



Getting Lost In Our Own Lives

A Work-Life Balance Program for New Admittees

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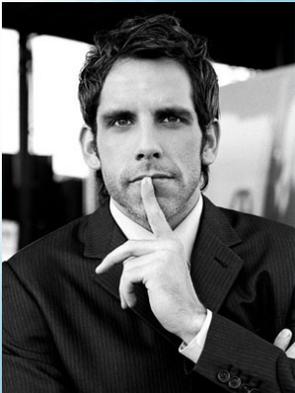
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LET'S FRAME THIS UP...

I am reminded of...



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Our ideal employee can function without sleep while working a 120 hour week. And is, of course, highly family oriented.

MIKE SHERIDAN

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Let's call a spade a spade. We must understand the true reality and nature of the system within which we operate.

Do we as a profession really practice what we preach?

We give it lip service until we hit a critical point personally.



Legal Profession and Self Care.
See the reality for what it is, in order to better navigate it.

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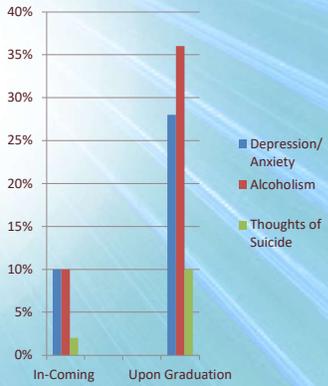


Good News! You're a Lawyer! ...The Bad News:

Longitudinal Law School Study – you check in but you don't check out.

One Research Study:

- Loss to connection of intrinsic values
- Increase in identification with extrinsic values
- Loss in perceived autonomy (18-25% range)



| Category | In-Coming | Upon Graduation |
|---------------------|-----------|-----------------|
| Depression/Anxiety | 10% | 28% |
| Alcoholism | 10% | 36% |
| Thoughts of Suicide | 2% | 10% |

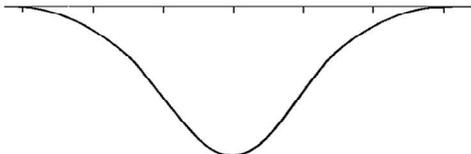
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Happiness & Satisfaction Career Trajectory

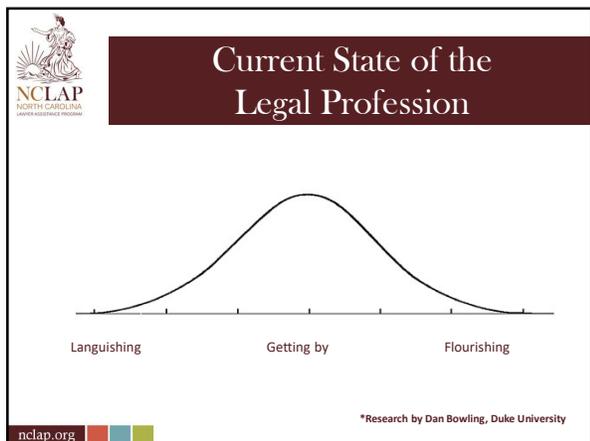
Pre-Law Lawschool Associate Partner Leader in profession



*Research by Dan Bowling, Duke University

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Why?

- Being studied.
- Ideas include (most relevant to our talk today):
 - False Self Syndrome – Loss of connection to and identification with true self
 - Limbic brain resilience can suffer from frontal cortex overload
 - Cannot be an all or nothing proposition

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False Self Syndrome

- We all (meaning all people on the planet) have it to some degree.
 - The disconnection with true self if for no other reason than to fit in our society and culture
 - Need to meet expectations, to succeed
- In its basic form – being "out of touch" with ourselves and overly identifying with the roles we play.
 - Disconnection from feelings and authentic internal experience

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Adding to that...False Self Syndrome

- Legal profession adds new layers and dimensions
 - Zealous advocacy;
 - Always the helper;
 - Law abolishes boundaries;
 - Confidentiality;
 - Isolated-workload;
 - Tomorrow never comes;
 - Success.

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Typical Attorney Workload



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Competitive Nature of Stress



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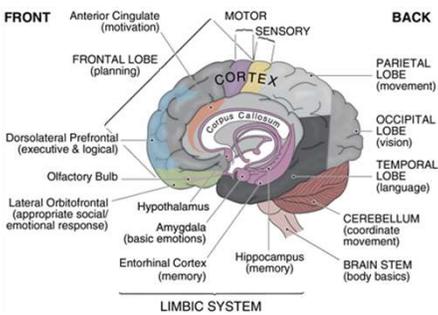
 **False Self**

- The profession of law greatly reinforces the false self syndrome and encourages disconnection from authentic experience.
- Lawyers are a self-select group already prone to this tendency.
- Can be a recipe for disaster.

