GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES GUIDE

Institute For Well-Being In Law

This Resources Guide focuses on IWIL's July 2022 Well-Being Theme: Growth & Development. IWIL committee members contributed some of their favorite ideas and resources on this topic. Below we pass along those recommendations—and our thanks to everyone who contributed: Anne Brafford, Erin Brown, Brandy Wilson Edwards, Casey Fairchild, Derek LaCroix, and Loretta Oleksy.

DOES GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT AID WELL-BEING?

Contributor: Anne Brafford, JD, MAPP, PhD Candidate, IWIL Vice President.

Concepts like growth, mastery, feeling effective and confident, and positively impacting our environment are incorporated into key dimensions of multiple well-being theories—including self-determination theory (SDT), which is discussed below. SDT proposes that we all have a fundamental need to experience "competence," which refers to a need to feel effective in one's activities and be able to master new skills, grow, and to achieve goals (Deci & Ryan, 2000). The competence need motivates people to strive to grow for the pleasure of being effective.

Work can help fulfill the competence need when employees experience their work as challenging, interesting, growth-promoting, and enabling them to fully use their capabilities to positively contribute at work (see Hakanen et al., 2021). The competence need relates to concepts like self-efficacy, growth mindset, flow and engagement, psychological safety, and impostor syndrome.

People who feel that they have the opportunity to use their full range of skills and "do what they do best everyday" have better physical and mental health, productivity, efficiency, and job satisfaction (Fujishiro et al., 2017; Okay-Somerville

& Scholarios, 2019). Feeling that they are using their strengths and abilities, have learning and challenge opportunities, and are achieving something worthwhile all contribute to the positive effect (e.g., O'Brien, 1982; Miglianico et al., 2019). On the flip side, having limited opportunities to use our skills and creativity and learn new things is a predictor of suicidal thinking (Choi et al., 2018).

Building a strong orientation toward learning and development also contributes to engagement. Top predictors of engagement include:

- ✨ **Developmental resources**, especially learning opportunities and job feedback,

- ✨ **A developmental work climate** in which managers value and prioritize developing others as important parts of their jobs, and

- ✨ **"Skill discretion,"** which encompasses opportunities for challenging, interesting learning opportunities and full use of our skills and talents.

(Albrecht et al., 2021; Chaudhary, 2014; Chaudhary et al., 2012; Hakanen et al., 2021, Mazzetti et al., 2021).

On the other hand, a top predictor of associate turnover is a lack of opportunities for challenging, interesting work (Cook, 2020).

A PRACTICAL THEORY TO SUPPORT GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT: SDT

To build a strong orientation toward learning and development so that employees experience their work as challenging, interesting, and growth-promoting, firms will want to go beyond formal training programs and embed a development orientation into everyday practices and interactions.

One step to do so is to teach behaviors and design practices to fulfill employees' basic psychological needs as defined by **self-determination theory (SDT)**. SDT has been described variously as a theory of motivation, personality development, well-being, and flourishing. At the heart of the theory "is the idea that humans have certain innate psychological needs, the satisfaction of which is essential for human wellness, growth, and sense of meaningfulness" (Martela et al., 2021). The SDT framework describes essential elements for facilitating human growth.

≫ What Are Psychological Needs?

SDT proposes that we all are naturally and intrinsically motivated toward growth and development and that inclination may be blocked or unlocked by certain psychological factors. SDT proposes that satisfaction of three psychological needs is necessary for our growth and development (and, ultimately, flourishing):

⭐ **RELATEDNESS:** Feeling cared for and a sense of belonging in groups that matter to us.

⭐ **COMPETENCE:** Feeling effective and able to grow.

⭐ **AUTONOMY:** Feeling a sense of volition (that our behaviors are self-endorsed) and authenticity (able to act in alignment with our values and interests and express ourselves).

⭐ **POSITIVE IMPACT:** A sense of having a positive impact in the lives of other people.

(Technically, SDT defines positive impact (called "beneficence") as a "wellness enhancer" rather than a basic need (Martela & Ryan, 2020). But the distinction makes no practical difference for our purposes.)

In work contexts that help satisfy these needs, employees will best be able to grow, develop, and achieve optimal functioning.

