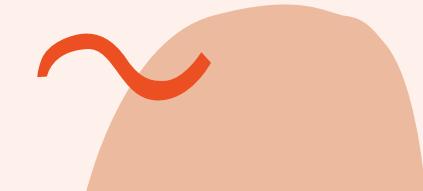




WHAT'S ON YOUR WELLNESS MENU?

from the Virginia Lawyers' Wellness Initiative
and the Virginia Judges and Lawyers Assistance Program

Today's Session



DEFINING WELL-BEING FOR LAWYERS

What are the six areas of well-being?

How has Virginia responded to a lack of well-being?

What ethical rules touch on well-being for lawyers?

UNDERSTANDING RISKS TO LAWYER WELLNESS

What are established and emerging occupational risks?

BUILDING YOUR WELLNESS MENU

How can I self-assess to determine how to tailor my menu?

What are different proven activities aimed at bolstering all six areas of lawyer wellness?

What other resources exist for lawyers?



Defining "Well-Being"

A process where we strive for thriving across all dimensions



Emotional



Intellectual



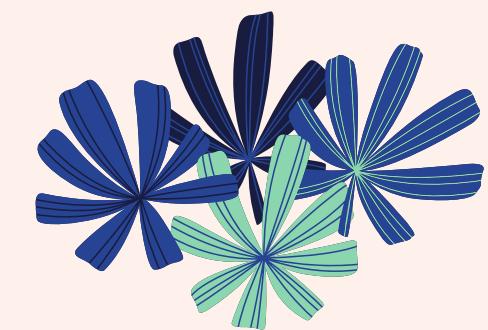
Occupational



Physical



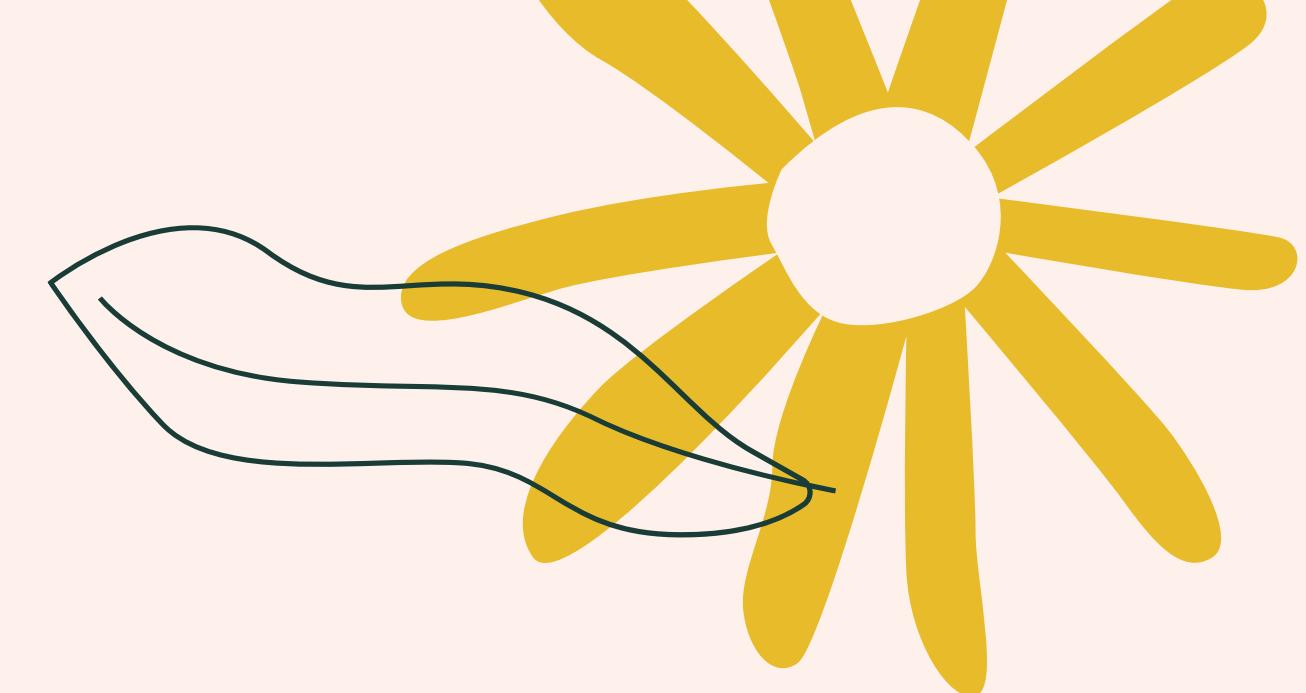
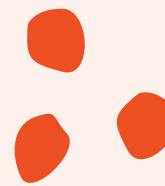
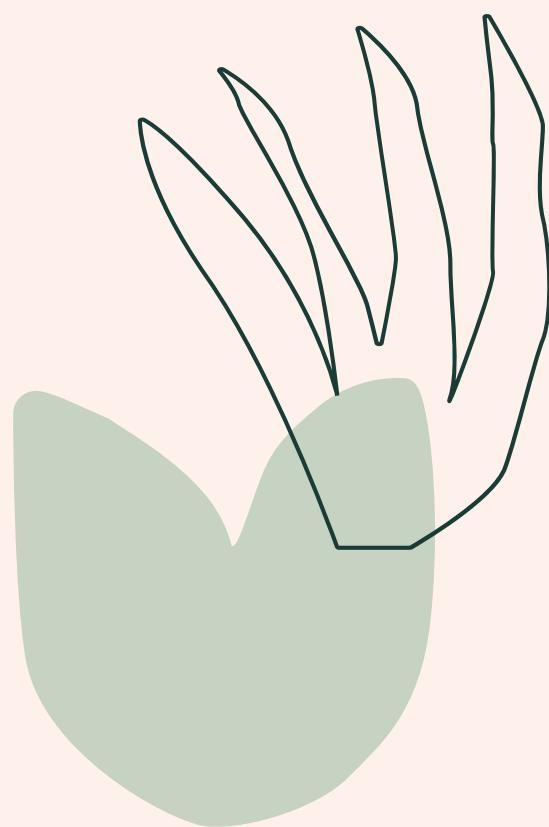
Spiritual



