1 **LAWYER WELLNESS –WHY IT MATTERS**

HUGH GRADY
DIRECTOR
IOWA LAWYERS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

2 **THE PROBLEM:**

THE WOEFUL STATE OF LAWYER WELL-BEING

3 **2015 ABA LAWYER STUDY**

4 **LAWYER STUDY: LAWYERS VS. DOCTORS (FREQUENCY AND VOLUME OF DRINKING)**

5 **LAWYER STUDY: MENTAL HEALTH**

- 28% depression
- 19% severe anxiety
- 11.5% suicidal thoughts during career

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- The younger the lawyer, the greater the
- likelihood of:
  - Substance Use Disorder
  - Depression

- Opposite of current perception
  -
-

7 **IT BEGINS IN LAW SCHOOL**

- 25% at risk for alcohol use disorder
- 17% depression
- 14% severe anxiety
- 23% mild/moderate anxiety
- 6% suicidal thoughts in last year
-

8 **WHAT MAKES A LAWYER HAPPY?**

External Factors
(prestige, income, status, honors, fame)
OR
Internal Factors
(integrity, connectedness, meaningful work)???

9 **IMPACTS ON LAWYER WELL-BEING**

-
- External factors are minimal
- Internal factors are critical

10 **WHY THIS IS A PROBLEM:**

WELL-BEING AS PART OF PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

11 **ABA MODEL RULE 1.1: COMPETENCE**

- Competent representation requires… thoroughness and preparation reasonably necessary for the representation.

12 **ABA MODEL RULE 1.3: DILIGENCE**

- A lawyer shall act with reasonable diligence and promptness in representing a client.
- A lawyer must also act with commitment, dedication and with zeal in advocacy.

13 **ABA MODEL RULE 8.3: REPORTING PROFESSIONAL MISCONDUCT**

- A violation of the Rules of Professional Conduct that raises a substantial question as to that lawyer's…fitness as a lawyer, [reporting is required].

14 **IT'S A NO BRAINER!**

A lawyers mental, emotional and physical state affects our duties to:

- Clients
- The Court
- The Profession

15 **LET'S TALK SOLUTIONS:**

TIPS FOR BUILDING RESILIENCY

16 **WHAT IS RESILIENCE?**

-
- The ability to respond to stress in a healthy, adaptive way such that personal goals are achieved at minimal psychological and physical cost. (Physician Wellness Research)

- The ability to persist in the face of challenges and to bounce back from adversity. (U.S. Army Resilience Program)
-
- The courage to grow from stress.

17 **HOW DOES RESILIENCE BOLSTER COMPETENCE?**

-
- CAN BETTER TOLERATE STRESS, UNCERTAINTY, ADVERSITY
- SPEEDS RECOVERY AFTER SETBACKS, LOSSES
- DIMINISHED -
    - Anxiety
    - Depression

- Substance Use
- PTSD

18 **OPTIMISM**

Choosing How to Think About Why Things Happen

19 **WHAT IS OPTIMISM?**

- Disposition toward believing the future is bright and things will work out
- Tendency toward a positive explanatory style
  - How we explain causes of bad events
  - Habit of thought
  - How we explain adversity makes us either prey to helplessness or mentally resilient

20 **YOU LOSE A BIG CASE**

1 SUCCESSFUL COPING

2 DIFFICULTY COPING

21 **OPTIMISM PRACTICES**

- Optimism practice: seeing the bright side
- Done daily: increases engagement in life and decreases dysfunctional thinking (such as believing that small failures make one a failure as a person)
- Pessimists benefited more and showed fewer depressive symptoms afterward

22 **CONNECTION**

Relationships, Social Support, and Belonging

23 **CONNECTIONS**

- We are hard wired to need relationships; belonging
- Critical to your brain's feeling of happiness
- Physical touch releases oxytocin
- Positive people are key
-

24 **BENEFITS OF CONNECTION**

- Longer life
- Improved immune system
- Reduced depression and anxiety
- Overall better functioning and well-being
- Reduced cardiovascular disease
- Reduced perceptions of pain and threat

25 **POSITIVE EMOTIONS**

Creating Upward Spirals

26 **CREATING AN UPWARD SPIRAL**

- Positive emotions boost resilience
  - Quicker cardiovascular recovery after disruption
  - Post 9/11, people with more frequent positive emotions showed greater post-traumatic

growth and less depression
- Better physical health
- More life and work satisfaction
- Less anxiety and depression
-

27 ☐ **POSITIVITY RATIO**

Bad outweighs good

28 ☐ **GRATITUDE**

29 ☐ **GRATEFUL PEOPLE**

- Stronger immune systems and lower blood pressure
- Higher levels of positive emotions
- More joy, optimism, and happiness
- Less likely to engage in self-blame
- Acting with more generosity and compassion
- Feeling less lonely and isolated
-

30 ☐ **PHYSICAL WELLNESS**

Eat Move Sleep

31 ☐

32 ☐

Get adequate sleep!

33 ☐ **SLEEP DEPRIVATION = COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT**

- Chronic sleep deprivation is linked to:
  - Deficits in reasoning
  - Global cognitive status
  - Vocabulary
- Highest predictive value for depression
- Greater rate of burnout
- Increases heart attacks, blood pressure, strokes
- Less than 6 hours = 30% rise in obesity
-

34 ☐ **SPIRITUALITY**

What Gives Your Life Meaning

35 ☐ **MEANINGFULNESS**

- Work is meaningful when we believe
  - It matters
  - Is valuable

- o Contributes to personal growth/greater good
- o Is a good fit with our values
- Primary motivational force
- Largest contributor to engagement (opposite of burnout)

36 **HOW MEANING BENEFITS US**

- Better emotional regulation
- Reduced risk of depression and anxiety
- Reduced substance abuse
- Healthy sleep
- Cardiovascular health
- Slower cognitive decline in Alzheimer's patients

37 **BUILDING MEANING IN WORK**

- Reframing (job crafting)
  - o What is/who is the benefit of our work?
  - o How does it fit into the overall picture?
- Positive challenge – pushed but not overwhelmed
- Seek variety
- Seek connection
-

38 **SHOW VULNERABILITY (COURAGE)**

Ask for Help

39

LAWYER STUDY: BARRIERS TO HELP-SEEKING

- Not wanting others to find out they needed help
- Concerns regarding privacy or confidentiality
- Stigma and shame
- "I can handle it myself"
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