

WELLNESS FOR ATTORNEYS

Achieving Excellence in Practice and Meaning in Life via Good Habits
Toward Focus, Fearlessness, and Balancing Priorities

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Wellness for Attorneys: Achieving Excellence in Practice and Meaning in Life via Good Habits
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Attorney Responsibility

Attorneys must practice good habits for personal wellness so they can—

- Attain the highest degree of professionalism
- Zealously represent their clients
- Experience excellent life-quality

Texas Lawyer’s Creed @ II: “A lawyer should employ **all appropriate means** to protect and advance the client’s legitimate rights, claims, and objectives.” (emphasis added)¹

Preamble to Tex. Disciplinary Rules @ 3: “In **all professional functions**, a lawyer should **zealously pursue clients’ interests** within the bounds of the law.” (emphasis added)²

¹ <https://www.txcourts.gov/media/276685/texaslawyerscreed.pdf>

² Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct (Including Amendments Effective January 31, 2022) pg. 5
<https://www.texasbar.com/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Home&ContentID=27271&Template=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm>

Introduction

Personal wellness is important for all of life each and every day. This includes the practice of law. The root of a rewarding, effective, and meaningful law practice for attorneys and their clients is for attorneys to pay attention to and develop good habits toward their personal wellbeing.

In her inspiring memoir, *The Beauty in Breaking*, ER Dr. Michele Harper observes “I [had practiced] medicine long enough to know that wellness was much more than anything we prescribe from a bottle. If we humans were to expand our definition of healing, there could actually be a great deal more of it.”³

Dr. Harper said it beautifully. Certainly, there are clinical circumstances where medicine and professional treatment are in order. I am not qualified to address such extremes of unhealthiness and disease. Rather, I want to consider some practical components that most of us, as adults, have within our control.

In full disclosure, I struggle personally with most everything I address in this paper, which I have divided into three major topics:

1. The practice of law is particularly important. What is more significant? You and your personal wellbeing. Personal wellbeing is the foundation of excellence in practice.
2. Each of us should endeavor to fill each of our days with meaning and fulfillment.
3. Each day, we are free, in any set of circumstances, to choose our attitude. This is true no matter the challenge—and when we slip, we can stop and adjust our attitudinal choice.

³ Dr. Michele Harper, *The Beauty in Breaking*, Riverhead Books, New York: 2020, p. 167.

The three points above are the overarching principles for the discussion that follows. I will provide practical suggestions and ideas for consideration and personal “practice,” including:

1. Sequential Action and thought—the importance of working to focus on one day, better yet, one activity or moment, at a time;
2. Daily practices to help us stay on a healthy and meaningful track, realizing that it takes hard, intentional work and commitment;
3. Coping with the emotion of fear and not allowing it to interfere with our work and aspirations in life;
4. Periodic self-reflection or “life-auditing” to help us refocus and identify, refine, and live out our life priorities; and
5. Endeavoring to keep our priorities in balance.

I have not mastered these prominent issues—and I never will. However, I recognize and embrace their significance and the necessary consistent work involved. Making progress and the discipline in simply working toward these objectives enhances the quality of our life journeys, making us more effective and fulfilled attorneys who can represent our clients to the absolute best of our respective abilities.

1. Sequential Action and Thought—Working to Focus on One Thing at a Time

How many things can we do at once? If it is a lot, do we consider it a strength and an asset as busy lawyers? A more important question is: How many things can **we do well** at once?

A few years ago, I attended a CLE program and discovered that I was “lost” in multitasking and lack of authentic attention to anything. About an hour into the program, I looked around my cramped space and took stock of everything I was doing almost

simultaneously. In that moment, I discovered I was checking and sending emails and texts; reading the sports page of the morning paper; skimming the professional paper created by the hard work of the current speaker; rating the prior speaker on a form; and *kind* of listening. In truth, I was hearing only parts of the speaker's presentation. At my feet was a big folder of work-related items that were also on my mind. Then I realized what I was *not* doing—**paying true attention to anything!** Then it hit me. My thoughts and actions were scattered, ineffective, and out of control—and it was habitual.

First is the importance of focusing on the **present**. This is often referred to as “mindfulness.” Unfortunately, mindfulness is such an overused word that many people just gloss over when they hear it. Yet, it is a vitally important concept. At the core of mindfulness is intentionality—a developed skill of paying attention to one person or thing at a time each day.