Need-satisfaction is itself linked to many benefits and it also fuels what's called **autonomous self-regulation**—which describes a type of high-quality motivation that derives from a sense of enjoyment or alignment of actions with one's own values, interests, and preferences rather than feeling coerced or pressured (Ryan & Deci, 2017). SDT proposes that, during the process of adapting to situations and challenges, people vary in the extent to which they feel controlled or autonomous when deciding how to think, act, and feel. On the controlled end of the continuum, people can feel externally compelled or internally pressured. At the more autonomous end of the spectrum, people feel increasingly attracted and engaged by their own values and interests to be, think, and behave in self-congruent ways (Van den Broeck et al., 2021). They feel like they are making decisions about and for themselves rather than feeling coerced or pressured to do so.

≫ What Are The Benefits?

People's ability to meet their needs and act with autonomous motivation provide a context that enables growth and development and promotes well-being, engagement, and inclusion. Hundreds of workplace studies have found significant negative relationships between need-satisfaction and/or autonomous motivation and, for example depression, anxiety, and burnout. Positive relationships have been found with general well-being, positive affect, resilience, vitality, self-esteem, optimism, proactivity, internal motivation, engagement, job satisfaction, job performance, creativity, meaningful work, helping behaviors

at work, voice behaviors, psychological safety, fairness perceptions, and retention (Allan et al., 2016; Huyghebaert et al., 2018; Magson et al., 2022; Martela & Riekki, 2018; Slemp et al., 2018; Van den Broeck et al., 2016; van Scheppingen et al., 2015; Wu et al., 2019; Xie et al., 2020).

≫ What Are Specific Ways That SDT Can Help the Legal Profession?

The SDT framework can guide how to build growth-promoting firm cultures and also supports well-being in the legal profession in other ways. SDT-based research that is especially relevant to lawyers includes the following:

✪ **Promote Well-Being**. A large-scale study of 6,000 lawyers led by Florida State University law professor Larry Krieger relied on SDT to powerfully predict subjective well-being among lawyers in a variety of work contexts (Krieger & Sheldon, 2015). Professor Krieger also has found that self-determination theory predicts mental health and other facets of optimal functioning among law students (e.g., Sheldon & Krieger, 2004, 2007).

✪ **Increase Engagement.** In a 2017 study of 240 lawyers, Anne Brafford (IWIL's Vice President) also relied on SDT to strongly predict engagement and turnover intentions.

✪ **Avoid Depression**. In a 2016 study of nearly 13,000 lawyers, significant numbers of surveyed lawyers reported mild or higher symptoms of depression (28 percent), anxiety (19 percent), and stress (23 percent; Krill, et al., 2016). Research has found that autonomous self-regulation significantly predicts lower levels of depressive symptoms, while controlled self-regulation significantly predicts higher levels of depressive symptoms (Leow & Lynch, 2016).

✪ **Reduce Problematic Drinking.** The 2016 lawyer study referenced above found that 21 percent of participants qualified as problem drinkers (Krill et al., 2016). Need-satisfaction and autonomous motivation are related to lower alcohol consumption (Carey et al., 2019; Richards et al., 2020).

✪ **Manage Perfectionism.** Lawyers tend to be high achievement-orientated perfectionists (Daicoff, 2004). Promoting autonomous motivation can curb depressive symptoms in perfectionists (Moore et al., 2021).

✪ **Prioritize Intrinsic Values.** A recent study of nearly 2,000 lawyers in California and D.C. found that lawyers who felt most valued for their professional talent/skill or overall human worth (versus those who felt valued for their billable hours, productivity, and responsiveness) had the best mental and physical health (Krill et al., 2022). Prior research has shown that firm work cultures that emphasize profit are related to depression among lawyers (e.g., Bergin & Jimmieson, 2013; Joudrey & Wallace, 2009). This comports with broader research finding that cultures with a bottom-line mentality (defined as one-dimensional thinking that revolves around bottom-line outcomes to the neglect of competing priorities) stoke harmful rivalries, unethical behavior, and workaholism, and reduce empathy, relationship-oriented behaviors, and psychological safety (Babalola et al., 2019, 2020; Greenbaum et al., 2012, 2020). On the other hand, lawyers' orientation toward intrinsic values is related to need-satisfaction and promotes well-being (Krieger & Sheldon, 2015). Such values include, for example, personal development, affiliation, and contribution.

