



Peer Supervision, Training & Support Models for Legal Workplaces

ADDRESSING VICARIOUS TRAUMA, MENTAL ILLNESS & STRESS. CASE STUDIES &
GUIDES

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Who am I?

- ▶ Mental Health Accredited Social Worker from NSW Australia
- ▶ Been training lawyers in mental health & resilience for over 20 years
- ▶ Consultant to Legal Aid NSW, ODPP NSW, CDPP Australia, AFP, Knowmore, Royal Commission into Child Abuse, NSW Law Society, NSW Bar, UK Bar, numerous tribunals and Ombudsman in Australia and NZ and many more

Training lawyers need to stay well

- ▶ What follows are training programs regularly being run in Australia and New Zealand

A Demystified View of Mental Illness

- ▶ Mental illness through the lens of neuroscience
 - ▶ Aetiology & early symptoms
 - ▶ How to manage self & others when symptoms are present
 - ▶ How to get help for self & others
 - ▶ Referral and further information
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- ▶ Legal Aid, NSW ODPP, Crown Solicitor, Holding Redlich, RACS, tribunals, the Law Society of NSW

Stress Management & Resilience Training

- ▶ Stress explained from a biological, and neuroscience point of view. Notably Robert Sapolsky, *Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers*
 - ▶ Practical Strategies for Individuals
 - ▶ What teams can do
 - ▶ What workplaces can do
 - ▶ Resources & referral information
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- ▶ Compulsory training for Legal Aid and ODPP NSW, part of Orientation programme, Law Society of NSW, RACS, Legal Services Commissions of NSW & Vic.

Vicarious Trauma

- ▶ Explain it
- ▶ Teach early warning signs
- ▶ Give strategies for individuals and workplaces
- ▶ Policies & procedures for handling difficult material
- ▶ Strengths based approach
- ▶ Pride in the ability to do this difficult work
- ▶ Mentoring and supervision in the workplace
- ▶ VT manual
- ▶ Knowmore, Holding Redlich, RACS, Royal Commission into Institutionalised Child Abuse, Aus. Federal Police

Mindfulness the essential tool

- ▶ Teach mindfulness again from a brain based perspective
- ▶ Teach a technique, have them practice it with you
- ▶ Websites and tools
- ▶ Ruby Wax, Prof Mark Williams & others
- ▶ Adam Fraser The Third Space

- ▶ Freehills, Tribunals, numerous law firms, Law Society of NSW

The elephant in the room: teaching skills to discuss & manage suicidality

- ▶ Teach the basics dispelling many harmful myths about suicide
- ▶ Assessment of self & others
- ▶ How to have the conversation
- ▶ Dealing with confidentiality fears
- ▶ Where to go for help
- ▶ Training responders
- ▶ NSW Law Society initiative of Lawyers' Lifeline
- ▶ NSW ODPP runs this training

Leadership & Mentoring Training

- ▶ Train managers in how to lead effectively & supportively
- ▶ Andrew O'Keefe hardwired Humans as resource
- ▶ Train, supervise and support mentors

- ▶ NSW Crown Solicitors, NSW ODPP, NSW Legal Aid

Workplace Wellbeing Committee

- ▶ Drawn from all levels of staff
- ▶ Meets regularly to research, plan and implement wellbeing initiatives in the workplace
- ▶ These include social, policy, physical fitness, wellbeing checks, training and work practices
- ▶ NSW Legal Aid and ODPP are 2 government agencies doing this
- ▶ TJMF guidelines are a great starting place

Managing Change Training

- ▶ Courses for both managers and individuals to cope with change
- ▶ Should include how to approach change in a way that will bring people with you
- ▶ How to consult & collaborate
- ▶ Implementation & review

- ▶ NSW Crown Solicitors ,NSW Women's' Legal Services NSW Law Society FLIP initiative

Managing Conflict

- ▶ Courses on recognising & dealing with bullying, both intentional & unintentional. See Evelyn Field Bullyblocking @ Work. Also John Clark Dealing with Monsters in the Workplace
- ▶ Policies & procedures also need to be discussed in this space.

Individual & Team Support Models

- ▶ Providing a mental health professional to both individuals and teams on a regular basis to check and support morale and wellbeing.
- ▶ Supportive & instructive, confidential.
- ▶ Examples: RACS, Royal Commission, Knowmore.
- ▶ Wellbeing checks e.g. Legal aid
- ▶ Coaching for lawyers
- ▶ Canadian example: Ontario and a number of other jurisdictions have embedded counsellors employed in house for the lawyers.

Peer Supervision Model for lawyers: case study RACS

- ▶ Senior Lawyers meet with one external supervisor, a clinician
- ▶ Junior lawyers meet with different external supervisor, who in this case is both lawyer and clinician
- ▶ Both groups meet quarterly

The groups follow the following format

- ▶ Check in: each group member reflects on and shares how they have been travelling lately and what are the current issues are for them
- ▶ The group then shares ideas in a facilitated discussion about how to tackle these issues
- ▶ The facilitator may add some psycho-social education about specific issues such as VT and techniques to manage it
- ▶ Check out: each group member shares what they will take from this session back into their practice.

Other Skills Based Training

- ▶ How to manage difficult clients
- ▶ How to have difficult conversations
- ▶ Business skills
- ▶ Technical skills (See FLIP program on NSW Law Society website)

Incentives for Uptake of Wellbeing Training

- ▶ CPD points for attending such training.
- ▶ E.g. NSW Law Society
- ▶ Compulsory component of Orientation Training.
- ▶ E.g. NSW ODPP, Legal Aid
- ▶ Online resources an intranet e.g. Law society of NSW, LawCover
NSW Legal & ODPP intranet wellbeing pages
- ▶ The Resilient Lawyer by Robyn Bradey
<http://www.lawcover.com.au/personal-wellbeing/>
- ▶ UK Bar Wellbeing at the Bar portal www.wellbeingatthebar.co.uk

Still to be done

- ▶ Engage the judiciary in all of the above training
- ▶ Career counselling for young lawyers and law students
- ▶ Law schools teaching so called soft skills and the content of this presentation
- ▶ Teaching lawyers social & emotional intelligence
- ▶ Finding & encouraging more flexible ways of working in the law and collaborative legal models
- ▶ What else??

Contact

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