The Legal Burnout Solution

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Menu of CLE Courses*

- **Client Communication:** Ethics Under Pressure: Trauma-Informed Strategies for Difficult Client Interactions

- **Mindful Ethics**: How Mindfulness Can Help You Avoid Legal Burnout, Continue to Competently Perform Legal Services, and Remain Ethically Compliant

- **Mental Health:** The Mindful Approach to Addressing Mental Health in the Legal Field

- **Substance Use:** Overcoming Substance Use Disorder and Avoiding Legal Ethics Issues

- **Elimination of Bias:**
    1. Learn Mindfulness to Curtail Implicit Bias and Make Ethical Decisions
    2. Combating Ageism in the Legal Field

- **Trauma:**
    1. How Secondary Trauma Affects Attorney Mental Health
    2. Strategies for a Trauma-Informed Law Practice

- **Technology**: How to Take Charge of Technology Ethically & Mindfully

*Each course qualifies for 1 hour of Ethics, Elimination of Bias, Substance Abuse or Mental Health CLE credits depending upon jurisdictional regulations. Ask about our customized presentations.

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CLE Course Description
60 minutes
1-hr CLE Ethics, Mental Health or Wellness credit depending on jurisdiction

Ethics Under Pressure: Trauma-Informed Strategies for Difficult Client Interactions

Lawyers regularly communicate with clients who are angry, overwhelmed, frightened, unrealistic, or disappointed by the legal process. In those moments, clear communication is not only good client service—it is an ethical obligation.

This program uses realistic client scenarios to explore how trauma-informed communication strategies can help lawyers comply with Model Rule of Professional Conduct 1.4: Communication. The program also touches on the negative impact of client distress on lawyers, including secondary trauma and compassion fatigue, and offers simple self-regulation strategies to support ethical, professional, and effective communication.

Participants will learn practical tools for:

- De-escalating angry or emotionally activated clients
- Delivering difficult news with clarity and compassion
- Responding to clients who interrupt, over-talk, or reject advice
- Setting appropriate communication boundaries
- Staying grounded under pressure to respond rather than react

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CLE Course Description
60 minutes
1-hr CLE Ethics credit

How Mindfulness Can Help You Avoid Legal Burnout, Continue to Competently Perform Legal Services, and Remain Ethically Compliant

As attorneys, constant stress is often a part of the job. If we don't effectively manage chronic stress, however, it has the potential to cripple our productivity levels and make it physically, mentally, and emotionally impossible to effectively advocate for our clients and ourselves. Further, we run the risk of running afoul of the rules of professional conduct.

Instituting even 1 or 2 minutes of meditation and mindfulness into our daily routines can have immediate and far-reaching benefits in our professional and personal lives. Become your best self now. Join us as we demystify meditation and focus on the basics of mindfulness: what it is and isn't, how to do it, and how to maximize its benefits.

We will delve into specific methods of integrating mindfulness into your day-to-day law practice. According to Professor Peter H. Huang of University of Colorado Law School, "Law students, lawyers, and law professors should try practicing mindfulness to see if they improve their legal decision-making, ethics and leadership."

This 60-min CLE session will empower you to:

- Protect yourself from burnout
- Improve focus and boost your overall productivity and efficiency
- Curb anxiety and stress through quick, effective "spot treatments"
- Use mindfulness to enhance ethical decision-making and conflict resolution.

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CLE Course Description
60 minutes
1-hr CLE Ethics or Mental Health credit depending on jurisdiction

The Mindful Approach to Addressing Mental Health Issues in the Legal Field

Join Attorneys Becky Howlett and Cindy Sharp as they explore the prevalence of burnout, stress, depression, and anxiety in the legal field.

The landmark 2016 study on lawyer impairment found that attorneys have disproportionately high rates of mental health concerns compared with the general population. For example, 45.7% of lawyers self-reported symptoms of depression and 61% for anxiety. *Tragically, 63% of them did not seek help for their mental health concerns.* One of the main reasons cited is the fear that they would be stigmatized if others discovered their "problem."

The objective of this program is to raise awareness about the nature of mental health distress in the legal setting, to challenge the biases and stigma that surround those concerns, and to motivate those who are suffering to take advantage of available resources. Certified Meditation Instructor Becky Howlett will teach and lead mindfulness meditation practices throughout this session designed to help lawyers learn how to cope with stress, depression, and anxiety.