✪ For more examples of how SDT can help common well-being issues in the legal profession, see Anne Brafford's article here.

STRATEGIES FOR SUPPORTING NEED-SATISFACTION AT WORK

Contributors: Anne Brafford, JD, MAPP, PhD Candidate, IWIL Vice President, Erin Brown, Professional Development Coordinator at Dentons, and Derek LaCroix, Executive Director, Lawyers Assistance Program of B.C.

Teaching all firm members strategies to support SDT basic needs can contribute to a work climate that supports learning and development and all the other benefits that flow from need-satisfaction. Below are resources that focus on how SDT can be incorporated into organizational practices, leader development, and firm-wide training.

✪ Supervisor Relationships Are Key To Beating Attorney Burnout, by Anne Brafford, Law360, 2022 (summarizes IWIL's burnout/engagement study and recommends supervisor strategies based on SDT that align with those findings).

✪ Effective Leaders: The Lynchpin of Workplace Well-Being, White Paper by Anne Brafford (discusses SDT-based leader development).

✪ Supervisor Support For Team Thriving, Cheat Sheet, IWIL Conference Materials by Anne Brafford (provides a table of specific supervisor behaviors to support SDT needs).

✪ Self-Determination Theory: A Proven, Science-Based Approach for Fostering Lawyer Well-Being, IWIL Conference Materials by Anne Brafford (includes a summary of IWIL's engagement/burnout study and list of common lawyer issues that SDT can benefit).

✪ 3 Ways to Motivate Your Team Through an Extended Crisis, by Anne Brafford (co-author), Harvard Business Review, 2020 (provides supervisor strategies based on SDT).

✪ Self-Determination Theory Can Help You Generate Performance and Well-Being in the Workplace: A Review of the Literature, by Lara Manganelli et al., Advances in Developing Human Resources, 2018 (academic article).

✪ Self-Determination Theory of Motivation: Why Intrinsic Motivation Matters, by Courtney Ackerman, 2021, PositivePsychology.com.

✪ Positive Professionals: Creating High-Performing Profitable Firms Through The Science of Engagement, Anne Brafford, 2017 (Book) (how law firm supervisors can build engagement on their teams, including supporting SDT needs).

✪ Master Your Motivation: Three Scientific Truths for Achieving Your Goals, by Susan Fowler, 2009 (Book) (SDT-based guidance for fostering one's own well-being).

✪ Why Motivating People Doesn't Work...and What Does: The New Science of Leading, Energizing, and Engaging, by Susan Fowler, 2017 (Book) (SDT-based guidance for supervisors).

✪ 10 Effective Strategies for Employee Retention for Employers, Declutter The Mind at Work, 2022 (tips for investing in employees' development and supporting their needs to encourage retention).

✪ How to Give Your Team the Right Amount of Autonomy, by Deborah Ancona & Kate Isaacs, Harvard Business Review, 2019.

✪ 6 Ways to Encourage Autonomy With Your Employees, by Tracy Maylett, Entrepreneur, 2016.

OVERCOMING THE FEAR OF GROWTH

Contributor: Casey Fairchild, Health & Welfare Benefits Manager at Perkins Coie LLP.

Below is a collection of resources about what to do when you're comfortable with your ability to do your job but feeling stagnate and afraid to take action to support your own growth and development.

- ✳️ [Feeling Stuck? Here's How To Get Unstuck And Move Ahead](), by Tracy Brower, Forbes.

- ✳️ [5 Strategies To Jumpstart A Stagnant Career](), by Derrick Rancourt, PhD, Cheeky Scientist.

- ✳️ [Feeling Stuck in Life and Career for Years: What to Do?]() (9 Tips to Get Unstuck in Life), DreamGravity.

- ✳️ [Feeling Stuck? 7 Ways to Climb Out of a Slump](), by Meg Lyons, BetterUp.

- ✳️ [What Is Career Stagnation and How Can You Overcome It?,]() by Chris Odogwu, Makeuseof. com.

- ✳️ [9 Goal Tracking Apps to Help You Track and Achieve Your Goals,]() by Hilda Munjuri, Makeuseof.com.

- ✳️ [How to Create an Effective Personal Development Plan](), by Shay Burns, Makeuseof. com (Having a personal development plan can help you maximize your potential at work).