Social



TRAITS OF WELL WORKPLACES



ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Characterized by trust, honesty and fairness

CIVILTY & RESPECT

With other employees and the public.

PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT

From supervisors and co-workers

PSYCHOLOGICAL COMPETENCIES & REQUIREMENTS

There is good fit.

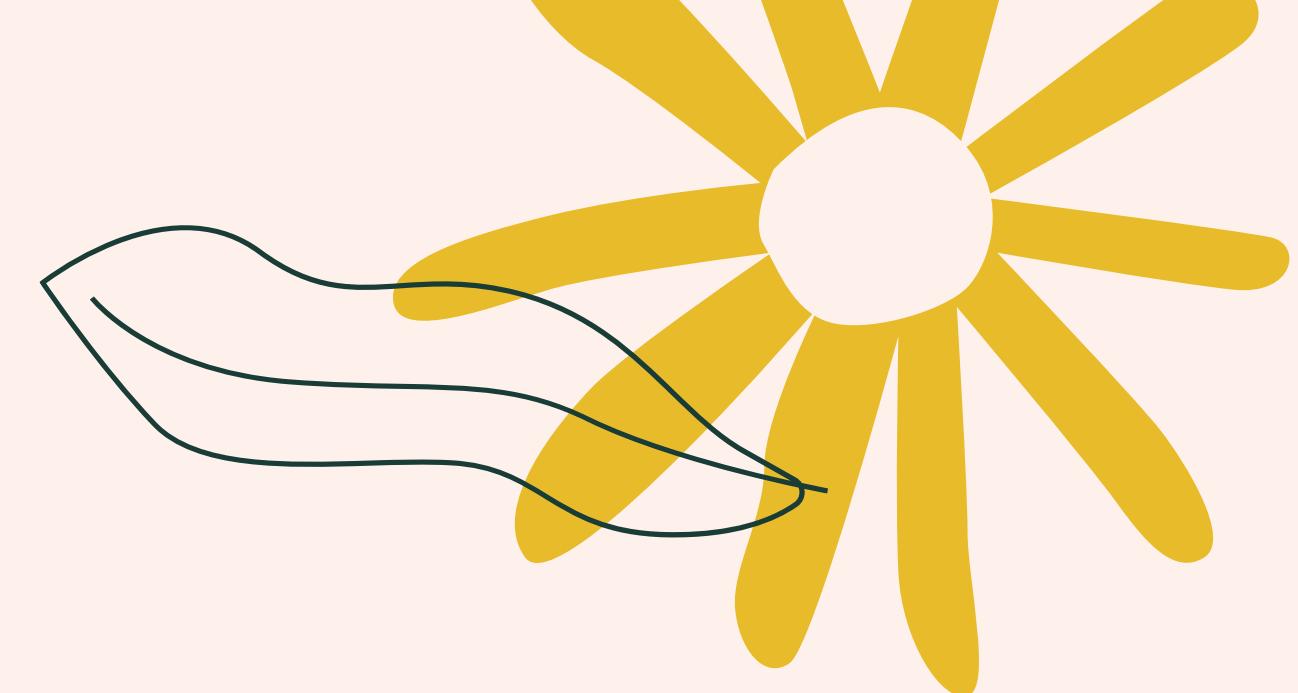
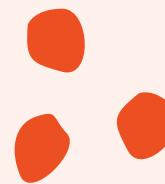
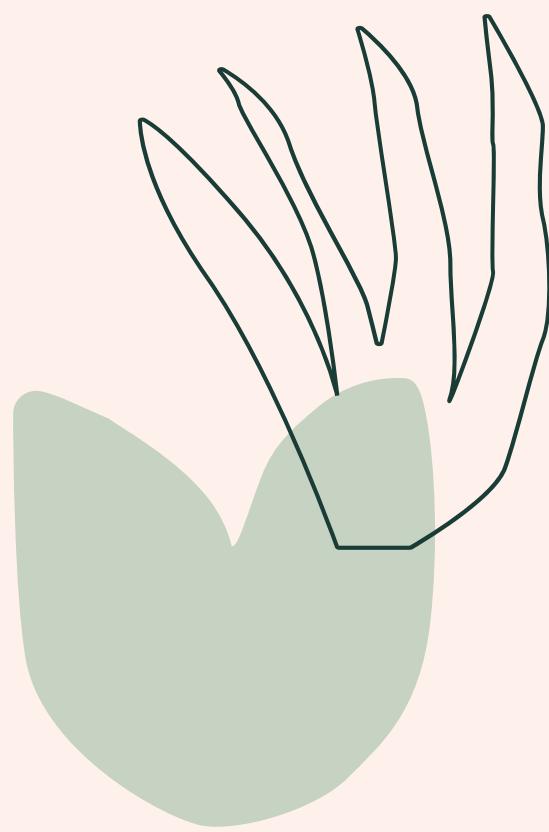
CLEAR LEADERSHIP