In our culture, especially for busy professionals, many consider multi-tasking a necessary skill. We believe we must multi-task to balance an overload of personal and professional obligations and interests. Many people have learned how to increase how many things they can do at once and as quickly as possible.

I strongly believe that the opposite is true. Multi-tasking results in imbalance. It is detrimental to our wellbeing because it leads to dispersion of thought and attentiveness. It dilutes our performance in everything that we do, including our law practice, and compromises our overall quality of life.

Multi-tasking is a **skill** on some level, but not all skills are healthy. While it might seem counter-intuitive, multi-tasking is easier than the demanding work of solely being attentive to the task, thought, or person in front of us right now.

Working toward focusing in the moment, authentically being present, and performing to the best of our ability is a healthy and productive life-skill. We must work at it over time—and all the time—so that mindfulness becomes habitual as we progressively improve our laser-focus skills in the moment.

Think of this as attending to matters and people **sequentially** instead of simultaneously. This is the core of living an authentic life. It adds depth, meaning, and happiness to our lives. We might never fully get to living each day in a completely attentive manner, but if we intend and commit to work on it diligently and consistently, we will move toward and into a more meaningful, prioritized, productive, and happier life. In summation, we can take charge of our wellness by choice, but with that choice comes the realization that it takes hard work.

In practicing law, how can we begin to, "zealously pursue [our] clients' interests" (Preamble to Tex. Disciplinary Rules @3) when we are thinking about or trying to do more than one thing at a time? Working on our ability to completely devote our minds and talents to one matter at a time may well be the most "appropriate means" to effectively represent and "advance [our] client's legitimate" interests (Texas Lawyer's Creed @II).

Increased ability to focus, which is always a discipline of learning, discovery, and progress, has the potential to calm us. Being calm allows us to be even more effective attorneys for our clients (and healthier for ourselves) because relaxation and calmness sets us free to do

our best. In his revolutionary book, *Chi Running*, Danny Dryer writes about running technique built on mindful focus with wisdom extending beyond exercise into other realms of life. He observes, "...like a meditation practice, the training of the mind...is more relaxing than letting the mind wander." Additionally, "...a focused mind is more relaxed than a mind that wanders aimlessly....When you are focused on teaching yourself something new, the benefits to your body and mind will far outweigh the effort it takes to focus."⁴ This does not only apply to runners, but to us as attorneys in our interaction with our clients.

Regarding the centrality of a focused mind to effectiveness, in Chapter 24 of my first book, *The Daily Practice of Life*, I draw on my experience as a single-track trail runner, but hiking or any other challenging activity that requires momentary focus is applicable. A single-track trail "...often has barely enough room to place one foot in front of the other while meandering over roots and rock" [and dealing with other obstacles]. "Any lapse of full attention to each momentary step with eyes open, front and center, can mean falling off the path, or worse yet, a painful face-plant."⁵

For me, this imagery is helpful in contemplating living in the present, as well as the role of the past and future in our thinking and experience. "Along the narrow way, the past is significant because it informs the present." Running in a forest on a trail, we learn about our footing and challenges as we go and become more adept. Similarly in life: "Good and bad steps we have taken in the midst of [life's] obstacles [inform and] enable us" to better focus on right now. Stated differently, meditatively contemplating our own life experiences provides a wealth

⁴ Danny Dryer. *Chi Running*, Fireside Books division of Simon & Schuster, New York: 2004, p. 44.

⁵ Walt Shelton. *The Daily Practice of Life*, Crosslink Publishing, Rapid City, SD: 2020, p. 106.

of information to help us make good choices in our daily lives *now*. Regarding the future, we may glance ahead into it, but it is like a “dream until it materializes when each foot hits the ground.”⁶ Working at our *art* of momentary focus along the way is a means of enhancing our life quality. In a law practice setting, exercising such discipline turns us into better attorneys over time by helping us develop and achieve excellence in representation.

In working toward greater mindfulness in our law practice and life, we must distinguish between interest and commitment. We might be interested in practicing and living in a more focused and balanced manner, but are we truly committed to it?

In her raw and excellent memoir, *Bravey*, former 10,000-meter Olympian and now filmmaker and actress Alexi Pappas shares a wealth of wisdom gained in a life of significant ups and downs. The “downs” included surviving her mother taking her own life when Alexi was a small girl (but old enough to always remember) and a serious fight with deep-seated depression later in life.

