

# 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.

#### Pick from seven sessions:

- Session #1: MUSIC
- Session #2: WRITING
- Session #3: COOKING
- Session #4: VACATIONS/TRAVEL
- Session #5: KNITTING
- Session #6: ART JOURNALING
- Session #7: PHOTO WALKS

## SESSION #4: VACATIONS & TRAVEL



60 Minutes: Friday, May 10, 1:00 pm ET—2:00 pm ET

Speakers: Matt Potempa, JD; Chahira Solh, JD; Luis Pineda (Moderator)

Two busy law firm leaders, Chahira and Matt, will share their passion for vacations and travel; ingredients that make up their best experiences; what they do before, during, an after a trip to make the most of the trip; and how they regularly fit it into their lives. Moderator Luis Pineda, who studies positive tourism, will spotlight elements that science says will support the well-being effects of taking time off. They also will discuss tips and tools and steps before, during, and after your trip to squeeze the most well-being boosting power out of it.



#### Link Between Vacations & Well-Being

Lawyer studies have identified one factor consistently related to lower depressive symptoms and greater psychological well-being: *number of vacation days taken* (Joudrey & Wallace, 2009; Krieger & Sheldon, 2015). But many skimp on this mental health booster by either not using all of their <u>vacation time</u> or not really unplugging while away (McLellan, 2020). These findings suggest that legal professionals will benefit from creating a plan to take more high-quality vacation days.

#### Vacations Can Curb Ill-Being and Promote Full Mental Health

Whether in the form of traveling abroad or having "stay-cations" at home, vacations and travel have received increasing attention as routes to mental well-being.

- The first aspect of mental well-being is reducing damaging symptoms of mental languishing, such as depression, burnout, anxiety, and fatigue. Legal professionals' relentless schedules and high job demands can drain their health and well-being if they don't have adequate recovery periods. "Recovery" refers to regeneration processes during non-work time—such as during vacations—that enhance positive states (e.g., vitality, positive emotions) and reduce negative states (e.g., fatigue, anxiety, depressed mood) that build up from effort and stress at work. When people's stress response stays activated and they don't fully recover, they're at an increased risk over time for depressive symptoms, burnout, health complaints, and cardiovascular disease. High-quality recovery experiences during vacations can help un-do the negative effects of stressful work lives.
- The second aspect of mental well-being includes promoting symptoms of psychological flourishing. This includes positive feelings and functioning—such as positive emotions, meaningfulness, high-quality relationships, and growth. As reflected below, vacations and travel also are important for this aspect of mental health.

#### How Vacations & Traveling Contribute to Well-Being

Vacations and traveling afford many pathways for reducing symptoms of ill-being and promoting positive feelings and functioning that contribute to full mental health or flourishing. The table below lists many of these pathways, according to science.

Of course, not every vacation needs to satisfy all your mental health needs. Some may be more exciting than restful. Some may focus more on serenity and recovery than novelty and adventure. Focus on whatever pathways and aspects of mental well-being you want to prioritize now.

For the best trips, be mindful and intentional in creating the experiences you want. Think about *why* you want to get away, not only *where* you want to go.

#### 16 Pathways to Mental Well-Being During Vacations & Travel

| 1. | Psychologically<br>detach from work.  | As much as possible, turn off thoughts about work (especially negative<br>ones) and refrain from work activities. This may be the most important<br>contributor to effective recovery from daily work demands.   |
|----|---|--|
| 2. | Relax and sleep.  | Relax to lower your stress response. Catch up on restorative sleep.  |
| 3. | Engage in mastery<br>experiences—<br>especially physical<br>activities.                                     | Absorbing yourself in activities that engage your skills and challenge you can aid psychological detachment and be highly restorative. Physical activity is especially useful for recovery, bolstering mood, and prolonging the restorative effects of vacations.  |
| 4. | Connect with other people.  | Deepen existing relationships and make high-quality connections with new people. People often identify relationship-oriented experiences as among the most meaningful things about their vacations and travels.  |
| 5. | Plan for fun,<br>pleasure, and<br>enjoyment.  | Experiences that spark positive emotions (interest, joy, contentment, love, awe, amusement, inspiration, serenity, pride) are essential for recovering from stress and promoting well-being. The overall goal is to amass more positive than negative emotions on your life's daily emotions scale (a key indicator of mental health).   |
| 6. | But don't overlook<br>the potential<br>benefits of<br>experiences that<br>also elicit negative<br>emotions. | Negative emotions (e.g., sadness, fear, disgust, hardship) can be part of<br>meaningful vacation activities (e.g., visiting the Holocaust Memorial<br>Museum, sky diving, challenging hikes) that spur self-growth. So, the<br>recommendation is not to try to eliminate negative emotions from all<br>vacations, only to be mindful of balance. Emotional diversity (many<br>different positive and negative emotions) is likely to generate the most<br>memorable and well-being-boosting trips (Wang et al., 2021). |

