. Choose Your Attitude
2. Be There
3. Make Their Day
4. Play

Now to be fair, the goal of the book was to help you create teams that provide better customer service. However, these same rules can be applied between a leader and their teams and can go a long way towards eliminating a big chunk of stress in the workplace. Let's look at each tenet.

CHOOSE YOUR ATTITUDE

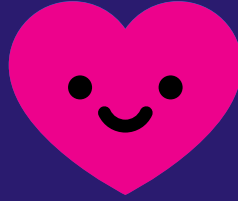
Ok, we've all seen the meme that shows how the letters of "attitude" when assigned their numerical equivalent in the alphabet equals 100 percent (so, we need a good attitude to be 100%). At the very least, I'm sure we can all agree that attitude is important to achieving success and that a team's success is a direct reflection of the attitude of the leader. In other words, if you are the leader, your team takes its attitude queues from you.

You may not realize it, but when you walk in feeling grumpy, it only takes a few moments for your entire team to know. And, like a viral sickness that spreads through the air-conditioning system, your whole team becomes infected with your grumpiness. One of the great books on attitude is by Keith Harrell, appropriately named "Attitude is Everything."

In his book Harrell points out that when a leader is asked, "How are you?" and replies by stating that his/she is miserable or stressed, the leader not only reinforces his/her own discomfort, but infects those that are listening with the same feelings. Upon his own realization of this fact, Harrell decided to maintain a stock answer whenever someone inquires as to his wellbeing. That response is, "I'm super-fantastic!"

I know we don't always (some may never) feel that way, but words have the power to modify how we feel. What if you raised your own bar? What if when someone inquired as to your well-being you responded, "Super-Fantastic!" How would that affect you personally and those you come in contact with?

Another way our words affect the attitude of our teams is how we discuss the challenges our teams are faced with. Do you chastise your teams or team members (publicly or privately) when something goes wrong or do you instill within them a belief that they are the perfect person to surmount any challenge put in front of them? Do you uplift those around you or do you speak negatively of their abilities? Remember your words will only reinforce the behavior you speak of, so choose those words wisely.



BE THERE

How often have you come in contact with leaders who only talk to you when something is wrong? Or, walk through their departments without as much as a hello. Maybe you've come across leaders who do not know the names of their employees, making little or no effort to learn them. Have you ever spoken to a leader and felt like they weren't listening to a word you said? Maybe they were on their cell phone the whole time you were speaking? How did it make you feel?

We currently live in a time where "mindfulness" is a trending buzz word. Often described as, the art of attention, this is another key to helping alleviate stress in the workplace. Let's face facts - we all like to have attention paid to us. We all want to be noticed and appreciated. When our lives lack recognition or attention we find ourselves feeling depressed, unwanted, lonely. There's no difference in the workplace.

In the 90's there was a concept called "Management by Walking Around" which was commonly referred to as MWA. Proponents of MWA believe that leaders need to leave their offices on a regular basis and wander the floor. I am not, of course, suggesting that you just wander aimlessly around the floor, but go out and connect with your teams. Take a temperature of their moods, frustrations and challenges. Stop and chat, learn about their families, their ambitions, and of course, their name! You'll find that making a personal connection often helps you to be the first to know when things go wrong or when changes need to be made. Most of all, you help alleviate stress by letting your teams know that you care about them enough to take the time out of your day to say hello.



MAKE THEIR DAY

We've talked about a couple of ways to make someone's day. But there are so many ways to do this that the subject could be its own book (actually there already are several books on this subject). Making someone's day can be as easy as walking up to someone's desk acknowledging the work they've done, sending a complimentary email, giving awards for excellent performance, gathering the team to celebrate the accomplishment of a goal, or even buying everyone an ice cream bar.

When you are in a crisis mode or in the midst of a long project, celebrating the achievement of milestones goes a long way in helping to keep the stress in check. Remember, everyone wants to be acknowledged for the work they do. The happier you make your teams the more productive, loyal, and innovative they will become.