According to Ms. Pappas, mere interest can dissolve when challenges inevitably arise on our journey toward an objective. “To be *committed* is to be dead set on achieving your goal no matter how much tedious work it takes. If you aren’t committed, then you’re only interested.”⁷

Interest and commitment are potentially two sequential steps, but the second one is much harder. The transition from interest to absolute commitment is never automatic. Instead, definitive choice and hard work create the bridge to commitment, followed by progress.

⁶ Ibid. p. 107.

⁷ Alexi Pappas. *Bravey*, Dial Press/Random House: New York, 2021, p. 290.

2. Daily Practices—and Reminders to Enhance Mindfulness in Practice and Life

How do we start our days? Is it with intention and preparation to be at our best throughout the day? Or, is it in an absolute rush to get to and through the day? Our daily start sets the tone for either a rushed and thought-dispersed day or one oriented toward meaning.

As busy attorneys with obligations within and outside of law practice, how can we find more time in our days? It is important to know because our health and wellbeing might depend upon it. Further, as little as ten minutes can make a dramatic difference in qualitative daily experience. How? Just get up ten minutes earlier (and go to bed ten minutes earlier).

Rabbi Harold Kushner is one of my favorite authors. He is a prolific writer who writes about faith and quality of life matters from an inclusive standpoint. He writes from a Jewish perspective, but he primarily writes for everyone. One reason I like him (I have eight of his books and have read all of them at least twice) is that he has standing to address life's challenges. I gravitate toward people who have experiential standing to provide insight and counsel.

Rabbi Kushner is best known for his first book, *When Bad Things Happen to Good People* (Avon Books 1983), which he wrote following the premature death of his son of an extremely rare disease (Progeria) that aged him to the point of a 90-year-old by age fourteen, when he died.

In Kushner's book, *When All You've Ever Wanted Isn't Enough*, he encourages his readers to, **"fill each day with one day's worth of meaning"** (emphasis added)⁸. What beautiful advice. Imagine the profound impact of adopting this daily objective and repeating it

⁸ Rabbi Harold Kushner. *When All You've Ever Wanted Isn't Enough*, Pocket Books: New York, 1986, p. 143.

over and over through the day, especially when law-practice demands, frustration, dispersion, and stress are getting the best of us. When you get down and overwhelmed, try taking a moment: breathe slowly a few times with your eyes closed, slow your mind down, and deliberately think: “I’m going to reset and work to fill this day with one day’s worth of meaning.” This includes but is not limited to the daily quality and experience of our law practice. Rather, it relates to all aspects of our lives, which are interrelated.

How do we fill our days with meaning? One day, and better yet, one part of the day at a time—and this includes all aspects of our legal work. How can we improve our intention of staying focused on the present task and person before us throughout each day? How do we stay consistent with our priorities in life, such as practicing to the best of our ability and providing our clients the absolute best of our skills?

Initially, we establish a first of the day routine to set our intention and commitment on the right track. Whatever our season in life, including our law practice settings, it is our choice how we start our day. The amount of time we should devote to a first-of-the-day-routine will vary depending on our circumstances and period of life, but the advantage is still the same.

I titled my first book *The Daily Practice of Life* because my life experience and faith tradition teach me that meaningful living is indeed a disciplined practice and process for all of life. By practice, I mean the art of actual living, not preparing for something later like a game or performance. We practice law by doing and progressing, which is simply part of our practice of daily life.

We practice law for a variety of reasons, but not to sacrifice the quality of our daily living. How we treat ourselves and others with focus on each day is much more important than

law practice. At the same time, this intentionality is central to a stellar law practice and enhances rather than interfering with it. A diligent commitment to staying focused allows us to enrich our life-experience and enjoyment, and this includes our legal performance.

What each one of us does to set-up each day in an intentional and balanced manner is a personal matter, which we should experiment with and refine over time by trial and error.

The first chapter of *The Daily Practice of Life* has the same title as the book: “The Daily Practice of Life.” This autobiographical account, focused on a point in my life after the rigors of law school and the multiplicity of working for a big law firm with crazed expectations (that were primarily self-imposed) as well as starting to teach one course at Baylor Law School. My life and mind were too hectic and scattered. It seemed as if ***I was thinking about everything at once all the time*** instead of slowing down to address matters, and more importantly people (clients included), one at a time.