Expectations and communications.

GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

Support for learning new interpersonal, emotional, and job skills.

TRAITS OF WELL WORKPLACES



RECOGNITION & REWARD

Showing of appreciation and meaning of work.

INVOLVEMENT & INFLUENCE

Included in discussions about work decisions.

WORKLOAD MANAGEMENT

Tasks can be completed reasonably in the time allowed.

ENGAGEMENT

Connected and motivated to do a good job.

BALANCE

Family and personal life are recognized as important.

PHYSICAL SAFETY

Including addressing health concerns in the workplace.

A PROFESSION AT RISK

Report of the
Committee on Lawyer Well-Being
of the Supreme Court of Virginia

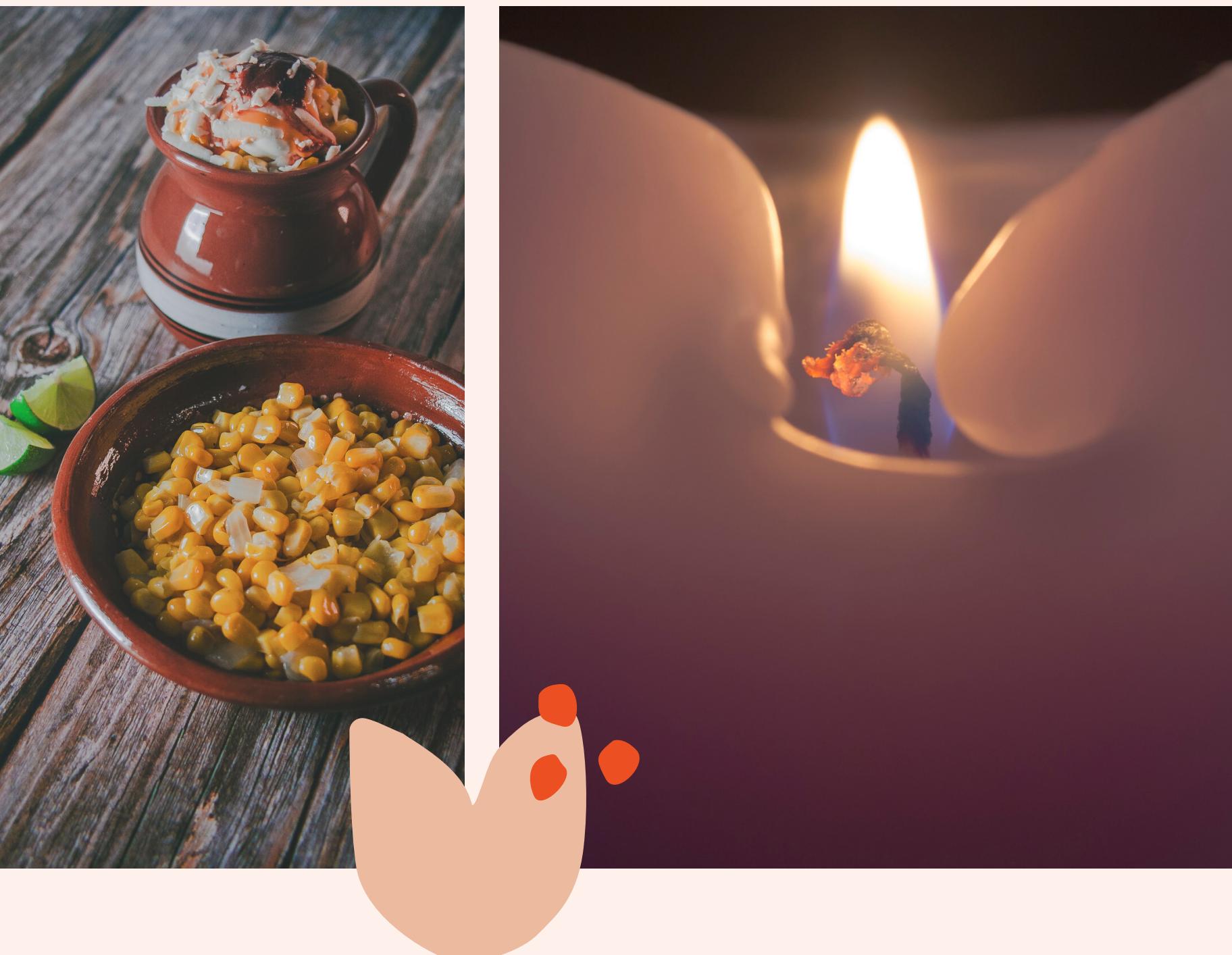


What is the VLWI?

Created by the Supreme Court of Virginia in 2018, the Virginia Lawyers' Wellness Initiative is focused on improving mental health and substance use issues in the legal profession through education, policy, and direct assistance via VJLAP. We serve judges, lawyers, law students, and other legal professionals.