PLAY

This seems to be one of the tenets that really bothers people. I often hear "we're too busy to play!" There are plenty of studies done that prove when employees are happy, they are more productive. For instance, the University of Oxford, UK, conducted a study that used daily surveys to track employees' daily happiness levels. The study concluded that employees who identified as happy had an average of 13% higher productivity (I've seen other studies that claim a 20% increase in productivity). What if you increased your team's productivity by 13% to 20%, while lowering absenteeism at the same time? Would you feel "super-fantastic" then?

So, how do you play in the workplace? Again, there are plenty of books on this subject, but here are some of the things I've personally witnessed or used in my career:

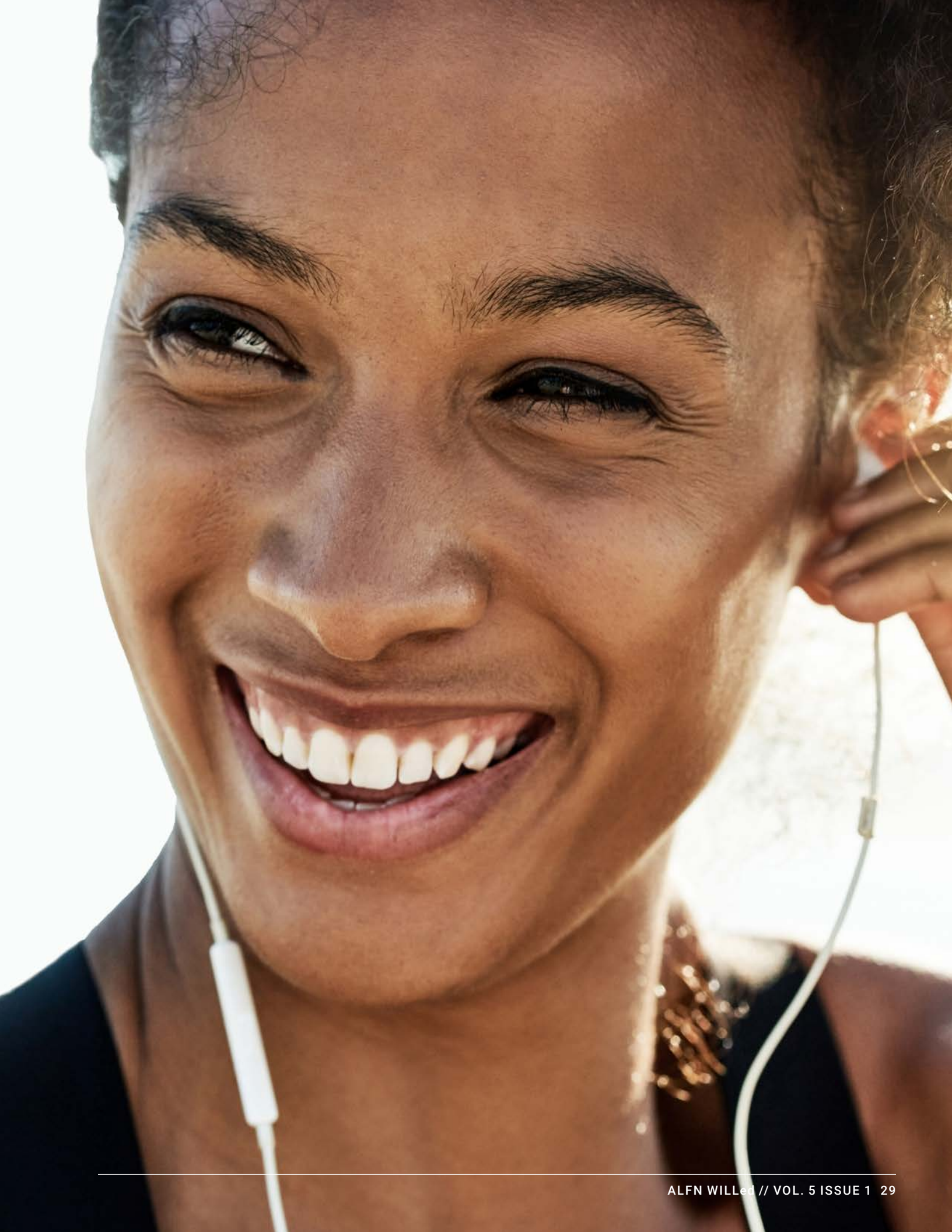
- Team Names and Posters – Gene Kranz, in his book, “Failure Is Not an Option,” discusses how team names, colors, flags, posters, patches played a role in the Apollo Program. The military uses similar techniques, have you ever wondered why? I’ve used this within loan servicing during the foreclosure crisis. Each of my teams created team names, posters or flags and decorated their area accordingly. In addition, we created a trophy that would be passed on a monthly basis to the teams with the best stats. It may sound silly, but it produced a lot of smiles (smiles = lower stress levels).
- Create Themed Events – Whether it’s to celebrate Halloween, July 4th or simply to bring summer indoors when it’s winter outside, create a competition where teams decorate their areas according to the theme and provide a prize to the best decorated area.
- Let The Games Begin – Whether it’s a mini version of the Olympics, water balloon toss, or trivia, there are endless games you can play to have fun in the office. Create games around understanding your procedures (i.e., Bankruptcy Jeopardy), or games around communication skills. Games can be informative as well as fun!
- Speakers – Bring in speakers from within your company or from the outside. Whether it’s to teach about a process, provide motivation, teach a skill or update your teams with company insight, bringing in a speaker has a way of lifting a team’s spirits.
- Leadership Training – Create a lunch bag leadership training sessions. Study leadership with your management team or even your up-and-coming leaders. Watch and discuss leadership videos, or have a leadership book club. The ideas are only limited by your imagination.

