



September 2018

Issue No. 109

*Practicing Law With
Depression & Anxiety*

Page 1

*Steps to Building a
Sustainable Career:
Ready to Thrive?*

Page 3

Fall Career CLEs

Page 6

*Five Ways to Make Your
Days Better*

Page 6

*Lawyers in Transition
Presentation Calendar*

Page 8

OREGON ATTORNEY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

503-226-1057

1-800-321-OAAP

www.oaap.org

Helping
lawyers and judges
since 1982

- Alcohol & Chemical Dependency
- Career Change & Transition
- Gambling Addiction
- Mental Health
- Procrastination & Time Management

A free, nonprofit,
confidential program
for you.

OREGON ATTORNEY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

IN SIGHT *for Oregon Lawyers and Judges*

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF YOUR PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL LIFE

PRACTICING LAW WITH DEPRESSION & ANXIETY

I am told that I am an up-and-coming young attorney with the potential to do great things, and by all outward accounts I suppose that must be true. My firm has gone out of its way to offer me opportunities for growth beyond its norms. I have won awards. I have spoken at conferences and CLEs. I have been elected to boards and run committees. People seek me out for these positions because they are confident in my abilities, my commitment, and my sense of responsibility. I am dependable, competent, and pragmatic. I apparently give the impression of someone with goals and drive who knows where she is going and how to get there. It is an impression I have a hard time accepting because on the inside it is a very different story.

I have struggled with depression and anxiety for most of my life and expect I will continue to struggle with them into the foreseeable future. I have been medicated for 13 years and have no intention of quitting any time soon. I fight a never-ending war against a part of myself that I cannot remove. Every day I win battles, but the war continues. I fight to get out of bed in the morning, to smile when I see other people. I fight against the voice that tells me constantly that everything I am doing and saying is wrong and everyone knows it. I question every decision I make and my ability to make them. I feel like a failure and a fraud every single day. When something goes wrong, it is proof. When something goes well, it is luck or a fluke. Every day is a challenge, to keep going, to appear normal, to not give in. It is painful

and exhausting. Even on my best days, the depression lurks in the back of my mind, waiting for a moment of weakness. I am constantly frustrated by my inability to be rid of it, no matter how hard I work and no matter how amazing I make my life.

Practicing law with depression is incredibly challenging. We work in a system that expects us to be perfect, to always know the answer, to be able to fix everything. It is impossible to live up to the image, and for those of us who are already inclined toward mental health issues, that impossibility can feel crushing. In many ways, I am one of the lucky ones. I have come to recognize my issues and get the help I need. I have family and friends who understand and support me, and I work in an environment that gives me the flexibility to attend therapy and confidential OAAP support group meetings with no questions asked. I am even able to speak openly with some of my supervisors and colleagues about my mental health and how I manage it. I work hard to maintain balance in my life because I know I can't survive without it. I can't join every organization, be on every board, go to every social, and work the long hours this profession often demands.

None of this makes me a bad lawyer. It does not make me weak, fragile, or unreliable. On the contrary, it has made me stronger. I wake up every day and fight for the life I have because the alternative is not an option. I know that I am capable

(Continued on page 2)

Welcome Law Students!

Caring for Self While Caring for Others

The OAAP is offering a lunchtime, brown bag series that will cover effective ways of caring for yourself while taking care of others. The programs will be held on Mondays from noon to 1:00 p.m. at the World Trade Center, Mezzanine 5, 121 SW Salmon Street, Portland, Oregon 97204:

- Monday, January 28, 2019: Cultivating Lawyer Well-Being
- Monday, February 4, 2019: Mindful Parenting
- Monday, February 11, 2019: Aging Parents and Family Members
- Monday, February 18, 2019: Holiday (session will not be held)
- Monday, February 25, 2019: Unhealthy Behaviors and Use of Substances in the Family

For more information, please contact Karen A. Neri, JD, at karenn@oaap.org, or 503-226-1057, ext. 11.

(Continued from page 1)

of fighting, I know that I can survive, and I know that I can triumph. I know that good days can come, even after the darkest times. That knowledge gives me the resilience to face struggles in the rest of my life, as well as in my practice. When I learned how to accept and take care of myself, I also learned how to take care of others. I learned compassion and patience, and I learned perspective. I learned to look beyond what people project and see who they are beneath the surface. I can usually see where a person is coming from, and most of the time I can meet him or her there without judgment. I treat my clients like human beings, and as a human being I do my best to guide them through an often impersonal legal system.