Topics include:
- High prevalence of mental health issues among lawyers
- Barriers to seeking treatment
- Ways to support colleagues who may be in distress
- Ethical implications of poorly managed stress
- Overcoming stigma in the legal community
- Mindfulness practices to help lawyers learn how to cope with stress, depression, and anxiety

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CLE Course Description
60 minutes
1-hr CLE Ethics or Substance Abuse credit depending on jurisdiction

How to Overcome Substance Use and Avoid Legal Ethics Issues

The ABA and Betty Ford Center's groundbreaking 2016 study confirmed devastatingly high rates of both mental health concerns and substance abuse amongst lawyers. For example, between 21-36% of attorneys qualify as problem drinkers—3-5x higher than the general population. Moreover, 25-30% of attorney disciplinary matters, 60% of all malpractice claims, and 85% of all trust-fund violation cases involve substance-use disorder issues.

Even though the problem is pervasive in the legal community, most aren't equipped to seek help if in distress or to have sensitive conversations with those who need help. Tragically, according to this landmark study, **93% of attorneys did not receive help for alcohol or other drug abuse.** As we struggle to cope with life in post-COVID-19 world, lawyers are particularly vulnerable to worsened mental health and substance abuse issues.

In this eye-opening program, veteran attorney Cindy Sharp will share her struggles with alcohol and reveal how she got sober and has remained alcohol free for over 11 years. Attorney and certified meditation instructor Becky Howlett will share her perspectives and provide practical tips for reducing stress and anxiety in your professional practice and personal life.

In this timely program, you will learn:
- Why we must eliminate the stigma surrounding substance use disorder
- How to detect the warning signs of impairment
- Ethical rules to consider: MRPC 1.1 - Competence, MRPC 1.3 - Diligence
- Ethical duties as to an impaired attorney
- Treatment options and other resources to consider
- Mindfulness as a tool for resilience, stress release and relapse prevention

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CLE Course Description
60 minutes
1-hr CLE Ethics or Elimination of Bias credit depending on jurisdiction

Learn Mindfulness to Curtail Implicit Bias and Make Ethical Decisions

Join Cindy Sharp and Becky Howlett as they unpack implicit bias—what it is, why it matters, and strategies to become aware of our own unconscious biases and ultimately enhance mindful decision-making. Overall, this program will support your ability to recognize these biases and implement strategies to curtail their harmful effects in your law practice.

Implicit bias is universal—everyone has it! Yet, these biases are uniquely our own as they are shaped by our individual life experiences. Although we all have them, we are generally unaware of their presence and effects, meaning implicit biases can negatively impact our decisions without our knowing. Research has shown that mindfulness meditation can reduce implicit bias at the individual level.

Certified Meditation Instructor and Attorney Becky Howlett will lead mindfulness practices designed to promote awareness of your own biases. Veteran Attorney Cynthia Sharp will share her perspectives as well as viewpoints and experiences of others in the legal community. The speakers will delve into why words DO matter and discuss commonly held harmful assumptions related to diverse groups.

You will also learn:

- How to use mindfulness tools to develop deeper awareness about implicit bias and learn to counter insensitive attitudes
- Specific steps that you can take IMMEDIATELY to reduce the ill effects of implicit bias in the legal setting
- Concepts that will help identify and address unconscious bias when dealing with colleagues, clients, and others
- How enhanced cultural competency will help any attorney both serve justice and advocate more effectively

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CLE Course Description
60 minutes
1-hr CLE Ethics or Elimination of Bias credit depending on jurisdiction

Combating Ageism in the Legal Field

Join veteran attorney Cindy Sharp and certified contemplative practices teacher and attorney Becky Howlett as they unpack age bias in the legal field—what it is, why it matters, and ways to enhance collaboration across all age levels. Addressing ageism in the legal profession can strengthen cross-generational collaboration, meaning better service for clients and more fulfilling workplaces for us all.