Hopefully, we can all agree that stress is unhealthy: not only for ourselves, but for our teams too. I know I covered a lot of ground here, but as you can see there are multiple ways to help alleviate stress in the workplace. Every team and company is unique. What works for one may not work for another. The key takeaway is that as a leader you are responsible for your team’s welfare and for ensuring that the company meets its goals. Having a healthy, happy team will help you not only achieve both of these objectives - it will help you exceed them! **W**

WORK-LIFE BALANCE

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The concept of work-life balance remains as elusive as ever, with the ongoing debate being whether work-life balance can be achieved or whether it is impossible. The Cambridge English Business Dictionary defines work-life balance as the amount of time you spend doing your job compared to the amount of time you spend with your family and doing things you enjoy. Work-life balance requires a prioritization of activities so that there is not a negative impact on either one's work performance or one's personal life. This also begs the question as to who is responsible for advocating for this balance. From an employer standpoint, ensuring our employees maintain some semblance of work-life balance is a benefit as it reduces the amount of time employees are sick, improves performance, and results in less health care costs. From an employee standpoint, maintaining a balance results in increased productivity, a more positive perception of an employer, greater employee loyalty, a more enjoyable workplace, and lower absenteeism.



According to a 2018 Korn Ferry Institute Survey, 76% of employees surveyed said that stress at work had a negative impact on their personal relationships, 66% said they have lost sleep due to work stress, and 16% said they had to quit a job due to stress. Work-life balance has been complicated even further by the improvements in technology, which have essentially made it possible for employers to have access to their employees on an unlimited basis. Think of it this way: 30 years ago, when you left the office, there was no way to respond to an email – you most likely would have prepared a letter that would be sent regular, first-class mail to its intended recipient. If you were out to dinner, you didn't have a phone sitting on the table, nor were you distracted by the constant buzz as emails or texts came in. Separation of work and personal life was much more distinct, whereas it has become increasingly blurred as technology connects us.

Thus, it is of no coincidence that in 2019, the World Health Organization decided to include the definition of burnout in the 11th Revision of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11) as an occupational phenomenon. For those of us who become enmeshed in our careers and lack boundaries, the concept of work-life balance not only becomes obscure but feels outright impossible.