Have you ever felt that way? Do you find yourself thinking about everything at once, but cannot turn it off? I decided in that moment that I needed a first of the day routine to enhance my ability to focus, relax, and perform at my best in a healthier manner. I drew upon my Christian tradition for that routine, and I still utilize these mechanisms as the foundation for starting each day. First, I start my day in solitude, silence, and stillness (both of mind and physical movement). As I read something motivational, and consistent with how I want to live, I calmly consider my “work” or activity for the day ahead and form the intent and commitment to stay as focused and fully present as possible. Depending on our life circumstances, this first of the day practice might involve ten minutes, thirty minutes, or some other length of time. The key is **consistency, intention, and commitment** to the process.

Practically, what might our morning time look like? Perhaps you have a special place—a patio, deck, or favorite chair—or you can create your place over time. Do you love coffee in the morning as much as I do—or maybe tea? I cannot participate in my preparatory morning time without good coffee. Do you have a dog you love, as I do (or maybe you are a cat person)? Having my dog in my lap or nearby helps calm me. Sometimes, my morning time could be as simple as drinking coffee, sitting still, and thinking about being more like my dog, who truly does live in the moment and always seems content.

What else might we do? Reading a short excerpt from a meaningful book (certainly not a case, brief, or legal memorandum) is helpful, such as a chapter from a devotional-style book, whether a religiously oriented book, a self-help-type book, or a few pages of a relaxing novel or poetry. We might also close with a few quiet moments to still our minds, then calmly think about the day ahead with intent to take it a step at a time and endeavor to keep a sense (or at least a part) of this calmness we have experienced. If you like to exercise, such as a walk or a run, you might follow this time with such activity as a transition to *your* day. Alternatively, you might utilize your walk or run as part of your morning preparatory period—some of us “still” our minds better as we physically move.

One important aspect of a personal morning routine is that we create and maintain a ritual to remind ourselves that each day is a new beginning. Every day matters—each one is a fresh start ripe with opportunities.

How do we react in our attempted quiet and peaceful time when our mind starts to wander? How do we readjust our thinking when our head fills up with how busy the day ahead

is going to be? Frustration is normal, but not beneficial. Recognize the frustration, acknowledge the thoughts, allow them to pass, and then we can refocus.

Solitude is excellent for daily preparation but may not be the end all and be all. What if we need—and we will—help, support, or encouragement? Relationships are essential. We lean on friends and take time to talk with them, and give them the same support, especially friends going through similar times. These best friends may come from the legal realm, or they may be our mentors—those we admire and who we may consider as role models. We feel safe when we talk with them.

Friendship does not only come from the outside, but we must also work on being a good friend to ourselves. Have you ever realized that you are an exceptionally good friend to others but tend to be overly hard and judgmental of yourself? Step outside of yourself and be your own good friend—give yourself a break.

In addition to being a good friend to yourself and avoiding self-condemnation, along with resolving to change where needed, we can choose to let struggles and mistakes improve our life journey. Remember the excellent memoir that I noted at the outset, *The Beauty in Breaking*? In it, Dr. Michele Harper tells us that she “...has been broken many times” in her life. She draws a parallel to a form of Japanese art where one repairs broken pottery with “...precious metals” such as gold or silver. She observes, “[The] choice to highlight the breaks...not only acknowledges them, but also pays tribute to the vessel that has been torn about by the mutability of life.” Imperfections make the “broken object...more beautiful for its imperfections. In life, too, even greater brilliance can be found after the mending.”⁹ This

⁹ Dr. Michele Harper, *The Beauty in Breaking*, Riverhead Books, New York: 2020, p. xv.

seamlessly translates to practicing law. Learning from our individual experiences is one of the most important aspects of progressing toward excellence in our practice, and more so, in all aspects of our lives. This includes our positive and negative experiences. The latter often become the greatest collection of learning experiences for us.

Daily life is all about choices. In Viktor Frankl's, *Man's Search for Meaning* (published in 1959 under the more compelling title *From Death-Camp to Existentialism*), he famously articulated based on his experiences in Auschwitz that the "...last of human freedoms" is the ability to **choose one's attitude** (emphasis added) in any set of circumstances."¹⁰ This brief book, in my opinion, it is one of the best ever written. I read it every few years and have done so since first reading it in the late 1970s. His autobiography, *Recollections* (Basic Books/Perseus Books Group 2000), is another excellent book with helpful insights into his life and life itself.

