



Presented by the Labor & Employment Law Section



Stress Less:

Practical Tips to Reduce Stress in the Practice of Law and Life

Saturday, January 30, 2021

Program - 9:00 - 10:30 AM

Zoom Webinar

CLE Credit: 1.5 Hours Competence Issues Credit



Provider #36

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**Stress Less:
Practical Tips to Reduce Stress in the Practice of Law and Life**

Carrie Williams

Master Your Stress

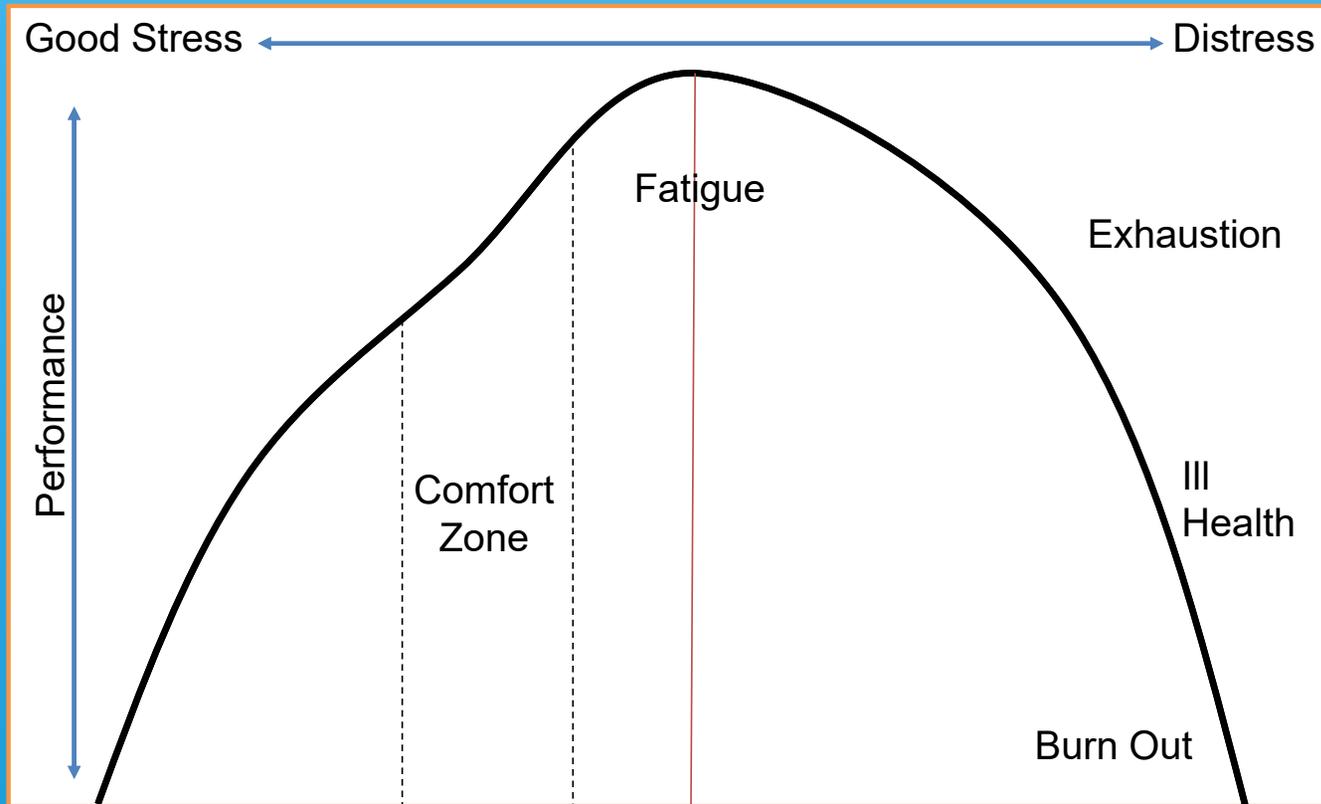
1. Stress

- Good vs. bad
- Factors of stress
- Your stress state

2. Solutions and tips to combat stress

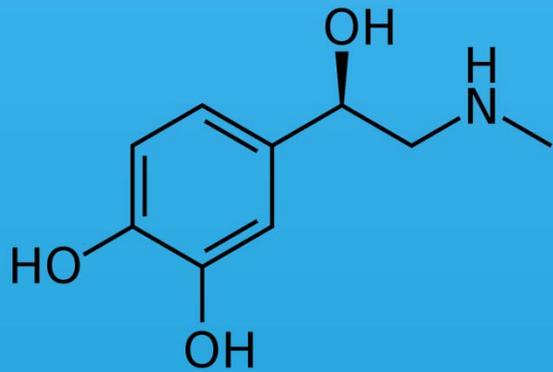
- Mentally
- Physically
- In the workplace