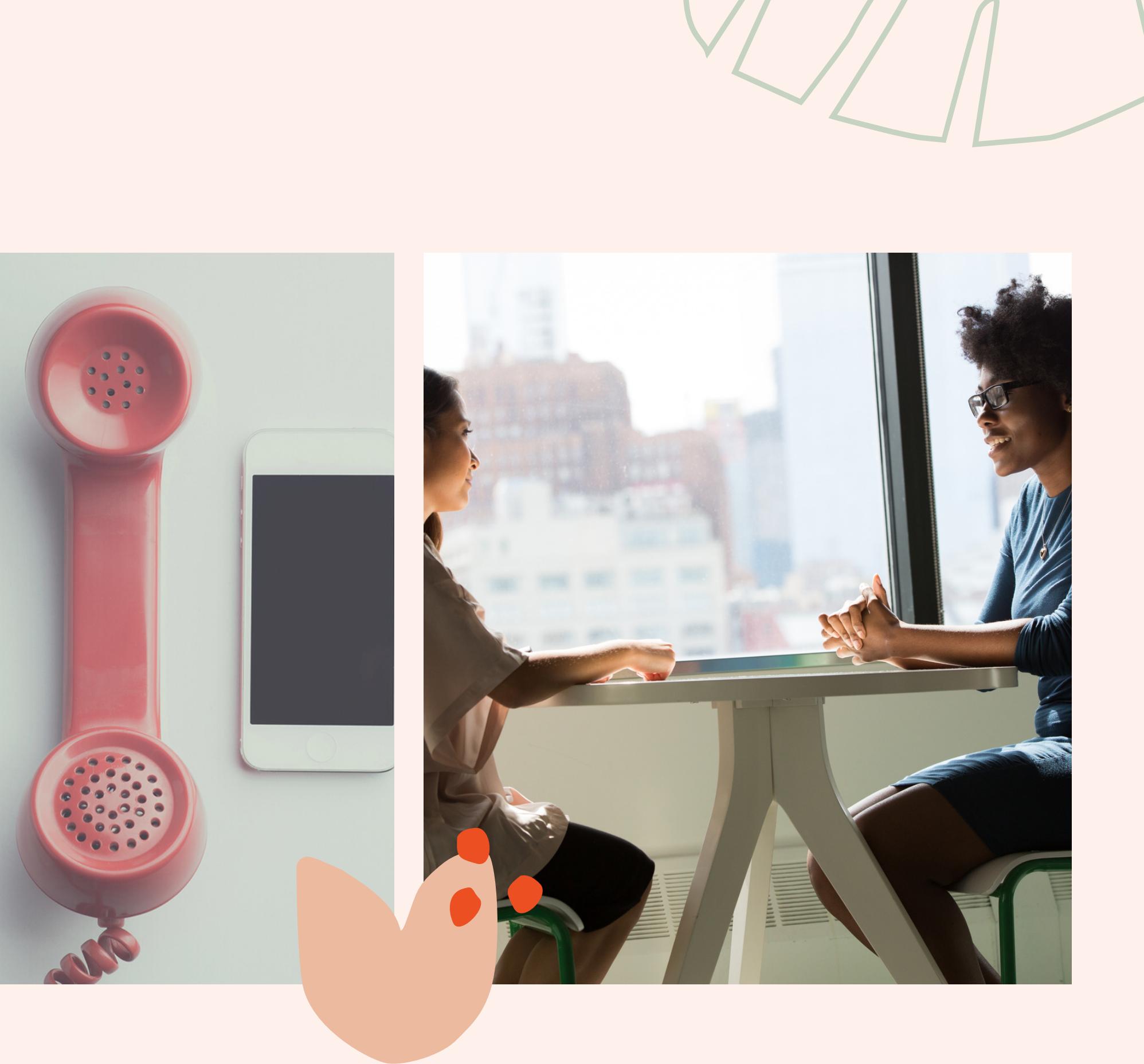
Wellness as Competence



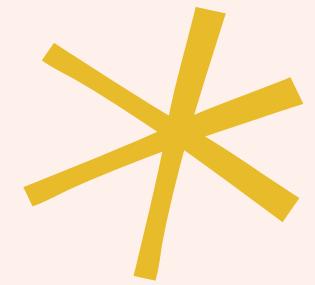
A lawyer's mental, emotional, and physical well-being impacts the lawyer's ability to represent clients and to make responsible choices in the practice of law. Maintaining the mental, emotional, and physical ability necessary for the representation of a client is an important aspect of maintaining competence to practice law.”

-VA RPC Rule 1.1 Comment [7]

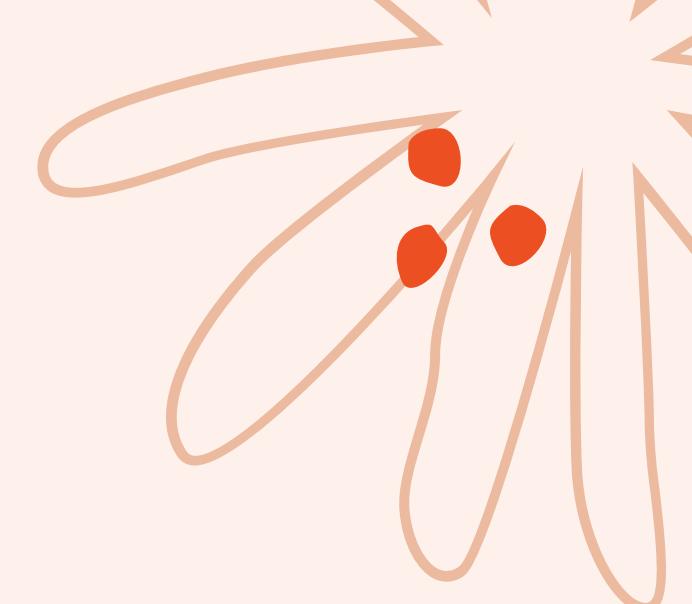




Communications with VJLAP



Rule 8.3 (d) and Comment [5] recognize the importance of confidentiality in encouraging help-seeking behavior, and grant lawyer-client privilege to these communications.



EMERGING THREATS TO OUR WELL-BEING

SCREEN FATIGUE

More than ever before, our work and social lives increasingly take place virtually. Sitting and looking at a screen for long periods can be extremely detrimental to our health.

ISOLATION

Our traditional social outlets have been disrupted. Alternative work arrangements interfere with our ability to connect meaningfully with our colleagues.

COLLECTIVE TRAUMA

Illness, loss, grief, uncertainty, and civic unrest experienced in the past year impact us all in different ways.



Self-Assess

MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL RISKS			
Risk Description	Potential Effects	Practice Pointers for Individuals	Practice Pointers for Organizations
Vicarious Trauma and Managing Others' Problems	Prolonged exposure to our clients' legal problems and dilemmas can be mentally and physically stressful, exhausting and debilitating.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Recognize the risk of vicarious trauma that is inherent in the representation and championing of others' struggles.Seek counseling if needed, and consider contacting Lawyers Helping Lawyers on its 24-Hour Help Line at 1-877-545-4682.Intentionally set time aside to separate from the client and case in order to recharge. This can be done through conversation with trusted colleagues or the pursuit of activities and hobbies outside of law.Create and maintain an end-of-day routine to help leave work at work and to transition from the office to home.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Discuss the issue of vicarious trauma openly to encourage those suffering to seek assistance.Implement an employee assistance program to provide a confidential outlet for attorneys suffering from vicarious trauma to discuss their struggles and provide access to mental health professionals where needed.Be proactive in seeking out suffering attorneys who may not recognize the risk in themselves and be willing to offer aid.Provide reasonable vacation and encourage its use so as to promote time away from the office.