As lawyers, we are ashamed and afraid to admit when we suffer from depression, anxiety, and other mental health issues. We are afraid to admit our weaknesses because of how our clients might judge them or how our colleagues might exploit them. I recognize my weaknesses, and I also know how to work with them. I know my limitations, and I know what I need to do to succeed. I am not only the part of me that wants to run away from the world. I am also the part of me that gets up every day and fights, that can accept the possibility of failure and understand that I can come back stronger. Without my depression, I would not have any of those strengths. I am not ashamed of that part of me – I am proud of it. I am a good lawyer, not in spite of my depression, but because of it.

ANONYMOUS

The path to fulfillment begins with a phone call.



The Oregon Attorney Assistance Program is here to help you through any personal or professional issue – confidentially and free of charge.

Call 503.226.1057 • 1.800.321.6227



OREGON ATTORNEY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
helping lawyers and judges since 1982

OAAP COUNSELORS: + SHARI R. GREGORY + KAREN A. NERI + DOUGLAS S. QUERIN + BRYAN R. WELCH

STEPS TO BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE CAREER: READY TO THRIVE?

For the past several years, our profession has seen a rise in attrition and a decline in satisfaction. Too many talented attorneys have walked away from the profession, believing that it's an all-or-nothing gig, and truthfully, there are few resources available to discourage that.

Yet many attorneys do succeed in building thriving, sustainable careers. What sets them apart? How do you join those ranks if you're teetering on the edge of law career despair? Whether you're a recently admitted attorney or an experienced professional, it behooves you to assess your career and your life at regular intervals. Circumstances, priorities, and desires all change.

To be the best lawyers that we can be, as well as to feel motivated and purposeful, means integrating our full complement of human intelligence into our thinking, then acting accordingly. Many attorneys move from soul-deadening jobs to fulfilling careers by integrating their full complement of human assets to find purpose and motivation, and to thrive.

How do we actually do this? Many avenues do exist; a few are listed below. Before you find yourself paralyzed by inertia, trapped by golden handcuffs, or dropping out altogether, consider the concepts below. Contemplate them. Notice which resonate with you. Then choose one or more upon which to act.

Regardless of the stage you're in, a few fundamentals remain important:

Find Your Why: Research confirms that when our core values and our work are not aligned, our well-being plummets.

Manage Your Energy: Even when we love our work, if demands exceed our energy, we are left feeling exhausted, with little left over for ourselves or others.

Find Your People: Humans tribe. We're designed to connect. Law practice is often an isolating experience, even in the largest firms.

Do You, Today: Much of the stress we experience is self-generated by anticipating the future or ruminating about the past.

Find Your Why

Think back to your pre-law days. Something drew you to the practice of law and led to the place you sit now. What motivated you to take the LSAT, fill out and submit applications, and pay perhaps hundreds of dollars in fees to be considered for a coveted slot? Was there a spark of inspiration attached to that effort, or did it simply seem like a good idea at the time? Does that pre-law motivation still exist for you? Motivations change. What has moved to the top of your priority list? To thrive in any career over a period of decades, our work has to matter to us in some way. Where do you, or can you, find meaning in your work?

Practicing law is complex and demanding, so many of us expect to feel some measure of daily discomfort and accept it. This is a far cry from the capacity to thrive that we can achieve.

Attorneys who practice in areas that answer their WHY shift from a job to a career, and sometimes even a calling.

You can begin by reflecting on the underlying purpose for the day-to-day work that you do and the needs of the client for whom you do your work.

Consider completing a values identification. This is very useful for crafting a life that is fulfilling to you. A primary value for one of my law students was adventure.

(Continued on page 4)

Trans* Law Professionals Peer Support Group

The OAAP is pleased to offer a biweekly evening peer support group. This inclusive group is open to all transgender, trans-questioning, non-binary, gender-nonconforming, and intersex judges, lawyers, law students, and legal professionals.

This group will be facilitated by OAAP Group Facilitator Kyra Hazilla, JD, LCSW. For more information, contact Kyra Hazilla at kyrah@oaap.org.

Not ready for a group? Feel free to reach out to Kyra for alternative resources.

(Continued from page 3)

Knowing that means it's important for her to work in a field that she finds stimulating.

Are you doing work that reflects something you care about?

Where do you find joy or meaning in your work?

Notice your resistance. We all have it. Examining the areas of resistance yields our greatest insights.

Many attorneys pivot at early, middle, and later junctures in their careers and land in practices they love. Filter out the naysayers who tell you it can't be done. Whether you're in your second, seventh, or seventeenth year of practice, it's never "too late" to live your life.