The good news is that work-life balance is possible, but it takes some work and it includes embracing some of the chaos. Here are some tips and ideas that can help:

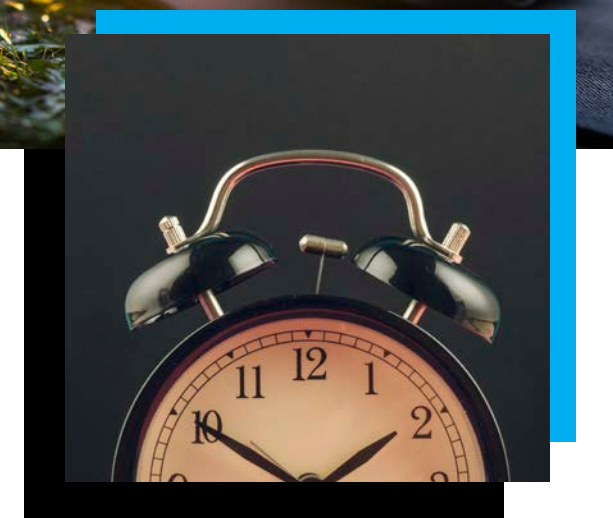


TIME MANAGEMENT

Play to your strengths – are you more productive in the morning or the afternoon? Understand what time of day is your prime time and prioritize your more difficult matters then. Schedule personal time on your calendar so that you remember to make those appointments, follow up with friends, or just have some time to do your favorite activity. Make this personal time a commitment to yourself to do something that you enjoy. Also, try to have set work hours – not always easy as an attorney. One suggestion is to make a commitment to be home for dinner a specific number of times per week.

MINDFULNESS

Mindfulness can be described as a state of being conscious or aware of something. The Oxford Dictionary defines it as a mental state achieved by focusing one's awareness on the present moment, while calmly acknowledging and accepting one's feelings, thoughts and bodily sensations. Mindfulness is a practice, and in our everyday lives where we are trying to multitask, and win the race, it is not initially an easy concept. However, by starting with short amounts of time, and reminding yourself to bring your thoughts back to the present moment, you can return to enjoying even the smallest of moments. If you are having trouble getting started, two excellent tools to try are Insight Timer app or Headspace, which provide guided meditations at varying lengths of time, to assist with focusing. However, mindfulness is



not just about meditation. It is about taking a moment – watch the snow fall, be involved in a conversation that makes you laugh so hard you cry. Not only will you see a difference in yourself, but you’ll also see more connected social interactions.

EXERCISE


The health benefits of exercise cannot be emphasized enough. According to the Mayo Clinic, the benefits of exercise include controlling weight, combatting health conditions and diseases, improving mood, boosting energy, and promoting better sleep, among others. Ultimately, this reduces stress levels and provides more balance to your day. Don’t have time to exercise? Nonsense – find a form of exercise that makes it fun or rather than eating lunch at your desk, make a commitment to walk for a half-hour during when you would normally be at your desk. Part of this is accepting that the work will be there when you return. Don’t like to walk alone? Grab a co-worker and head out together – this way you have accountability to walk and get some social interaction.

