

Taking Care of Ourselves: Lessons in Work-Life Balance and Self-Care

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The Numbers

Vicarious Traumatization

Self-Care Tools/Mindfulness

RECENT STUDY

Hazel den Betty Ford Foundation and ABA Commission on Lawyer Assistance Programs, featured in March 2016 edition of Texas Bar Journal. First comprehensive study in 25 years, involved almost 15K attorneys from 19 states.

- Major findings:
 - 21 percent of licensed working attorneys are problem drinkers (19.2 for those “in-house in government, public or non-profit”)
 - 28 percent struggle with some level of depression
 - 19 percent suffer from anxiety
 - Younger attorneys in the first 10 years of their practice exhibit the highest incidence of these problems.

A TOUGH JOB

Bottom line orientation of firms/organizations



Lack of civility in lawyering



Clients in crisis



STRESS, BURNOUT, VICARIOUS TRAUMA

VICARIOUS TRAUMATIZATION

- It is the high cost of caring.
- People who have experienced highly stressful events put the caregiver at risk for developing similar stress-related symptoms.
- Not a disorder or syndrome, but an occupational hazard of compassionate professional service.
- Vicarious traumatization is a *process*, not an event. It is the cumulative effect of caring for many clients and its effect on the lawyer overtime.

(Transforming the Pain, Pearlman & Saakvitne 1996)

GENERAL SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- No time or energy for oneself
- Disconnection from loved ones
- Social withdrawal
- Increased sensitivity to violence
- Cynicism
- Generalized despair and hopelessness
- Nightmares

Overtime, an assault on our hope and idealism.

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