Take Better Breaks



UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF REST

Feeling foggy, irritable, anxious, distracted? Our brains need rest to maintain peak performance. Building small breaks into our days helps improve cognitive function and mood.

GET OUTSIDE

Spending just five minutes in nature has been shown to reduce stress. Try engaging with each of your senses while outside by naming one thing you can hear, see, smell, and touch (we'll save taste for another break!).

PLAN A VACATION

Everyone needs time away from work, and the act of planning time off can give us something to look forward to when we're approaching burnout. COVID may mean that we're not flying across the country, but there's plenty to do while still taking precautions.

Bolster Our Connections

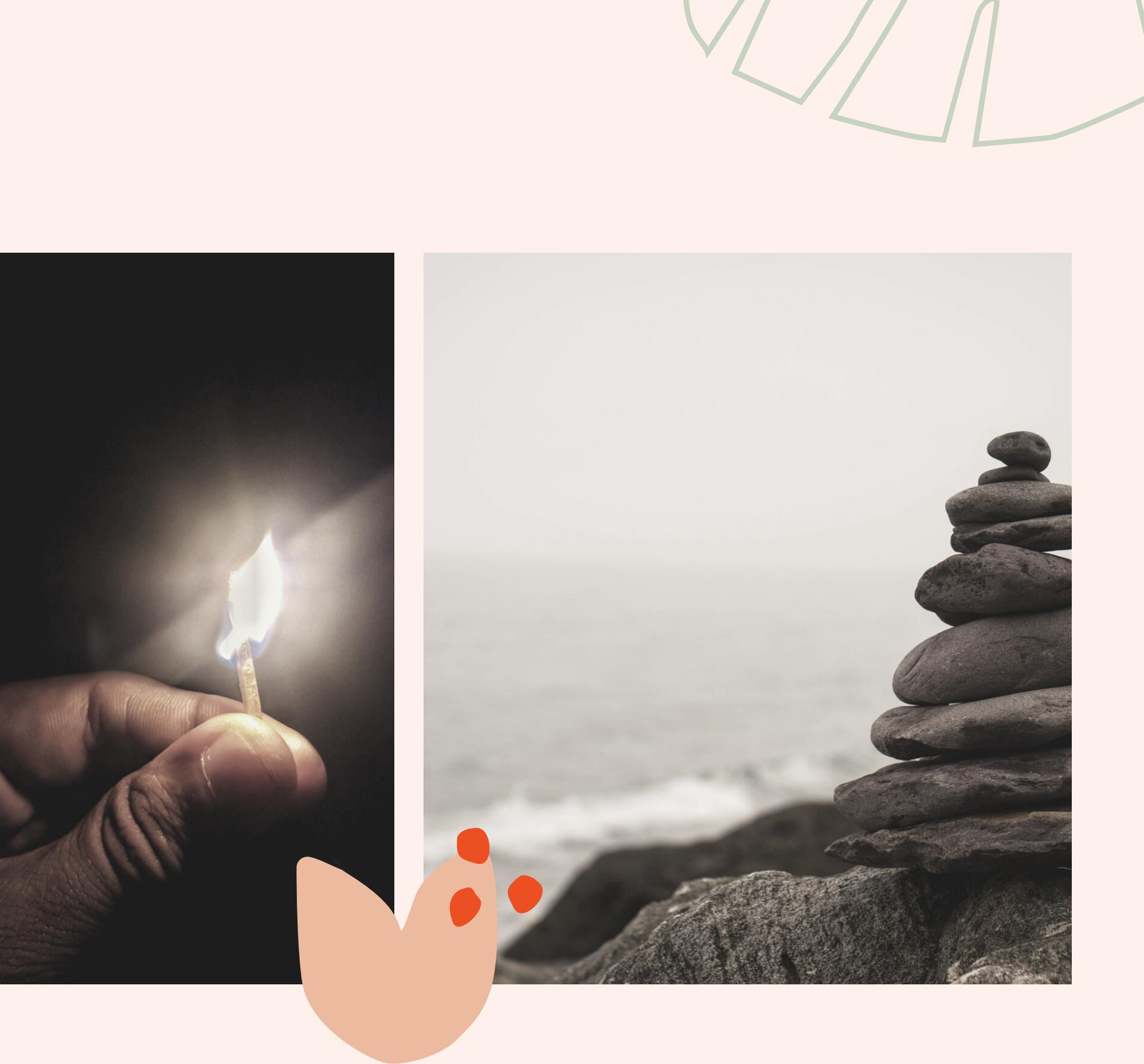
Express gratitude

Finding new ways to thank people builds stronger relationships and helps us cultivate an attitude of gratitude in ourselves, one of the key ingredients in resilience.