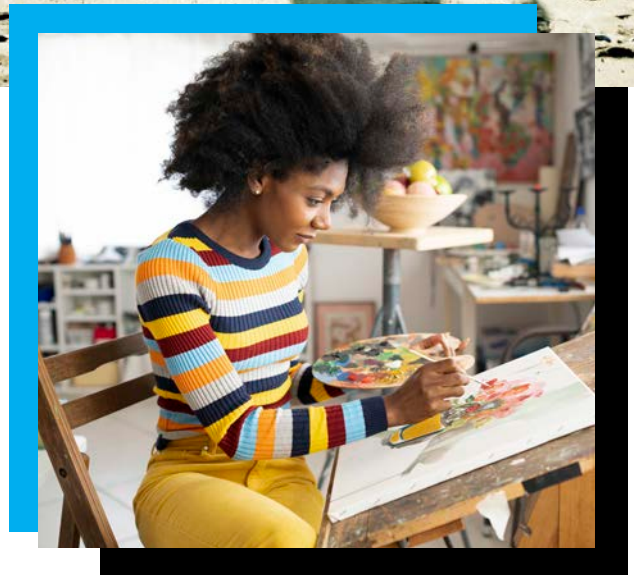
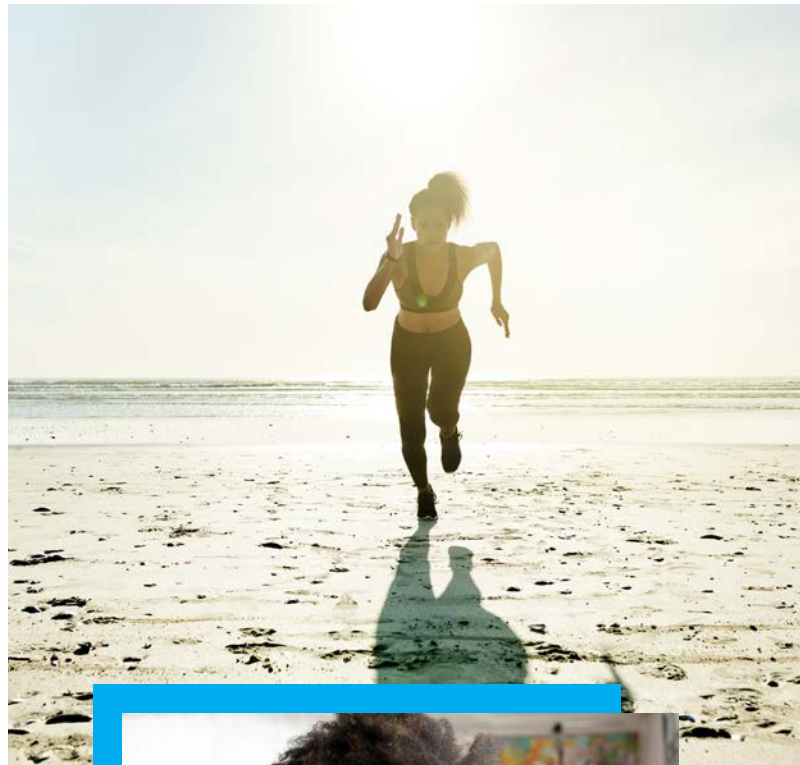
BE STRATEGICALLY SELFISH

I initially heard this concept while listening to the Brilliant Balance Podcast by Cherlyanne Skolnicki. Essentially, this concept requires looking at your life and making the decision of where you may need help- such as grocery delivery, a cleaning person, or a dog walking service, just to name a few. These are services that you invest in to save yourself time so you can focus elsewhere.

UNPLUG

As a society as a whole, we have become so dependent on technology, yet the detrimental impact it has on us is becoming increasingly publicized. The idea of unplugging from technology is not limited to leaving your phone behind. Rather, it means a full electronics detox – no television, no radio, no computer. Instead, spend time having family game nights, heading outside, getting together with friends. Start by trying it for 30 minutes each day just to see how you feel.

Work-life balance is something, like everything else in life that needs to be worked on. There is no “one size fits all” or secret sauce to how this concept plays out for each person. In fact, what works for one person may not work for another. But making a lasting commitment to work-life balance, in the end, is better for you as a person as well as those around you. 