Good Stress vs. Bad Stress



Adapted from Nixon, P. Practitioner, 1979

What is stress?



Hormone
Moderation



Emotion
Regulation

AUDIENCE QUESTION #1

How many points did you score on the Holmes-Rahe Test?

- 11-150 points
- 151-299 points
- 300+ points

Holmes-Rahe

- **11-150 points** - Low to moderate chance of becoming ill or having an accident in the next 2 years.
- **151-299 points** – 50% chance of becoming ill or having an accident in the next 2 years.
- **300-600 points** - 80% chance of becoming ill of having an accident in the next 2 years.

Audience Question #2

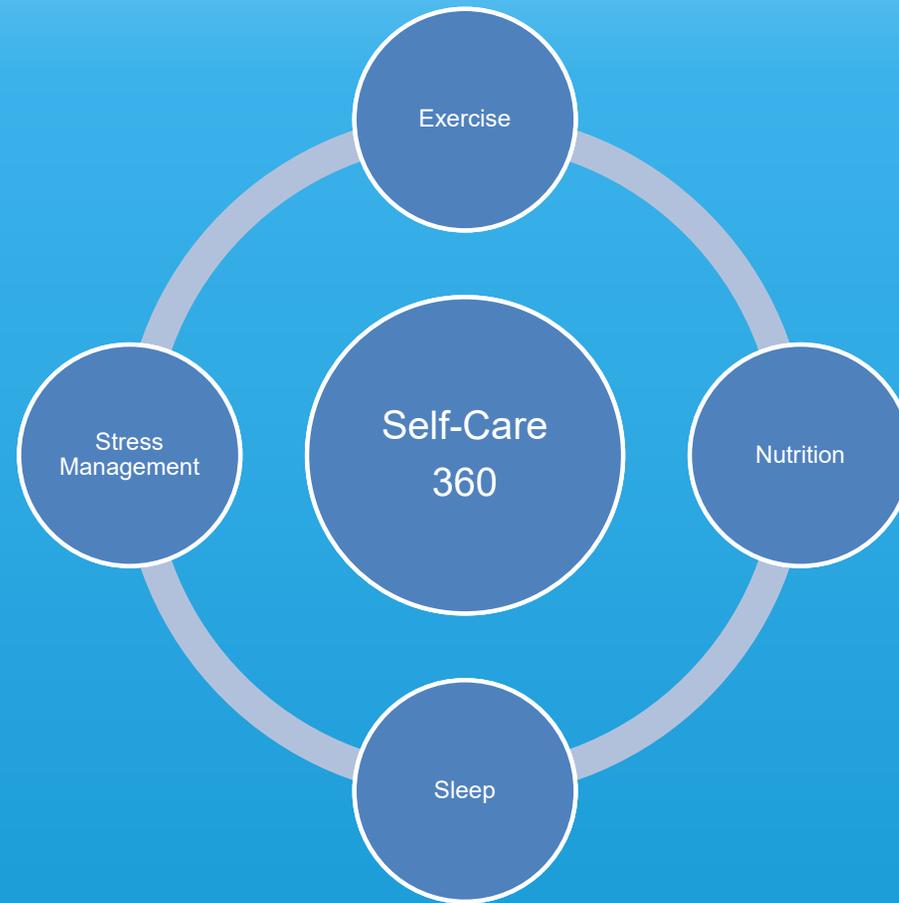
How many points did you score on the Williams Physical Stress Test?