We can make good and bad choices, inside and outside of legal contexts. We are human, so occasional bad choices and consequences are inevitable. Dr. Harper also observes: "As we place one foot in front of the other, we make choices at every step, no matter the terrain. [At any point,] we look back at our footprints and must face the result of our choices."¹¹ That is certainly true. We are accountable for our choices. Yet, we move on—and forgiving ourselves is so important. We do not forget. Instead, we learn without self-condemnation. As Dr. Harper so wisely observes, "Forgiveness condones nothing, but it does cast off the chains of anger, judgment...denial, and pain that choke growth. [Forgiveness]

¹⁰ Victor Frankl. *Man's Search for Meaning*, Beacon Press: Boston, 2006, p.66.

¹¹ Harper. *The Beauty of Breaking*, pp. 136-37

allows for life, for freedom....With this freedom, we can **feel better, be better, and choose better the next time**" (emphasis added)¹².

Regarding easing up on ourselves and being realistic, Rabbi Harold Kushner, in his renowned book *How Good do We Have to Be? A New Understanding of Guilt and Forgiveness*, observes, "When we let ourselves be defined...by our worst moments instead of our best ones, we learn to think of ourselves as people who never get it right, rather than as capable people who make an occasional, thoroughly human mistake."¹³

Once we have our morning time ritual established, it is time to move fully into our day. Inevitably, we will lose our focus and get overwhelmed. What can we do? During the day, when I find myself straying off course, I think back on my morning time alone and some key words, such as: "calm," or, "just breathe," or, "one step at a time," or, "mindfulness," or, "slow down"—whatever helps me refocus and retrieve my intended daily perspective. At other times, my words are geared toward qualities I want to exhibit, such as: "gentleness," and, "compassion," and, "professionalism," and, "justice," and "patience," and "kindness." Collectively, we should deeply and consistently care about how we live, including in our relationships and interactions with loved ones, clients, other people, and ourselves.

Personal first-of-the-day practices and reminder techniques throughout each day can lead us toward *harmony* and balance, as well as excellence in our professional endeavors. Inevitably, we will fall off the narrow path. When we do, we should pick ourselves up and keep trying.

¹² Ibid p. 229.

¹³ Rabbi Harold Kushner, *How Good do We Have to Be? A New Understanding of Guilt and Forgiveness*, First Back Bay 1997: New York, (originally Little, Brown and Company, 1996), p. 38.

3. Dealing With Fear

How does fear factor into and affect the practice of law? In a larger and more significant context, how does our response to fear impact our families, friends, health, needed rest, and other parts of life?

It is important to distinguish between feeling fear and what I characterize as, **being afraid**. Fear as an emotion is normal and often helpful. For example, feeling fearful can keep us from running into a burning building or taking on legal representation in areas outside our areas of expertise.

The stagnant condition of being afraid is different than the normal emotion of fear. The ineffective state of fear may result from exaggerating the emotion or habitual fearfulness. Such condition involves hesitation or, worse yet, something close to immobilization. We may be petrified and produce nothing of value. In some toxic work cultures, an overload of projects, constant utilization of speed-of-light communication mechanisms, unreasonable presumptions for availability, and feeling compelled to immediately respond to demands can trigger this negative state of mind or inaction.

One of the biggest potential fears for busy attorneys is being afraid of making a mistake, which can cause stagnation. Another fear shared by many attorneys is not readily knowing the answer to a client's or senior colleague's questions, coupled with an obsession that we should immediately answer all questions within our substantive areas of expertise. Both manifestations of fear are stressful and potentially harmful. Neither is conducive to qualitative law practice or

life. At an extreme, such apprehensions can negatively affect our not only our work quality, but our life and health as well.

Immobilization or extreme hesitancy just short of fearful inertia is like a trance that keeps us from doing our best in any activity, including being the most effective and stellar advocates possible for clients. *New York Times* writer Frank Bruni, in his autobiography, *The Beauty of Dusk: On Vision Lost and Found*, profoundly accounts suddenly having to cope with partial blindness due to a rare stroke that affected his optical nerve. He observes that it is “...harder to rouse yourself from a standstill than it is to keep moving, to let the velocity you’ve worked up carry you a bit further....Coping can be incremental and sequential.”¹⁴

So, what can we do about fear inhibiting our work performance and life? We can start by giving ourselves a break, realizing that regardless of our level of experience and sophistication, we are human. Thus, we are imperfect. We should always be ready and willing to say: “I don’t know” or, “Let me look into it and follow-up with you.” Over the years, I have often suggested to students that as attorneys, they should always be ready to answer: “I don’t know.” Those three words are a badge of true wisdom instead of weakness or inability. As an attorney or a potential client, I would not want to work with anyone who can never say: “I don’t know.”