- ✳️ [How to Figure Out What You Really Want](), by Ashley Stahl, TEDxLeidenUniversity (Stahl's podcast "The You Turn Podcast" focuses on helping listeners upgrade their mindset in work and love, and land a new job they love.)

- ✳️ [Fear of Success: Why We're Sometimes Afraid of Being Our Best](), by Kristine Moe, BetterUp.

🔼 EMBRACING DISCOMFORT & FAILURE TO HELP YOU GROW

Contributor: Anne Brafford, JD, MAPP, PhD Candidate, IWIL Vice President.

- ✳️ [Embracing Discomfort Can Help You Grow](), by Kira Newman, Greater Good Magazine, 2022 (Leaning into those vulnerable, uncomfortable feelings could help us stay motivated and make progress toward our goals.).

- ✳️ [Why Embracing Discomfort is Important for Personal Growth](), by Jesse Choo, 2020, Medium.com.

- ✳️ [6 Fearful Barriers to Growth & How to Overcome Them](), by Laura K. Schenck, PhD, MindfulnessMuse.com.

- ✳️ [I Fear Change: How to Cope With the Unknown](), by Morgan Mandriota, 2021, VeryWellMind.com.

- ✳️ [How to Overcome Your Fear of Failure](), by Susan Peppercorn, 2018, Harvard Business Review.

- ✳️ [The Confidence Gap: A Guide to Overcoming Fear and Self-Doubt](), by Russ Harris (Book).

🧠 COMBATING IMPOSTOR SYNDROME & BUILDING HEALTHY MINDSETS

Contributors: Brandy Wilson Edwards, Attorney and Motivational Speaker, and Anne Brafford, IWIL Vice President.

Below is a collection of resources about combating impostor syndrome and developing healthy mindsets that support growth and development.

≫ Impostor Syndrome Resources

- ✳️ [Imposter Syndrome - The Silent Career Killer,]() by Helen Pamely, New Law Journal.

- ✳️ [Do You Suffer From Imposter Syndrome? If You Do, You Are Not Alone,]() by Martha McIntire Newman, Texas Bar.com.

- ✳️ [Stop, Imposter! Imposter Syndrome in the Legal Profession]() (includes a section on how firms and management can respond), Law Society.org.

- ✳️ [How to Overcome Imposter Syndrome: 14 Tests & Worksheets](), by Jeremy Sutton, PhD, PositivePsychology.com.

- ✳️ [Combating Imposter Syndrome for Minority Attorneys]() (On-demand CLE).

- [Overcoming Imposter Syndrome As A Black Woman In Law](#), An Interview of Erin Young, Esq. by Cherie O'Reilly, Esq., 17 minutes (freely-available Well-Being Week in Law YouTube video).

- Infographic: [Are You Suffering From Impostor Syndrome?](#) Visualcapitalist.com.

≫ Healthy Mindsets Resources

- [What's Your Stress Mindset? (And Why It Matters)](#), Stress Resilient Mind.com (Article).

- [Pessimism vs. Optimism: How Mindset Impacts Well-Being](#), by Heather S. Lonczak, Ph.D., PositivePsychology.com (Article).

- [Stress Mindset Tied to Physical and Mental Health](#), by Sarah-Nicole Bostan, PhD, Psychology Today (Article)

- [Stress Mindset: How Stress Can Work for You Not Against You,](#) by Jaclyn Gaffaney & Dana Arakawa, EudaimonicByDesign.com (Article).

- [Growth Mindset vs. Fixed + Key Takeaways From Dweck's Book](#), by Courtney E. Ackerman, PositivePsychology.com (Article).

- [Dispute Negative Thinking](#), PositivePsychology.com (Worksheet).

- [Adopt A Growth Mindset](#), PositivePsychology.com (Worksheet).

- [11 Mindset Activities and Tests Designed to Nurture Growth](#), by Catherine Moore, PositivePsychology.com (Worksheets, assessments).

- [18 Best Growth Mindset Activities, Worksheets, and Questions,](#) by Jeremy Sutton, PhD, PositivePsychology.com (Worksheets, activities).

- [Fact Checking Thoughts Worksheet](#), PositivePsychology.com (Worksheet).