- Under 5 points
- 6-25 points
- 25-49 points
- 50+ points

Williams Physical Stress Test

- **Under 5 points** - Total Zen master and handle your stress extremely well.
- **6-25 points** - Minimal to moderate stress, at times you may slip into the bad stress zone, but you don't tend to stay there.
- **25-49 points** - Stress is affecting your daily life. Now is the time to actively reduce it.
- **50+ points** - On a direct path to burnout. Change needs to be made immediately.

Self-Care



Mindfulness to Manage Stress

- Focusing on the present moment instead of worrying about the past or stressing about the future.
- Benefits:
 - Increase in serotonin, dopamine, endorphins = increase in mood
 - decrease pain intensity by 40%
 - reduce anxiety levels by up to 22%
- Practices:
 - Mindful breathing
 - Meditation
 - Yoga
 - Tai-chi

Mental

- Mindset
- Positivity Ratio
- Shift Thoughts and Actions

FIXED



GROWTH

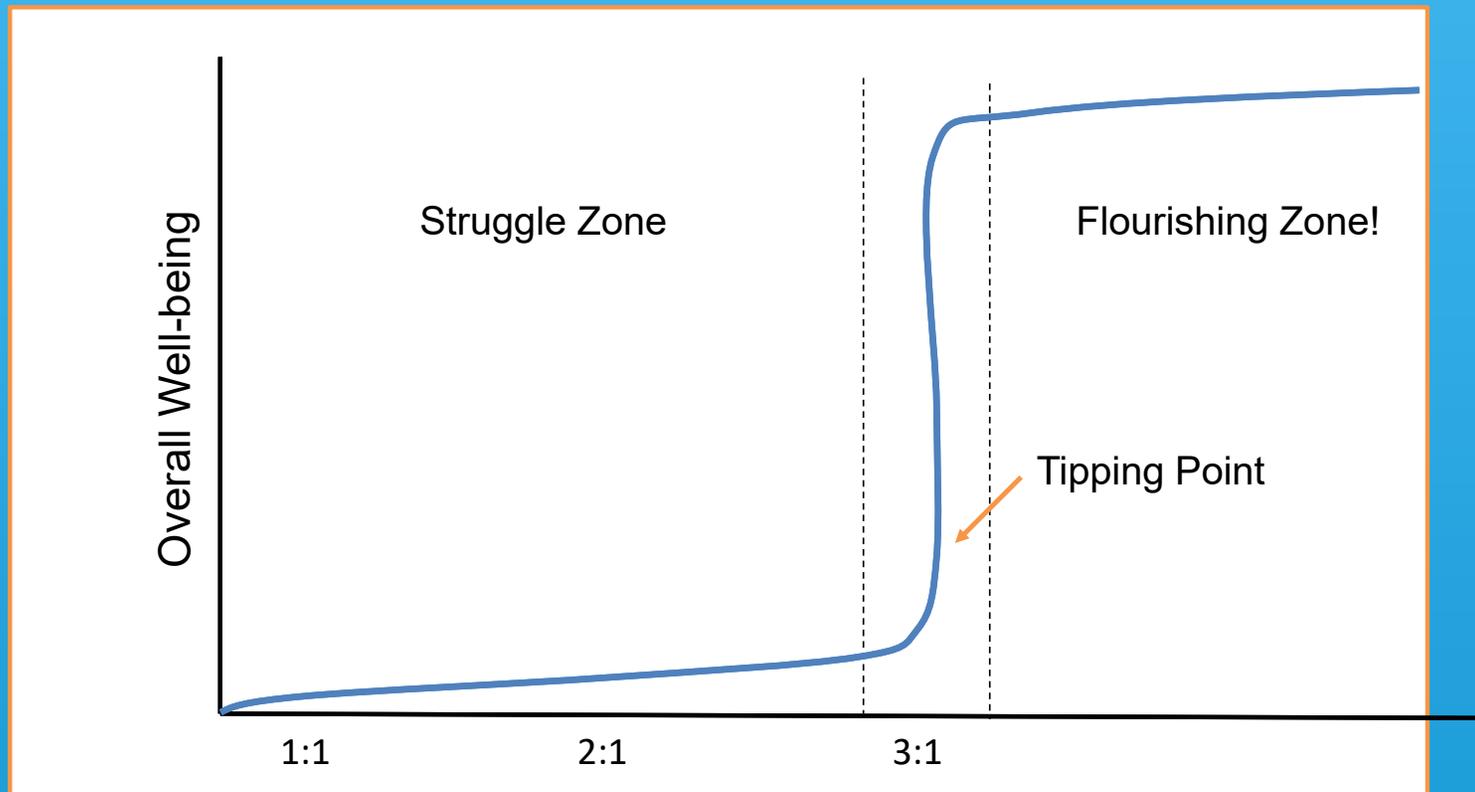
When faced with:



Changing Mindset

- Be aware and actively set growth mindset
- Identify and acknowledge triggers
- Consistently focus on what you can choose and challenge
- Take growth action

Positivity Ratio



Adapted from Positivity, Dweck, Carol

Negative Emotions

- Anger
- Shame
- Contempt
- Disgust
- Embarrassment
- Guilt
- Hate
- Sadness
- Fear
- Stress

Positive Emotions

- Joy
- Gratitude
- Serenity
- Interest
- Hope
- Pride
- Amusement
- Inspiration
- Awe
- Love

Tips to Increase Positivity

- Spend time in nature
- Daily gratitude journal
- Daily anticipation list
- Learn and apply your strengths
- Wall of positivity
- Revisit past positive situations
- Reduce or avoid negative situations

Shifting Thoughts and Actions

I see the tiger.  Trigger

I think I am in danger.  Thought

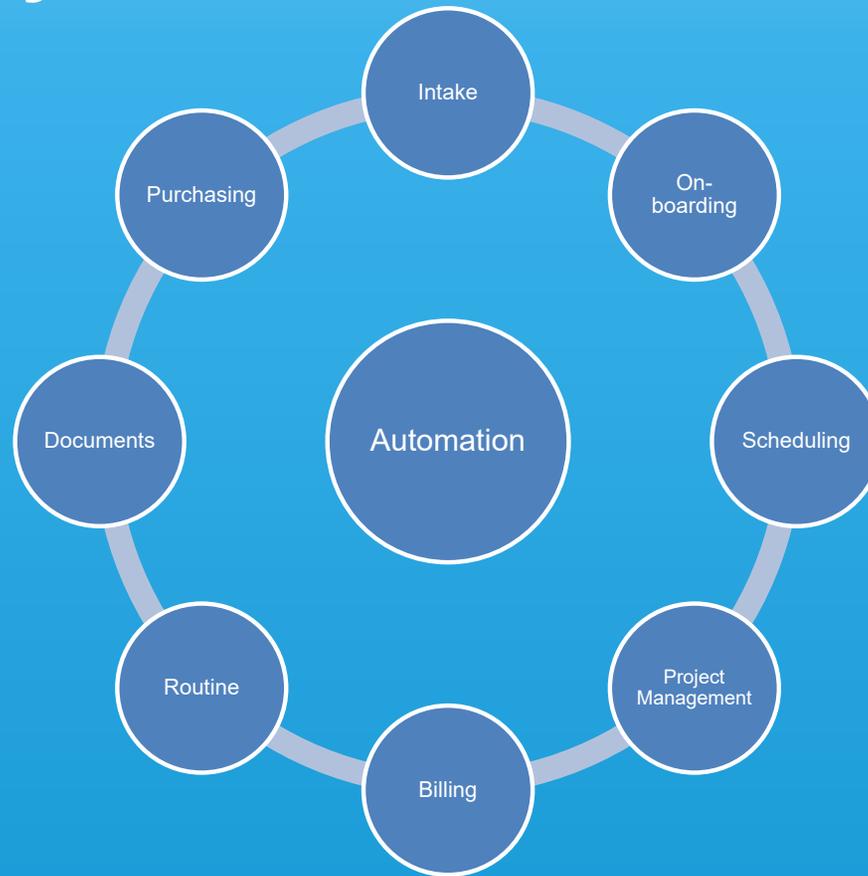
I feel afraid.  Emotion

I run.  Action

Work

- Practice the 3 “ates”
 - Automate
 - Delegate
 - Separate

Automate – Systematize – Pre-Plan



Delegate

1. Does it help me reach my goal?
2. Do I want to do it?
3. Do I need to do it?

Separate – Work/Life Integration

- Know your values
- Set realistic expectations
- Create boundaries / guidelines / exceptions
- Prepare for violations
- Bring up a violation right away
- Say no to extras

Questions?

www.rainshadowcoaching.com/book-a-session



Conclusion

- That you will experience stress is a given.
- How it effects your life is a choice.



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In the last year have you experienced:	Yes	No
1. Death of spouse (100)		
2. Divorce (73)		
3. Marital separation (65)		
4. Jail term (63)		
5. Death of close family member (63)		
6. Personal injury or illness (53)		
7. Marriage (50)		
8. Fired at work (47)		
9. Marital reconciliation (45)		
10. Retirement (45)		
11. Change in health of family member (44)		
12. Pregnancy (40)		
13. Sex difficulties (39)		
14. Gain of new family member (39)		
15. Business readjustment (39)		
16. Change in financial state (38)		
17. Death of close friend (37)		
18. Change to a different line of work (36)		
19. Change in number of arguments with spouse (35)		
20. A large mortgage or loan (31)		
21. Foreclosure of mortgage or loan (30)		
22. Change in responsibilities at work (29)		
23. Son or daughter leaving home (29)		
24. Trouble with in-laws (29)		
25. Outstanding personal achievement (28)		