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 **Our Poor, Ignored Limbic Brain**



FRONT Anterior Cingulate (motivation) MOTOR SENSORY BACK

FRONTAL LOBE (planning)

Dorsolateral Prefrontal (executive & logical)

Olfactory Bulb

Lateral Orbitofrontal (appropriate social/emotional response)

Hypothalamus

Amygdala (basic emotions)

Entorhinal Cortex (memory)

CORTEX

Corpus Callosum

PARIETAL LOBE (movement)

OCCIPITAL LOBE (vision)

TEMPORAL LOBE (language)

CEREBELLUM (coordinate movement)

BRAIN STEM (body basics)

LIMBIC SYSTEM

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 **Limbic Brain**

- This is where emotional resilience resides.
- We must attend to it or ignore it at our peril.

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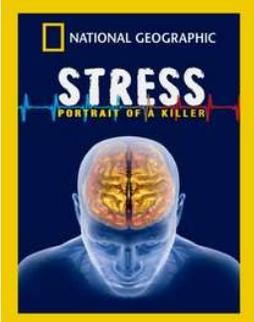
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 **Stress: Portrait of a Killer**

This movie sheds wonderful insight into the propagation of illness in today's society via the inner workings of the human stress response.

Only 50 minutes long.

Available on You Tube.



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 **So, what is a lawyer to do?**

- Critical to maintain, renew or begin extracurricular activities that nurture the limbic brain
 - Focus is on heartfelt joy and connection to self, others, and community
 - This does NOT mean volunteering for a bar committee to add something to your résumé. That is OK, it just does not count for this purpose.
 - Not superficial connections. These are OK, they just do not count for this purpose.
 - The guiding features: it brings you no outer recognition or benefit other than joy to your heart.

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 **So, what is a lawyer to do?**

- Practice good boundaries from the onset
 - Believe it or not, it is easier to start now than to try to turn it off later
 - We teach people how to treat us
 - Many lawyers think they do not have a choice – we always have a choice
 - Do something at the end of the day to affirmatively transition out of work into home life
 - Turn off the **smart stupid** phones
 - TAKE vacations; USE those vacation hours
 - Make good choices now that do not limit future options
 - i.e. buy a less expensive/smaller house
 - Take 3-day weekends when things are quiet
 - Realize many practice areas are feast or famine and work within that framework.

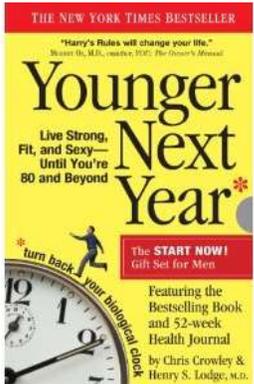
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Regular Exercise Routine

- This book is written by a lawyer and his doctor and explains the evolutionary biology of aging. Most of what we call aging in this country is decay...
- This book explains in rather simple terms why exercise is so critical to our optimal functioning.



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Alas...you will forget...we all do.



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Future Practice Advisory...

- Doesn't imply weakness, just "human-ness"
- Is more about "dis-ease" than disease.



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So slow, is it even moving?



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Rather slow and insidious....
then increases... then overwhelming....



Burning



Uncomfortable



Overwhelming

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So what happens?



We crash.

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LAP: Safe, Confidential & Free

- Services are FREE, paid for by your State Bar dues
- Completely confidential – Pursuant to Rule 1.6
 - Assist
 - Assess
 - Educate
 - Refer
 - Support

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LAP: Safe, Confidential & Free

- Issues we help with include:
 - Depression
 - Anxiety
 - Career Counseling
 - Family Issues (including parent, spouse or child addiction – we can give you resources)
 - Alcoholism or Drug Addiction
 - Stress, Burnout, Compassion Fatigue
 - Trauma
 - Grief & Loss

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Remember... mighty forces are at work



Not the least of which is ourselves and our drive for recognition, success, achievement and perfection...in many ways we each are the single biggest force we must each overcome.

We always have a choice. (movie clip)

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But we always have a choice.



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The Take Away

- Conscious choice vs. unconscious reaction
- Keep fun things happening in your life

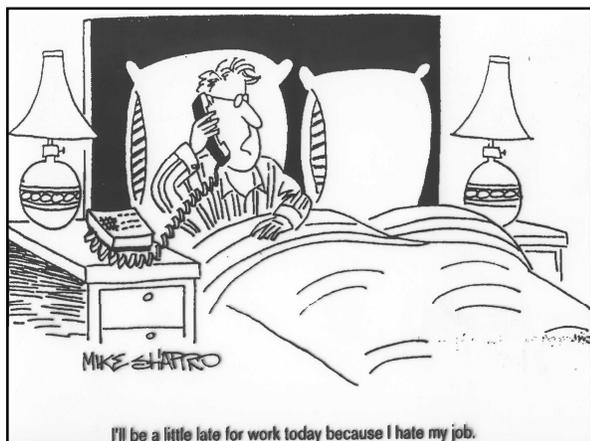
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Our ideal employee can function without sleep while working a 120 hour week. And is, of course, highly family oriented.

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In the event you wind up there...

| | |
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Thank you!

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