- [The Power of Believing You Can Improve](#), by Carol Dweck, TED talk, 10:24 minutes (Video).

- [The Power of Expectations](#), NPR, YouTube video, 3:11 minutes (how others' expectations affect our confidence and expectations for ourselves). Video can be supplemented with J. Sterling Livingson's Harvard Business Review article, [Pygmalion in Management](#).

- [Change Your Mindset, Change The Game](#), by Dr. Alia Crum, TEDxTraverseCity, 18:20 minutes (Video).

- [Learned Optimism: How to Change Your Mind and Your Life](#), by Dr. Martin Seligman (Book).

- [Positive Intelligence: Why Only 20% of Teams and Individuals Achieve Their True Potential and How You Can Achieve Yours](#), by Shirzad Chamine (Book).

- [Strategies to Develop a Growth Mindset](#), Inner Drive Blog (Infographic).

SUPPORTING OUR OWN NEEDS AT WORK

Contributor: Loretta Oleksy, Mindful Life and Work Coach, Thought Kitchen LLC.

Taking proactive action to ensure that our basic needs are met is critical for our well-being—and is especially important in unsupportive workplaces. In a blog titled *[Workplace Well-Being and All I Know So Far](#)*, Mindful Life and Work Coach Loretta Oleksy provides her thoughts and personal experiences on this topic.

BUILDING WORK CULTURES THAT SUPPORT NEEDS & FACILITATE GROWTH

Contributors: Anne Brafford, IWIL Vice President, and Derek LaCroix, Executive Director, Lawyers Assistance Program of B.C.

Workplace psychosocial factors are things within employers' influence that can impact employees' health and optimal functioning—either positively

or negatively. (Find a handy infographic here, which draws from the TJMF Best Practices for Psychological Well-Being for the Legal Profession and the Guarding Minds @ Work framework for developing supportive psychosocial workplaces.)

Among the key psychosocial factors necessary for fostering employee mental health is **"growth and development,"** defined as "a work environment where employees receive encouragement and support in the development of their interpersonal, emotional, and job skills" (GuardingMinds@Work).

≫ **Build Workplace Climates That Foster Growth & Well-Being**

Work climates that support employees' growth, well-being, and engagement include the following:

✪ **Psychological Safety Climate (PSC)** captures the extent to which employees perceive that their employers are committed to their mental well-being. In the IWIL engagement-burnout study conducted in Spring 2021 (summarized here at page 6), PSC perceptions were the top (negative) predictor of burnout for lawyers and staff and among the top (positive) predictors of engagement. Other research has found that learning opportunities are more prevalent in organizations with high PSC (e.g., Idris et al., 2015).

✪ **Human Resource Development (HRD) Climate** captures the extent to which employees perceive that managers value and prioritize the development of all employees, believe in their capabilities, encourage experimentation, help employees recognize their strengths and weaknesses, and foster trust and collaboration (Chaudhary, 2014; Chaudhary et al., 2012). HRD Climate is a strong predictor of engagement.

✪ **Psychological Climate** captures employees' perceptions of their work environment as supportive (or not) of their workplace functioning. Common dimensions include role clarity,

supportive management, self-expression (able to be oneself), contribution (feeling useful), recognition, and challenging work (Kataria et al., 2013). Psychological climate predicts engagement and other positive work experiences.

✪ **SDT Need-Supportive Workplaces.** The SDT framework provides guidance for developing policies, practices, and behaviors that foster cultures that facilitate growth, well-being, and many other positive outcomes. Academic journal articles that provide an overview of such an approach can be found here and here (Manganelli et al., 2018; Rigby & Ryan, 2018).

≫ **Create a Movement to Change Culture**

Improving well-being across the legal profession will not be easy, and presents difficult culture change challenges. You may get some inspiration from reading IDEO's case study of effective culture change to foster greater innovation: Changing Company Culture Requires a Movement, Not a Mandate, by Bryan Walker and Sarah A. Soule, Harvard Business Review, 2017.

USE OF THIS RESOURCE GUIDE

This Resource Guide should not be considered legal or mental health advice or as an endorsement of any of the listed resources by the Institute for Well-Being in Law. It is provided for information purposes only, and you should personally evaluate all resources for fit and effectiveness for the purpose for which you plan to use them.