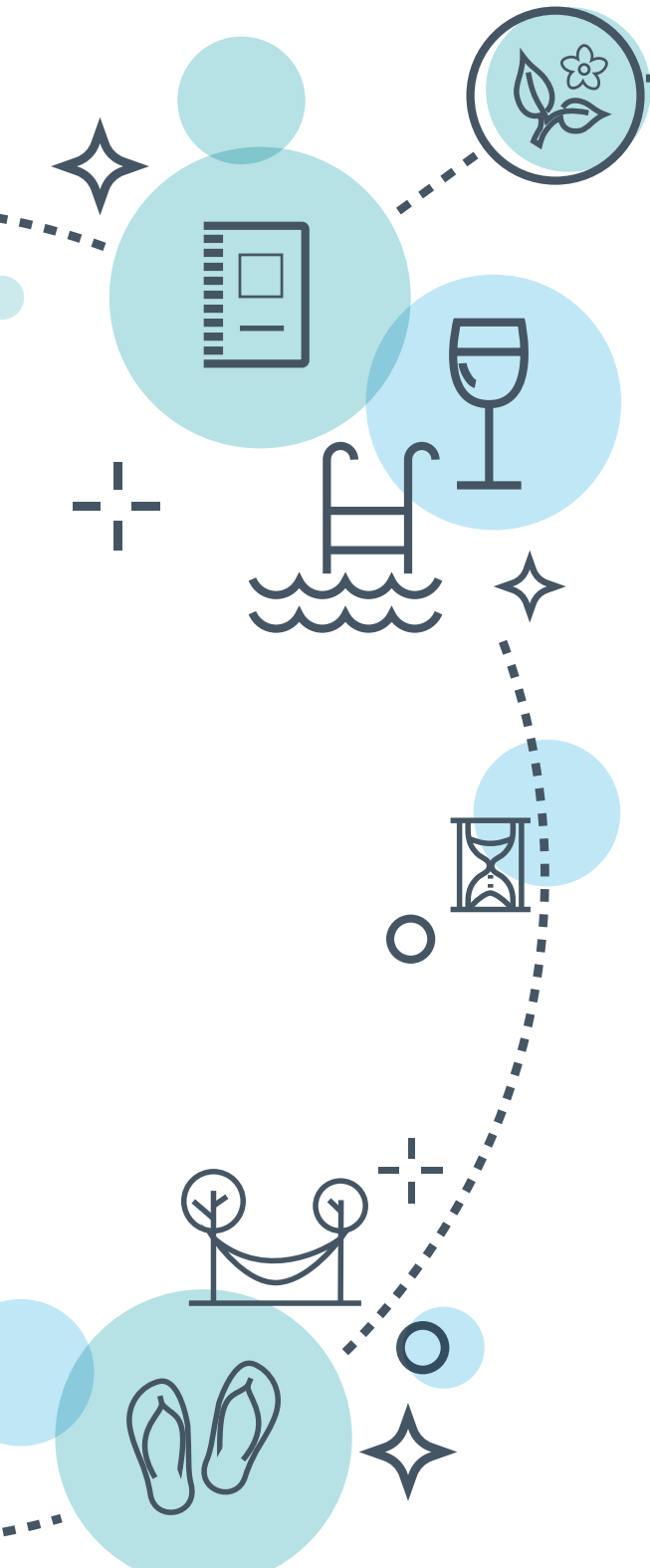
PLACES TO GO TO RELIEVE STRESS!

It is with the very best of intentions that we all start this New Year and new decade. We will plan, live, work, and continue our individual, family, and professional journeys through the changing season. Many of us feel a surge of excitement and a fresh sense of motivation as we step forward. We strive for new opportunities, hope for positive transformations, and undoubtedly and unfortunately, we brace ourselves for more STRESS! We all feel stressed at times and some of us become more stressed as we search for healthy and balanced ways to cope with this six-letter-word, It is true that in our professional lives, we may be a bit more focused under pressure; however, when we allow stress to overwhelm us, it can impair our thinking, our decision-making, and in some cases, our common sense.

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"HOW MANY CALENDAR INVITES, HOWEVER, ARE CREATED JUST FOR YOU?"



When my children were small and I was much younger, I did not realize the importance of taking care of "me." The closest thing I discovered to a mere ten minutes of sanity was when I would "send myself to time-out" to get this – Take a shower! We must take caution not to allow stress to control us and instead, we must manage it effectively if we intend to find and maintain the very best version of ourselves.

Stress has been linked to disease, short-term illness and failed relationships – both personally and professionally. In the wake of our most chaotic moments, it becomes increasingly difficult as we age, to rationalize taking time away from others to give to ourselves. To prioritize time to decompress, unwind and recharge our batteries, or to change our scenery and escape; this is typically treated more as a privilege, reward or vacation.

As it turns out, some of us may have convinced ourselves that we do not have the time or energy to borrow an hour or a day from our elongated laundry list of responsibilities and we neglect the voice of our inner child, the one who is dying to put the technology down and run tirelessly through a sunflower field miles from home, or lay beside a waterfall after a hike, or sip a latte quietly with a book at a coffee shop, to simply escape for a small window of time. The verdict is in, we NEED these priority based escapes to a much less complicated and serene environment, and we need them regularly!