Manage Your Energy

Practicing law requires stamina. Even when we love our work, if demands exceed our energy, we are left feeling exhausted, with little left over for ourselves or others. Powering through a long day of billable hours or back-to-back clients can leave us feeling exhausted. Technology places an added drag on our attention and our energy. Our human brains were not designed for the 24/7 demands we're placing on them. For too many at-

Men's Workshop

If you find it challenging to achieve a healthy balance between work and the rest of your life, the OAAP is here to help. Our confidential men's workshop, "Practicing Law While Practicing Life," provides practical techniques for lawyers to use while exploring topics such as unhealthy stress; self-care; and balancing the demands of work, family, and friends.

This five-session noontime workshop will meet at the OAAP starting in October 2018. The workshop facilitator will be OAAP Attorney Counselor Douglas S. Querin, JD, LPC, CADC I. There is no fee, but advance registration is required because space is limited.

To participate in this workshop, please set up a meeting with Doug at 503-226-1057, ext. 12, or at douglasq@oaap.org.

torneys, the substantive work is challenging and enjoyable, yet they are so drained, that their life enjoyment is reduced to a concept. This, too, is where understanding a little human physiology goes a long way in battling burnout. When we're doing mental work, our brain is working hard to connect thoughts, process information, produce neurotransmitters, and manage the many other systems operating in our bodies. To improve stamina and sustain energy throughout your day:

- **Sip water.** As little as 1% dehydration diminishes cognitive function and impairs mood. Staying hydrated provides the electrical energy our brains need to think and process information.

- **Focus on one task at a time.** Single-tasking is more efficient, improves outcomes, and leaves you feeling more alert throughout the day. The effort involved in multitasking – switching between two or more cognitive tasks – increases the output of stress hormones and drains the brain of resources needed for cognitive function. As a result, we tire rapidly and diminish the quality (and enjoyment) of our work. Rather than answering emails and phone calls while working on a document, give your focused attention to each task individually; you'll save time, improve outcomes, and feel more alert at the end of the day.

- **Take mental breaks.** Two to five minutes of brain rest at regular intervals are imperative for mental processing and productive work. Powering through is not a productivity tool. Turn away from your computer (and phone!), and gaze out the window for a few minutes of nondirected thought. Breathe. Take a short walk, perhaps to the water cooler. We can't skip these human physiological processes any more than we can skip fueling our cars when the tank is empty. A brief break every 45 to 90 minutes will save you time, boost your energy, and pay off in productivity.

- **Skip the soda.** Though you may experience a quick, temporary "feel-good" fix, the sugar content actually interferes with mental focus.

Find Your People

Humans tribe. We're designed to connect. On par with meaningful work is mutual respect in our workplace. Yet law practice is often an isolating experience, even in the largest firms. It's important to work with

attorneys who care about you as a person and take an interest in your career and your well-being, for more than the obvious reasons.

A substantial body of research suggests that the people with whom we work are strong indicators of who we become. Are your colleagues collaborative or competitive, encouraging or discouraging, kind or sarcastic, healthy or unhealthy, optimistic or pessimistic? In his insightful TED talk, Nicholas Christakis, MD, a Yale sociologist and physician, explains how the people with whom we work day in and day out influence our lives, our health, and our happiness.

I recently met with a young lawyer and former student of mine who loves her substantive practice but regularly finds herself at odds with her supervising attorney's approach and style. She recognizes that while she is committed to continuing in her field, practicing meaningfully over the long term means working with more like-minded practitioners.

Many attorneys find connection and community in the firms and organizations in which they work. When we enjoy the people and the environment in which we spend most of our waking hours, we're able to thrive.

Do You, Today

Although humans are no longer in danger of being eaten by a predator for lunch, our brains are still primed to protect us from danger. Much of the stress that we experience is self-generated. Large caseloads, irate clients, and traffic, to name just a few potential stressors, are interpreted by our brains as threats that trigger a stress response, even though we're in no actual danger. A truly wonderful human gift is our ability to observe ourselves. Once we identify the source of the stress response, we're able to step back, put it into perspective, and respond to potentially stressful situations in a more detached, composed fashion. Recent research in health psychology also shows that when we view stress as a motivator or as neutral, it doesn't have the negative health impacts that accompany concern about feeling stressed. Below are some useful strategies.

"Have I done all that I can in the present moment?" A "no" answer to that question guides me toward appropriate action, while a "yes" reassures me that in the present moment, the situation is the best that it can be and no further action is needed right now. Depending

Depression/Anxiety Support Group

The OAAP offers a confidential peer support group for lawyers who have depression and/or anxiety. The group focuses on effective coping strategies and building resiliencies. This ongoing group meets twice per month in the evenings and is facilitated by Attorney Counselor Bryan R. Welch. The group is free, but space is limited. To participate in this group, please set up a meeting with Bryan at bryanw@oaap.org or at 503-226-1057/1-800-321-OAAP, ext. 19.

upon the circumstances, I'll often make an appointment to revisit the issue at a later time.