Rabbi Harold Kushner once again shares some immensely helpful advice on coping with fear in his book, *Conquering Fear: Living Boldly in an Uncertain World*. His subtitle is a good slogan for attorneys as we progress toward a better, healthier balance of life priorities within the demands and often absurd expectations associated with modern law practice.

¹⁴ Frank Bruni, *The Beauty of Dusk: On Vision Lost and Found*, Avid Reader Press: 2022, p. 47.

In *Conquering Fear*, Rabbi Kushner counsels: "Our goal should not be the total absence of fear but the mastery of fear, being the master of our emotions rather than their slave. Our goal should be to recognize legitimate fears, dismiss exaggerated fears, and not let fear keep us from doing the things we yearn [or are reasonably expected] to do."¹⁵ In a similar vein, Kushner again emphasizes and suggests that, "[o]ur goal should never be denial of fear but the mastery of fear, the refusal to let fear keep us from living fully and happily."¹⁶ Recognizing, facing, and controlling fear can help us pace ourselves so that we can qualitatively practice law and integrate it into our overall life and personal priorities.

4. Periodic Self-Reflection to Identify, Refine, and Implement Priorities

In addition to daily preparation for and reflection on our practice of life and law, we can all benefit from periodic longer **hard looks**. This includes how we are living and practicing relative to our intentions and priorities, and whether we need to make changes in our perspectives, attitudes, or life context and circumstances. An annual or semi-annual practice can be most helpful in this regard. According to a quote ascribed to Socrates, a fourth century B.C.E. Greek philosopher, an "unexamined life is not worth living."¹⁷ Further, and in a more profound way than our daily routines, periodic life audits provide us with a deep sense of making a fresh start—a new beginning.

As a practical matter, an annual or other periodic time for a solitary retreat of sorts is an excellent practice to reflect, recharge, and commit to desired, needed, and helpful changes in

¹⁵ Rabbi Harold Kushner. *Conquering Fear: Living Boldly in an Uncertain World*, Anchor/Random House: New York, 2009, p. 11.

¹⁶ Ibid. p. 24.

¹⁷Plato. *The Apology of Socrates*, Delphi Open Books, p. 31.

habits and other aspects of life, including our work. For example, we can use this valuable time to examine and reflect upon:

- (1) the prior year relative to our priorities, which we should also identify and re-examine;
- (2) how we have lived; and
- (3) what changes we might want to make.

The duration could be from a few hours to a half-day, a weekend, or a series of parts of the day over a week or so. Whatever fits, as long as we can take our time without distraction—or with as little distraction as possible within our circumstances. The time involved pales in comparison to the potential benefits for our wellness and the quality of our lives, including our law practice.

In the apocryphal book of Sirach (part of the Catholic Bible but not the Protestant or Hebrew Bible), the wise teacher observes based on life experience: “...the mind firmly resolved after due reflection will not be afraid[, including] in a crisis” (Sir. 22:16B). When we habitually take the time for a hard, honest, self-analytical look at our lives and priorities, we can indeed emerge with a strong, committed resolve and a fresh outlook that will help us weather storms as well as the calmest of days.

5. Endeavoring to Balance Priorities

Daily and periodic routine practices can help us stay balanced in life—meaning balanced relative to our priorities.

“Priorities” means what is profoundly important to us in life. Of course, this is personal and varies. Yet, I expect for many of us, the list includes our families, friends, faith, good health, rest, excellence in work, and collectively meaningful living. That is a lot to balance.

Remember, there should be no **exemption** or **intermission** from consistently working to balance and live out our priorities. This is especially true for extremely busy times as faced by many attorneys. Think of such times as simply presenting more challenging circumstances.

I hope the practices illuminated in this paper, both daily and periodic, help with that balance right now and as we live into the future, one period of life at a time, and within each season, one day at a time.

Working to stay focused and attentive is key toward attaining good health, true wellness, happiness, and leaving a positive **mark** in the world for others. In addition to our personal health, wellbeing, and experiences, we should seriously consider the imprint we leave on the world around us each day and for the entirety of our lives. A helpful image is living as if others are watching us as mentors and role-models without us even realizing it, while at the same time giving ourselves a break when we stumble.

Takeaways

- * Our personal wellness is more important than law practice, yet it enhances the quality and enjoyment of our professional practice.
- * We should aspire to fill each of our days with one day's worth of meaning and fulfillment at a time, including as healthy, stellar attorneys.
- * We are always free to choose our attitude and path, and to *reset* each when we stray from our intentions and objectives.

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