We are experts at managing our work and family timetables. We calendar calls and meetings electronically and in our new 2020 paper versions of our favorite calendar designer. If you are like me,

you probably know exactly where you will be in six months and what needs to happen beforehand. How many calendar invites, however, are created JUST FOR YOU? How many days, mornings or afternoons are carved out to switch up your backdrop? Let's unveil some quaint destinations that provide you with a quick escape from tension and anxiety that is sure to reverse your mood, ease your mind and eliminate your stress!

- First, check out a popular local spa in your area for a well-earned treat. Find your chief physical pressure point complaints and select the best option available for an hour of bliss. You DESERVE it! Don't be afraid to make a day of it if your bank account can handle it. Some of the best and most accommodating spa treatments are found at local resorts, which also give you access to their pools, hot tubs and gym amenities. Might as well book a room and stay the night if you are having this much fun!
- Check into local Botanical Gardens in your area and opt for a day or a few hours in landscape tranquility. Like milk, this scene does the body (mind & soul) good! Many have local guides and tours or you can grab a blanket and good book to give yourself a break. If you do not have local gardens in your area, a nearby park will deliver the same nature rush of positive vibes and energy, grounding you back to the beauty of your earthly being.
- Speaking of reading, one of my personal favorite activities is found in quiet sanctuaries at a bookstore or library. Shake off the frustration and/or worry and find your favorite author and a seat. Engulf yourself in a story that is not your own for a while and check out. Do not feel the least bit odd or out of place and take a quick look around. More than half of the people you see are up to the same thing as you are.
- If you need a little more excitement in your life to kick the stress bug, think about music that speaks to your soul and uplifts your spirit. Find

a local music venue, festival or concert. Let the music play and the melodies take you far away.

- Coming to you straight from the mouth of medical experts all over the globe, of course one of the greatest places to go to relieve stress is... drumroll... you guessed it! The gym! Working out and burning off some frustration (and calories) is linked to dopamine, the actual release of endorphins that is proven to put you back in your happy zone! Opt for a yoga class which is guaranteed to relax your mind while strengthening your body simultaneously. Winning!
- Where is the closest body of water to you? Take a chill pill and find it! If it is not the beach, find a lake or a river or even a pond. The bigger the form of water, the better. Significant areas of H₂O, not to mention the relaxation sensations derived from their sounds, have a tendency to shed some serious perspective on the actual magnitude of our stressors. Grab a kayak, canoe or rent a boat for the day and watch your troubles sail away.
- If you are an animal lover, nothing beats the mystical beauty and comfort of watching and being close to wildlife. Head to your local zoo to spend some time and marvel at the wonderful creatures we share our globe with. If you do not have a zoo nearby, check into horse-back-riding at a reputable stable. One that forbids you from checking your email on the trail.
- Finally, locate a nearby wine tasting and schedule one! Depending on your geographic location, you may have to pack a lunch for the drive and it might need to be a full day's event. The bad news? There is absolutely none whatsoever.

Cheers to achieving your best intentions in 2020, living a good and healthy life while navigating any obstacle you encounter with humor, patience and common sense. On behalf of the ALFN team and ALFN members, have a successful and happy new year! **W**

Tips and Tricks for Stress Management



LET'S FACE IT, we all have stress in our lives...deadlines, holidays, demands and work. I researched and found consistent approaches, but I also made some suggestions based on some habits of some of the most stress-free people in the world – KIDS!

Physical activities

LOTS! Walking or running, or even jumping on a trampoline. Biking, hula hoops, swimming and splashing. ACT LIKE A KID in some way! It doesn't have to be for long; quick breaks are very effective.

Play

We can all learn from children and their love to play. Set up a playdate with friends. Game Nights can be especially fun and free: UNO plus extra rules = SPICY UNO. Fun competition with family or include the neighborhood; people plus a kickball can become a new tradition.

Pamper yourself and get a massage

If possible. If not, stretch as much as you can. You-Tube has plenty of videos of stretches that you can do right in your office or home!

LAUGH. JOKE.