26. Spouse begins or stops work (26)		
27. Begin or end school/college (26)		
28. Change in living conditions (25)		
29. Revision of personal habits (24)		
30. Trouble with boss (23)		
31. Change in work hours or conditions (20)		
32. Change in residence (20)		
33. Change in school/college (20)		
34. Change in recreation (19)		
35. Change in church activities (19)		
36. Change in social activities (18)		
37. A moderate loan or mortgage (37)		
38. Change in sleeping habits (16)		
39. Change in number of family get-togethers (15)		
40. Change in eating habits (15)		
41. Vacation (13)		
42. Christmas (12)		
43. Minor violations of the law (11)		
Total Points		

Test from www.mindtools.com

Here, your future is brighter. carrie@rainshadowcoaching.com (323) 481-6771

Do you...	Never (0 pts)	Sometimes (.5 pts)	Often (1 pt)
Get less than 7 hours sleep			
Eat too much or too little			
Exercise less than 3 times a week			
Have low energy			
Feel fatigued			
Feel anxious			
Feel afraid			
Feel easily irritated or annoyed			
Feel nervous or on edge			
Have trouble concentrating			
Have trouble relaxing			
Can't control worrying			
Total			

Do you...	Never (0 pts)	In the Past (1.5 pts)	In Past 6 Months (3 pts)
Experience allergy flare ups			
Experience insomnia			
Experience hair loss (alopecia)			
Experience digestion issues			
Experience heartburn			
Experience recurring colds or flu			
Experience tension headaches			
Are more than 20 pounds over/under weight			
Total			

Do you...	Never (0 pts)	In the Past (2 pts)	Currently (4 pts)
Have depression			
Have panic attacks			
Have heart palpitations			
Hyperventilate			
Have irritable bowel syndrome			
Have fibromyalgia			
Have another autoimmune disease			
Have dermatitis or eczema			
Have high blood pressure			
Have diabetes			
Have sleep apnea			
Have high cholesterol			
Have migraines			
Have a major illness or disease not listed			
Smoke			
Do drugs			
Grand Total			

Stress in Life and the Law

By : Carrie Williams

April 16, 2019

Stress is ever present in modern-day society. Individuals worry about money, time, families, relationships, careers. Some stress is beneficial and positive: the stress of a new baby, the stress of a promotion, the stress of personal growth. But more and more, stress is passing a tipping point from short-term, motivating, and positive, to long-term, chronic, and detrimental.