Lawyers of all experience levels and ages will benefit from this program. Overall, this course will support your ability to recognize implicit bias and implement strategies to curtail its harmful effects. Cindy and Becky—whose age difference spans 35 years!—will share their own perspectives, as well as viewpoints and experiences of others in the legal community. You will also learn:

- Concepts to help identify and address age bias when dealing with colleagues, clients, and others.
- How enhanced cultural competency will help any attorney both serve justice and advocate more effectively.
- How to use mindfulness tools to develop deeper awareness of age bias and learn to counter insensitive attitudes.
- Specific steps that you can take IMMEDIATELY to reduce the ill effects of age bias in the legal setting.

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CLE Course Description
60 minutes
1-hr CLE Ethics or Mental Health credit depending on jurisdiction

How Secondary Trauma Affects Attorney Mental Health

Attorneys often represent people who have been traumatized as victims of abuse, crime or other adversity. As the matter unfolds, lawyers, staff and judges alike may be exposed to emotional stories, highly charged situations, as well as gruesome and disturbing evidence, which can lead to secondary or vicarious trauma. Symptoms include burnout, PTSD, irritability, difficulties with sleep and concentration as well as diminished pleasure and interest in activities.

Join Cindy Sharp and Becky Howlett for this timely educational webinar as they explore secondary trauma. Case studies of legal professionals who have experienced the adverse effects of vicarious trauma are included. Certified Meditation Instructor and Attorney Becky Howlett will teach and lead mindfulness practices throughout this session.

Attendees will learn:

- How to identify situations that may lead to secondary trauma
- Symptoms of vicarious traumatization
- Ethical Implications of secondary trauma: Analysis of MRPC 1.1 - Competence, MRPC 1.3 - Diligence, MRPC 1.4 - Communication, MRPC 8.4 - Misconduct
- Specific steps you can take IMMEDIATELY to manage and avoid the ill effects of compassion fatigue
- Tips on how to approach a colleague who is exhibiting “the signs”
- Strategies to implement a trauma-informed approach
- How to use mindfulness tools to develop deeper awareness about secondary trauma

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CLE Course Description
60 minutes
1-hr CLE Ethics or Mental Health credit depending on jurisdiction

Strategies for a Trauma-Informed Law Practice

Trauma is pervasive in our society as 1/3 of Americans will experience a severe trauma at some point. Indeed, lawyers are often serving clients at some of the darkest times of the clients' lives due to traumatic events. Yet, until recently, our profession has not emphasized the necessary "soft skills" to be a successful attorney, including mindful communication, empathy, connection and even our own self-care.

Attend this program and explore best practices to curb the negative effects of trauma within the legal profession. This program will examine how unresolved primary trauma, as well as vicarious trauma, can hinder an attorney's ability to effectively manage and cope with stress, which can have dire impacts on our professional responsibilities and health. Discover how to bolster awareness of trauma and how it can present so that you can strengthen connections with your clients, while also creating environments that support your mental health and overall well-being.

Lawyers of all ages and experience levels will benefit from this program.

You will also learn how:

- Attorney well-being serves as a foundation for ethical representation
- Exposure to trauma can adversely affect legal practitioners
- Improving rapport with traumatized clients can lead to better results
- Strategies to avoid re-traumatizing clients

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CLE Course Description
60 minutes
1 hour of CLE Ethics Credit

How to Take Charge of Technology - Ethically and Mindfully

Do you control your digital life or does it control you? Whether texting, emailing, posting on social media, or browsing the Web, many people are at the mercy of their digital devices. Indeed, Internet addiction is on the rise and is linked to mental health concerns like depression and anxiety. In 2019, the average American checked their phone 96 times a day. By the end of 2021, that figure skyrocketed to 344 times a day—a 3.5 times increase since the start of the pandemic. Those suffering from severe internet addiction are 8 times more likely to be depressed, 9 times more likely to have anxiety, and 14 times more likely to experience both of these mental health concerns.

Join attorneys Becky Howlett and Cindy Sharp as they present strategies designed to help attorneys manage and even unplug from the digital world - ethically and mindfully.

In this timely program, we will explore:

- Dangers of digital addiction on mental health and well-being
- Ethical ramifications of mismanaged use of technology, including relevant Model Rules of Professional Conduct
- Suggestions for creating an organizational digital policy
- Specific steps to mindfully disconnect from the digital world