Try vulnerability

All of us have had a rough year. Rather than displaying constant confidence, sharing our doubts and worries with trusted colleagues can alleviate anxiety and deepen connections.





Find a Higher Meaning

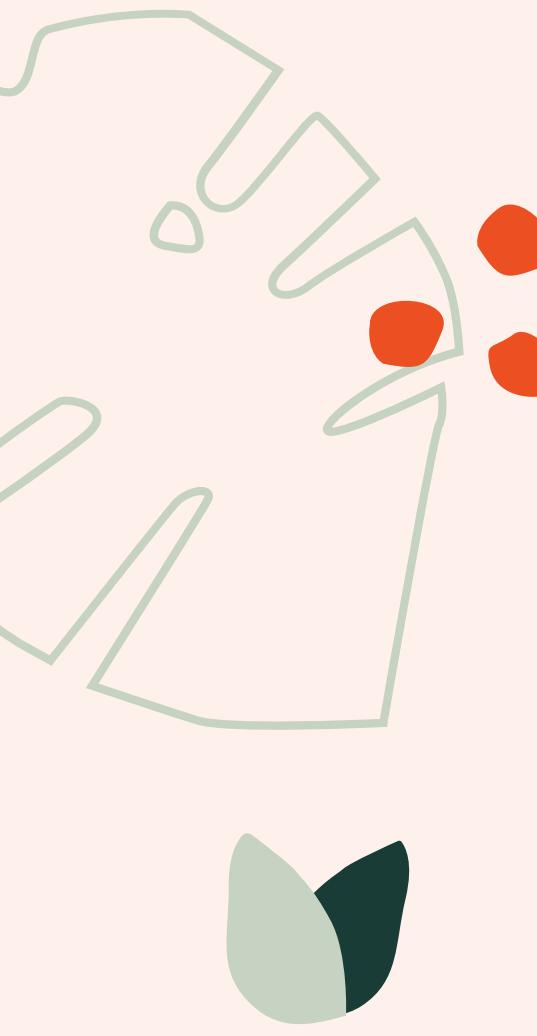
We all are part of something larger than ourselves.

This greater purpose can come from community connection, internal values, religion, family culture, and many other places.

Try mindfulness.

Practicing an open-minded, non-judgmental awareness of our present moment not only helps our internal satisfaction, it can also create space for the deep thinking required for accessing philosophical ideas.