Individuals who practice the law are habitual overachievers; sadly, they are also overachievers when it comes to stress. Data from the U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics shows that the occupation of >“lawyer” ranks second in the top 10 most stressful jobs. The practice of [law also ranked 11th for suicide rate in 2016](#), [lawyers are more than three times as likely to be depressed](#) as non-lawyers, and [lawyers are twice as likely as the average citizen to become an alcoholic](#). According to the late Amiram Elwork, a doctorate of clinical psychology and author of *[Stress Management for Lawyers: How to Increase Personal & Professional Satisfaction in the Law](#)*, “Because law requires objective logical analysis and close attention to details, the legal profession attracts *perfectionists*. These are people who live by the rule: ‘If I don’t do a perfect job in every detail, I will fail.’”

As a group, lawyers are hard-working, high-performing, intelligent, super-stressed professionals who are often on the verge of burning out.

How Stress Works

When you feel fear, or perceive a threat, your central nervous system (CNS) takes control. The CNS oversees your “fight or flight” response, and in times of stress it commandeers your body to prepare for defense or for fleeing. Your adrenal glands are triggered to release adrenaline and cortisol. Your breathing rate and heart rate increase to distribute oxygen quickly and to move blood to your body’s core. Your liver begins to produce extra blood sugar to give you a boost of energy. Your muscles begin to tense so they can respond quickly to any physical threat, and to protect themselves from injury.

Once the threat has passed, your CNS should send out the “all clear” and your systems should return to normal; however if it fails to stand down, or if it immediately “calls to arm” again because of another stressor or threat, the entire process begins again. This is when stress becomes chronic stress.

When Good Stress Goes Bad

Not all stress is harmful; in fact, for lawyers stress likely helped you reach your current level of success. There was the stress of getting accepted to a top law school, the stress of competing with your graduating class, the stress of passing the bar exam, the stress of navigating your first

years as a lawyer. In proper quantities and situations, stress can be an incredibly helpful motivator.

However, when you tip into unhealthy or chronic stress, it can begin to negatively affect your body, work, and overall happiness.

Long-term exposure to stress can lead to a plethora of physical ailments including but not limited to:

- Headaches
- Alopecia or permanent hair loss
- Damage to short-term memory
- Reduction in gray matter in the brain
- Increase in seasonal allergy flare-ups
- Increased blood pressure
- Increased risk of stroke
- Narrowing of the arteries in the heart increasing the risk of heart disease
- Increased cholesterol levels
- Increased inflammation
- Gastritis
- Slowing of the digestive process
- Irritable colon
- Heart burn
- Weight gain
- Increased risk of diabetes
- Decreased fertility
- Decreased sex drive
- Tight muscles
- Eczema
- Psoriasis
- Acne

It comes as no shock that stress also has a major impact on our output and productivity level at work, as well as our overall work satisfaction. A recent U.K. study determined that one in three work absences were due directly to stress, and estimated that 2.5 out of three work absences were potentially caused by residual effects of stress. The [Towers Watson Global Benefits survey](#) of 22,347 employees concludes: “Employees suffering from high stress levels have lower engagement, are less productive, and have higher absentee levels than those not operating under excessive pressure.” The problem of stress in our professional lives is so pervasive that the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) declared stress a hazard of the workplace, and estimates that stress causes American industry more than \$300 billion per year.

The habits that helped get us to our current level of success create unsustainable levels of stress, which are wreaking havoc on our bodies, our work, and our happiness. To achieve further success, with less stress, requires a conscious change to daily practices and to law practices.