For many, the question, "Does this serve me?" proves useful. We've all agreed to serve on additional committees or take on matters that pick up another's slack. This question enables us to recognize situations that require a "no" response now, thus avoiding situations that result in resentment or unwanted outcomes later, and also building confidence.

- **Develop your confidence.** Confidence turns thought into action, and action moves us forward. Notice your thinking and your self-talk. You may inadvertently be holding yourself back with doubt and unwarranted self-talk that are unsupported by evidence. While your brain may think it's keeping you safe, recognizing the skills you possess that propel you will move you and your career forward.

- **Attend to your inner life.** Whether it's to paint, read, run, meditate, cook, or stargaze, incorporate one activity into your routine that brings you joy for no other reason than its existence.

Finally, "never get so busy making a living that you forget to make a life." Dolly Parton

JUDITH GORDON

Judith Gordon is a speaker and coach and a lecturer at UCLA School of Law, committed to empowering attorneys so that they thrive in law and in life. She can be reached at judith@leaderesq.net or 310-968-7270.

Fall Career CLEs

This fall, the OAAP will present two half-day CLEs, “The Career of a Lawyer: Creating Success at Each Stage.”

The seminar will be held on Friday, November 2, 2018, at the World Trade Center, Mezzanines 2, 3, and 4, in Portland. The morning program will run from 9 a.m. to noon, and the afternoon program will run from 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Lunch is on your own.

The morning presentation will focus on finding your direction through self-assessment and recognizing and using your leadership strengths, with a panel of lawyers who have successfully navigated the early years of their career path. The afternoon presentation will focus on succeeding mid-career and retirement considerations, with a panel of lawyers who either have successfully retired or are working toward retirement.

The program speakers will feature career coaches Kirsten Meneghello, JD; and Susanne Aronowitz, JD, ACC; in addition to the OAAP Attorney Counselors.

The cost for the full day is \$50; \$35 for a half day. Registration at the morning seminar includes the book *The New What Can You Do With a Law Degree? A Lawyer's Guide to Career Satisfaction Inside, Outside & Around the Law*. Registration at the afternoon seminar includes the book *Lawyers at Midlife: Laying the Groundwork for the Road Ahead*.

Application for MCLE credits is pending.

Watch your inbox for broadcast emails with links to our registration page.

Registration deadline: Wednesday, October 31, 2018.

For more information, contact OAAP Attorney Counselor Shari R. Gregory, LCSW, JD, at 503-226-1057, ext. 14, or at sharig@oaap.org.

FIVE WAYS TO MAKE YOUR DAYS BETTER

Sometimes your day is cruising happily along when a bump in the road – or a major pothole – comes along to derail you from the easy life. Then there are days when everything seems to go wrong all day long. Life isn't always easy, but there are steps you can take to make your days better. Here are five:

1. Adopt an attitude of gratitude. Many thought leaders, from Brene Brown to the Dalai Lama, tout the benefits of living with an attitude of gratitude. This is different from positive thinking in the face of real adversity. Rather, it is seeing life for the reality that it is and being grateful for what's good about it even when some parts are not good. My friend Diane Costigan, who is Director of Coaching at Winston & Strawn LLP in New York City, taught me this phrase when I was working with her as a coach: “What I like about it is...” This is a great way to live with an attitude of gratitude. It can also make you laugh in the face of trouble. For example, I lost my cellphone (disaster!), but what I like about it is I can get an early upgrade to a better phone.

2. Accept reality. As one of my favorite authors, Byron Katie, would say, when you argue with reality you always lose. I love this thought. It makes life much simpler. Katie says to let go of the “shoulds” in your life. Yes, opposing counsel should be more civil. Yes, the judge should let you make your argument without interruption. Your difficult client should appreciate how hard you are working. But sometimes the reality is that those things don't happen, even if they should. The best way to handle these difficulties is to accept that they exist and then work with them. You can either work to remedy them or change something in your life or practice so that you don't continue to find yourself in a reality that you don't like.

3. Delegate. It is difficult to succeed without a team. If you don't have teammates – colleagues, friends, assistants, family – take the time to create a team that can help you handle all your responsibilities. It can be hard to let go of the control to effectively delegate. Let's be honest, though: If you micro-manage

the person to whom you delegate, you aren't saving yourself any time and you are frustrating him or her. So instead, take the time to find a competent and cooperative teammate, be very clear in your directions, and let him or her take the responsibility. There may be growing pains, both in your ability to give effective directions and your teammate's ability to deliver as expected, but it will be worth it.