Watch a short skit on You-Tube. Tim Hawkins is super clean and family friendly. They say laughter adds 7 years to your life. Call someone who makes you laugh. Everyone needs to SMILE. Do you have an encourager/cheerleader? If not, find one!

Breathe

Lots of deep breaths. Put on some scents for a nice

touch - aromatherapy can be good for you and relieve stress. If your tongue is at the roof of your mouth, it's a sign you aren't relaxed (tongues are muscles, too).

*Sing. Yep, crank the tunes and let it go. LET IT GO! Or just be quiet and turn everything completely OFF. Locked and in the upright position for a few minutes can give you fresh perspective.

Journal

Write your thoughts, a prayer OR meditate about something GOOD. Change the channel in your mind.

Star-Gazing

It's like a free nightly show. I use the Sky Guide app.- It has a lot of useful information about the weather and the planets, and shows you exactly where to look for planets and stars. Gazing at them near a firepit adds even more relaxation. The app works inside too, so if the weather isn't right...you can still do it. This also relaxes you for the last tip.

Fewer commitments and more sleep

Does anyone get 8 hours of sleep anymore? Our bodies ACTUALLY need it, especially after a stressful day. Sometimes the best medicine is just plain rest. The next day you may wonder why you were so bothered...but it may have been that you just need some extra rest for a big decision or a project. **W**

INDICATORS OF AN UNHEALTHY WORK-LIFE BALANCE



BY MARISSA M. YAKER, ESQ.,
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DING!

As soon as I hear it, I immediately check my email. It is an addiction. I want to ensure that I am timely responding to emails, which means that I never really stop working

I know that this is not unique to me. We always want to make ourselves available, even if that means never taking a mental health or personal day. This topic picked me, as I am guilty of never knowing when to stop working. I love my job, and because I am so passionate about it, I find it hard to stop working. Fortunately, the firm that I work for is heavily focused on family and ensuring its employees have time for what is truly important.

My New Year's Resolution is to achieve a healthier work-life balance, perhaps not running to check my email after 10 p.m. every night. Accordingly, this article will point out few, but by no means exclusive, list of indicators of falling into an unhealthy work life balance.

LIST OF INDICATORS:

1. *Answering Emails/Calls Around the Clock:*

I am 100% guilty of this. It is an addiction; I want to know what is going on and that someone is handling is the same. My resolution for this year, is not to run for the phone after 10p.m... to be honest, probably after 11p.m.. Baby steps, right?

2. *Working both Saturdays and Sundays:*

I had a high school teacher state that we should always give ourselves one day off a week to recharge for the upcoming week. I personally like to take Saturday off and to work on Sunday, to prepare for the week ahead. That one day truly does allow me to recharge and enjoy some much needed family time.





3. *Working until 2 a.m.:*

We all have certain projects that may require late nights. Doing this daily, however, is not a good place to be in.

MISSING IMPORTANT PERSONAL MATTERS FOR WORK:

NOT GOING TO A CHILD'S RECITAL, MISSING A FAMILY DINNER, CANCELLING WITH FRIENDS TO WORK INSTEAD. OCCASIONALLY, FOR IMPORTANT MATTERS, IS UNDERSTANDABLE. BUT THIS SHOULD BE THE EXCEPTION, NOT THE RULE. IT IS CRITICAL TO SEE THE EFFECTS THAT AN UNBALANCED LIFE HAS ON THOSE CLOSEST TO YOU.

4. *Skipping Lunch:*

Super guilty of this. I used to say that lunch is a waste of a perfectly good hour. This leads to munching on those unhealthy snacks, and not taking a break during the day. If taking an hour sounds like too much, consider perhaps stepping away from your desk for fifteen to thirty minutes. I know someone that makes it a point to just get up, walk away from her desk, and go outside just for some fresh air. Being outside for fifteen minutes can change one's attitude/mindset for the rest of the day.

More could be added to this list, but the above highlight some of the most common pitfalls that we all can fall into. When you have a job that you love and enjoy, it is easy to miss how an unbalanced life can actually make you less effective over time. In order to be an effective employee, leader, and family member, it is crucial to unplug from time to time. Even if it only after 11 p.m. 📌

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