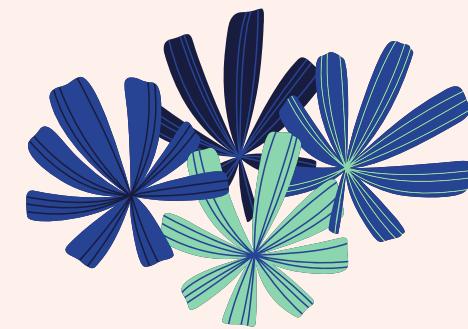




Create Your Own Well- Being Menu



Go for a Walk



Call a Friend



Read for Pleasure



Dance



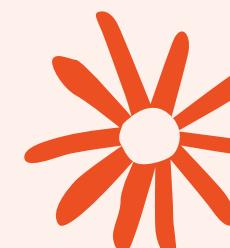
Do Yoga



Breathe Deeply



Cook a Meal



Write



Make Something

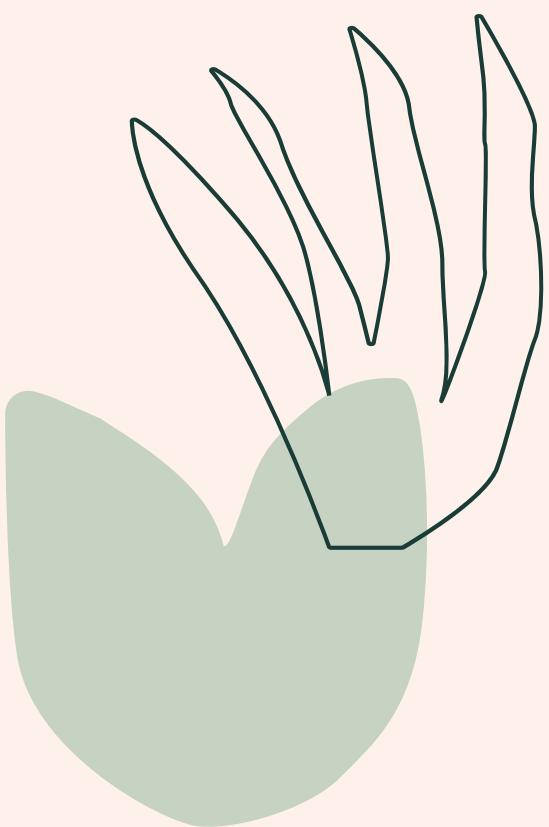
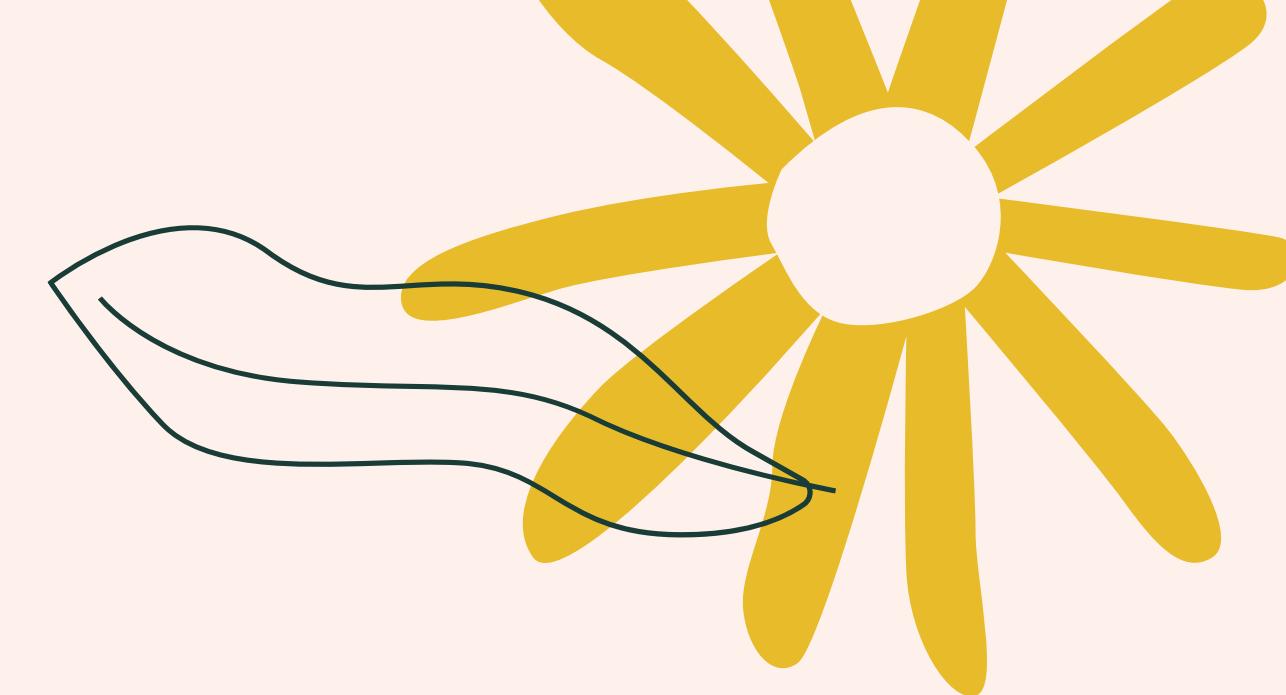
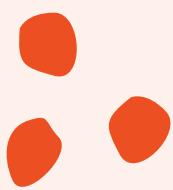


Know when to get help.

It can be hard to gauge the line between what is a normal amount of worry, grief, or loneliness, and when we're in over our heads. Having strong daily routines and trusted relationships can allow us to notice when we are struggling.



MORE RESOURCES



VLWI WEEKLY WELLNOTE

Good

This newsletter comes out most Mondays, curating wellness resources and events designed specifically for legal professionals.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Better

Available through many health insurance plan, these confidential services provides 3-5 counseling sessions on a variety of topics.

LAP

Best

Non-disciplinary, confidential, and free assistance for legal professionals (and their families) who experience mental health or substance use issues.

Further Reading



ATOMIC HABITS

By James Clear, this book examines the power of our daily habits and the impact of tiny, incremental change.

THE FOUR AGREEMENTS

By don Miguel Ruiz, this book encourages us to be impeccable with our word, not to take things personally, avoid assumptions, and always do our best.

THE HAPPINESS PROJECT

By Gretchen Rubin, who tries a different joy-boosting activity each month for a year to see what actually works.

ARTICLES FROM THE JUDICIAL CONFERENCE

Attached as part of your written materials, judges share well-being boosting activities such as interval jogging, hiking, and reading for pleasure.

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