

Share Your Well-Being Boosting Passion

Well-Being Week in Law 2024 | Friday, May 10

How legal professionals invest their non-work time and energy can have a big impact on their mental health and work engagement. But many feel so busy and tired from work, that their non-work activities dwindle. The aim of this program is to provide inspiration, guidance, and resources to try out new, well-being-boosting activities outside work.

Session leaders will:

- Share activities they do to disconnect from work, revitalize their energy, stave off burnout, and feed their soul.
- Explain how they fit their passion into their busy lives.
- Provide tips and resources for trying out the activity.

Linking Nonwork Passions to Well-Being

Nearly all the *Share Your Passion* sessions involve some form of creativity. Creativity supports mental health and fuller, happier lives and can help stressed-out lawyers relax, recover from stress, and rejuvenate.

Everyday Creativity

The positive effects of creativity aren't tied to specific activities or to any special talent. It's the [creative process](#) that appears to be most important for our well-being and positive psychological development (Silvia et al., 2014). For example, a [2018 study](#) found that people who identified themselves as "Makers" tended to be happier and more likely to have indicators of psychological health, such as less rumination and excessive self-focus (Collier & Wayment, 2018). This study involved everyday creativity like domestic activities (e.g., baking, cooking, gardening, scrapbooking) and arts and crafts (photography, quilting, drawing, painting, sewing, jewelry-making, knitting, crochet, ceramics, computer graphics).

Pathways Between Creativity & Well-Being

Creativity connects to well-being through multiple pathways:

- Sparks positive emotions.
- Generates the mental state of flow.
- Connects us with other people and aids a sense of belonging.
- Enables self-expression.
- Promotes a sense of meaning.
- Helps us relax and detach from work.
- Provides positive challenge & experiences of mastery and accomplishment.
- Builds self-awareness.

SESSION #7: PHOTO WALKS

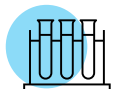


DESCRIPTION

30 Minutes: Friday, May 10, 2:00 pm ET-3:00 pm ET

Speaker: Noah Bradow

Noah will share how he found his way to photowalking, what it is, and the benefits he experiences—such as silencing the inner chatter and rumination triggered by daily stressors and mindfully connecting with the present moment. He'll also discuss practical tips for you to get started on your own photowalks. Please have a phone (with a camera) handy, because the session will include a hands-on session of mindfully selecting a photo to capture in your immediate surroundings. You can see some of Noah's images on Instagram @bradowno.



SCIENCE

Link Between Photography & Well-Being

A [2018 study](#) that people who identified themselves as “Makers” tended to be happier and more likely to have indicators of psychological health, such as less rumination and excessive self-focus (Collier & Wayment, 2018). This study found that photography and moviemaking were top mood-boosting creative activities.

One way photography can benefit well-being is by cultivating [mindfulness](#) (Sutton, 2021). For example, in [one study](#), participants were asked to take photos during the week of things that brought them joy (Kurtz & Lyubomirsky, 2013). Doing so was related to greater happiness—even more so than the popular “counting your blessings” activity. In another [study](#), participants were asked to take photos of things that make their lives feel meaningful and to describe why. Doing so was related to greater meaning and satisfaction with life (Steger et al., 2014).

Why did these activities work? In part, mindful photography works because it makes you examine your life in a way you normally do not. The camera elevates your subject and assigns meaning and value to that which may have previously gone unnoticed.



TIPS & RESOURCES

Equipment

- To get started, you will need a camera or phone with a camera. There are a lot of factors that go into purchasing a camera, many of which are personal. So, remember that the “best” camera is the one you're actually using.

- For those looking for reviews to help determine which camera to use, try the [website Digital Photography Review](#). If you want to edit your photos, I recommend checking out Adobe Lightroom.

Learning the Basics

- For those that like classroom learning, I would recommend finding a local photography basics workshop. Otherwise, there is no shortage of helpful YouTube videos [like this one](#) on the photography basics.
- There is also a great collection of articles on a variety of basic photography topics available at [Photography Life](#).

Creative Inspiration

- If you are looking for inspiration to get your creative energy flowing, I would recommend the following two books:
 - The Artist's Way by Julia Cameron
 - The Creative Act: A Way of Being by Rick Rubin



SPEAKER BIO

NOAH A. BRADOW

I am a Michigander living in the Lansing, MI area with my wife, Alison, and our dog, Jerome. I received my first camera as a gift from my wife in 2013 and have enjoyed learning and sharing how I see the world through photography ever since. You can see some of my images on Instagram @bradowno. Professionally, I spent 3 years in private practice in the areas of family law, criminal defense, and child welfare before joining the Michigan State Court Administrative Office in 2013.

References

- Collier, A. F., & Wayment, H. A. (2018). Psychological benefits of the “maker” or do-it-yourself movement in young adults: A pathway towards subjective well-being. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 19, 1217-1239.
- Kurtz, J. L., & Lyubomirsky, S. (2013). Happiness promotion: Using mindful photography to increase positive emotion and appreciation. In J. J. Froh & A. C. Parks (Eds.), *Activities for teaching positive psychology: A guide for instructors* (pp. 133–136). American Psychological Association.
- Silvia, P. J., Beaty, R. E., Nusbaum, E. C., Eddington, K. M., Levin-Aspenson, H., & Kwapil, T. R. (2014). Everyday creativity in daily life: An experience-sampling study of “little c” creativity. *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts*, 8(2), 183.
- Steger, M. F., Shim, Y., Barenz, J., & Shin, J. Y. (2014). Through the windows of the soul: A pilot study using photography to enhance meaning in life. *Journal of Contextual Behavioral Science*, 3(1), 27-30.
- Sutton, J. (2021). *Mindful Photography: 11 Therapeutic Ways to Use Your Camera*. PositivePsychology.com.

MATERIALS NOTE

These materials were prepared for Well-Being Week in Law 2024, an event of the Institution for Well-Being in Law. The science blurbs were prepared by Dr. Anne M. Brafford, JD, MAPP, PhD. The session leaders contributed to the Tips & Resources for their sessions. Others are welcome to use these materials with proper attribution.



MAY 6-10, 2024