Increased Stress on Lawyers

Well-Being & Social Distancing by Alice Sherren and Patty Beck, MLM Claim Attorneys

Uncertainty regarding coronavirus and COVID-19 are exacerbating already high levels of stress and anxiety in the United States and around the world. Recommendations to engage in social distancing, and sometimes even social isolation and quarantine, can make us feel alone. MLM wants lawyers to know that we are here for you and will do everything we can to support you during this challenging time. While it is recommended to limit physical interaction, we can use technology to connect and get through this crisis as a community.

Well-Being & Social Distancing

Exercise at home – Exercise is known to reduce stress and anxiety. If you are someone who maintains your mental health through physical exercise, avoid going to the gym and instead do your workout routines outside or within your home. A brisk walk with your family can do wonders for your emotional well-being. There are countless videos on YouTube and other websites that guide you through cardio, muscle-building, and yoga workouts at home, even if you do not have machines or weights to work with. As with any physical activity, start slow and respect your body’s limitations to make sure you conduct each exercise safely.

Practice mindfulness and meditation at home – Focusing on your breathing and training yourself to be present in the moment rather than worrying about the future can help you to maintain a sense of calm in an uncertain global environment. There are many online videos and apps with guided meditations and trainings on mindfulness that can be performed at home.

Use technology to stay connected with friends and loved ones – Social distancing can have negative emotional impacts and contribute to feelings of isolation. It is vital to follow the recommendations from the CDC regarding physical social distancing, but we encourage you to use technology to stay in touch your friends and family. Social distancing does not prevent you from talking on the phone, sending text messages or emails, or even writing snail mail letters to keep in contact and brighten another’s day. Use technology to remain in contact with those you care about while ensuring the health and safety of your community (FaceTime is a great way to stay connected without having to download a new app).

Lastly, MLM reminds you to be aware that courts across several jurisdictions have been issuing orders regarding postponing jury trials and other relevant court dates. Please be vigilant about staying abreast of updates provided by your jurisdiction and advise your clients of any changes in their cases to ensure compliance with your ethical duties, especially Rule 1.1 Competence and Rule 1.4 Communication.

As we adapt to an evolving situation as a global community, take the time to minimize any stress and anxiety you may be experiencing. Remember that everyone will handle their stress differently, so please support and be kind to each other, show gratitude to each other, and use this experience as an opportunity to grow as both lawyers and as people. Be well!

RECOMMENDATION TO ATTORNEYS

In addition to guidance from the Center of Disease Control & Prevention (CDC), MLM encourages you to stay calm and focus on maintaining your physical and emotional well-being. Below are ways to stay healthy and minimize stress during this challenging time:

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RESOURCES

If you would like additional information or resources on maintaining your well-being, or if you recognize that stress is taking a toll on a colleague, MLM encourages you to contact your state’s legal assistance program (LAP) and state bar well-being committee.

Questions? Contact MLM’s Risk Management HelpLine at 855-692-5146

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