4. Organize. One of the best ways to keep all your various responsibilities in order and successfully handled is to be organized. Organize your office so that things don't get lost in the shuffle. Organize your day so that you use your time as efficiently as possible. Organize your life so that you have resources readily available to you. When you are organized, you don't waste time and energy trying to find whatever you need to be successful.

5. Meditate, then plan. When I am overwhelmed with work and life, I want to jump in as quickly as possible and tackle things. Resist that temptation. Take a breath, and take the time to meditate and then plan. Would you build a house without first drafting a plan? Of course not. Take the same approach to your day, your matter, and your life. You actually save time when you make a good and thoughtful plan. When you take five minutes to meditate before you plan, your planning will go more smoothly and efficiently. Meditation will clear your mind of the noise and allow you to breathe, slow down, and think.

Have a great day!

JAMIE SPANNHAKE

Jamie Spannhake is a lawyer, mediator, and certified health coach. She is a partner at Berlandi Nussbaum & Reitzas LLP, serving clients in New York and Connecticut, practicing in the areas of commercial litigation, estate planning, residential and commercial real estate, and business transactions. She writes and speaks on issues of interest to lawyers, including time and stress management, health and wellness, work-life balance, and effective legal writing. Follow her on Twitter @IdealYear.

This article first appeared in Attorney at Work at www.attorneyatwork.com/five-ways-to-make-your-days-better/. Reprinted with permission.



USE AMAZONSMILE: HELP US HELP LAWYERS

You can help Oregon lawyers by choosing Oregon Lawyer Assistance Foundation (OLAF) as your charity on AmazonSmile.

When you shop Amazon, go to <https://smile.amazon.com> instead of amazon.com, and for each purchase Amazon will donate .5% to Oregon Lawyer Assistance Foundation.

Your AmazonSmile account login is the same as your account login on amazon.com.

To choose OLAF for your charity:

1. Go to <https://smile.amazon.com>.
2. Select a "Charitable Organization" in "Your Account."
3. Type in Oregon Lawyer Assistance Foundation.

Choosing OLAF makes a difference!

The Oregon Lawyer Assistance Foundation (OLAF) provides grants and loans to Oregon lawyers who need financial help in order to obtain the addiction or mental health treatment they need.



Oregon Lawyer Assistance Foundation

www.oaap.org | 503-684-7425

Help Us | Help Lawyers

OAAP is funded by the Professional Liability Fund.

In Sight is published quarterly.

Tanya Hanson, JD
Editor

503-639-7203



Barbara S. Fishleder, JD, BBA
OAAP Executive Director

503-684-7425
barbaraf@oaap.org

**OAAP ATTORNEY
COUNSELORS**

Shari R. Gregory, LCSW, JD
OAAP Assistant Director
sharig@oaap.org

Karen A. Neri, JD, MA-MCFC
Candidate
karenn@oaap.org

Douglas S. Querin, JD, LPC, CADC I
douglasq@oaap.org

Bryan R. Welch, JD, CADC I
bryanw@oaap.org

OAAP GROUP FACILITATOR

Kyra M. Hazilla, JD, LCSW
kyrah@oaap.org

1-800-321-OAAP
503-226-1057
www.oaap.org

Finding Meaningful Work

The OAAP holds a periodic six-session networking and support group for lawyers making job or career transitions called “Finding Meaningful Work.” The topics are designed to assist lawyers in creating and executing a personalized job search plan; developing a mission statement and elevator speech; learning and practicing networking skills; and honing job search skills. The group is facilitated by OAAP Attorney Counselor Shari R. Gregory, LCSW, JD. To participate, please contact Shari at 503-226-1057, ext. 14, or at sharig@oaap.org.

Career Self-Assessment

The OAAP attorney counselors can help you assess your career path and job and career opportunities. If you would like additional information about individual self-assessment, contact OAAP Attorney Counselor Shari R. Gregory, LCSW, JD, at 503-226-1057, ext. 14, or at sharig@oaap.org.

Lawyers in Transition Presentation Calendar

A “Lawyers in Transition” guest speaker is featured quarterly on Thursdays at noon at the OAAP, 520 SW Yamhill, Suite 1050, Portland, Oregon 97204. These presentations are open for anyone to attend. See the calendar below for scheduled speakers.

Dec. 6, 2018 Sarra Yamin Assistant Attorney General to Diversity & Inclusion External Coordinator with the Oregon State Bar

For current information on upcoming Lawyers in Transition speakers and topics, please visit the OAAP website at www.oaap.org and click on CLEs/Workshops.