| 7. Connect with<br>something bigger<br>than you.   | Consider experiences that allow you to connect with something bigger than<br>yourself. For example, connect with your spirituality, cultivate feelings of<br>transcendence and awe, immerse yourself in the vast histories of other<br>cultures, or participate in charity work.   |
|--|--|
| 8. Create meaningful experiences.  | Plan experiences that that are meaningful to you or help you explore your meaning and purpose. You can create more meaningful vacations by, for example, immersing yourself in natural settings, deeply connecting with other people, making an engaged contribution to benefit others, engaging in some self-reflection and inquiry, having peak or flow experiences, experiencing a sense of wonder or awe, mindfully observing and savoring your trip, learning about the local culture (e.g., its stories, arts, history, and architecture); and engaging in novel or unique experiences; Packer & Gill, 2017; Sheldon, 2020). |
| 9. Build confidence and self-efficacy.   | Plan activities that allow you to build your sense of effectiveness and confidence in taking on new challenges.  |
| 10. Experience personal growth.  | Have new experiences that challenge how you think about yourself and the world and inspire you to grow and expand as a person. Engage in self-development, be open to new experiences, and deepen self-knowledge and feelings of effectiveness.  |
| 11. Be mindful of the<br>benefits of autonomy<br>and being self-<br>congruent and self-<br>expressive. | Choose activities that you really want to do because they align with your interests, values, preferences, or identities. These are better for your well-<br>being than activities that you feel pressured to do or guilted into. Also, unenjoyable "chore" activities are not restorative even if they are not work-related, because they continue to drain psychological and emotional resources.   |
| 12. Build self-knowledge<br>and self-acceptance.   | Plan experiences that allow you to reflect, learn more about yourself, clarify<br>your values and identities, or envision ways to continue to create the life<br>you want after your trip. Consider activities that also help you cultivate<br>positive attitudes toward yourself.   |
| 13. Give to others,<br>express kindness.   | Engage in activities in which you give to others and show kindness.<br>Consider ways of positively impacting the people you encounter.   |
| 14. Seek novel experiences.  | Go to different places and experience a variety of different and new things, which makes us feel happier (Heller et al., 2020; Urban-Wojcik et al., 2022).   |
| 15. Get outdoors.  | Get outdoors in green, natural settings, which has vitalizing effects.   |
| 16. Build psychological strengths.   | Practice mindfulness to notice and savor your surroundings. If things don't go as planned, practice psychological flexibility, adaptivity, optimism, and openness to experience to avoid reactive, negative responses and to try to see the positive side of less agreeable situations.  |



#### **Tips for Creating the Experience**

- Be Intentional About Crafting the Experience: Intentionality in vacations and travel is often overlooked. People tend to focus only on the destination and activities rather than their intention to craft the experience. To be more intentional, ask how you (and your fellow travelers) can be most enriched. Consider the list of 16 well-being pathways above, which ones resonate with you, and how you can create an experience that meets your needs. You might want a trip that is relaxing and restorative, purpose-driven and introspective, or to be brave and learn something new. Not all trips need to meet all needs. Do a self-audit and plan a trip that meets what you need right now.
- Be Intentional Before, During, & After: Your travel/vacation experience can be divided into three phases: before (anticipatory), during (on-site), and after (reflective; Filep & Laing, 2019). All phases can affect your well-being, so be intentional in how you craft your experiences in each phase. For example, <u>planning and anticipating a trip</u> ("anticipatory savoring") can be enjoyable and itself be a well-being booster (Curran, 2020).
- Engage Mindfully in Taking & Sharing Photos: Mindfully photographing things that make the trip feel meaningful (Steger et al., 2014) or joyful (Kurtz & Lyubomirsky, 2013) can enhance well-being. Also, sharing photos during a trip (e.g., on social media) or afterwards (e.g., travel blogs, travel reports) is positively related to trip satisfaction and well-being (Yu et al., 2021). Mindfulness and balance are keys, however. Too much mindless photo-taking can cause you to miss out on savoring the moment and ignore loved ones.
- Consider How to Be a Positive Tourist: "Positive tourism" has been defined to encompass
  positively impacting the well-being of (1) yourself and fellow tourists, (2) the host community
  members, and (3) tourism workers (Filep, 2016). Much research has found that positively
  impacting other people bolsters our experience of meaningfulness and well-being. So,
  consider how you might support, respect, and show kindness to fellow travelers, host
  community members, and tourism workers.
- Align with Travel Values: Focus on WHY you travel or take vacation not only WHERE you're going. What are your travel values—openness to experience, respect, kindness to all, caring for the environment, giving back to the community, sustainability, etc. How can you align with them continually during the trip?

## **Practical Tips**

- Make plans to complete unresolved work tasks: Creating plans to resolve incomplete tasks at work can increase your ability to psychologically detach from work (Smit, 2016).
- Make concrete vacation plans: If you don't invest in planning and commit yourself to at least some activities, you're likely to default to standard operating procedure—e.g., reading work email, working.
- Out of office notification: Consider using the automatic out-of-office email function to let

people know your responses may be delayed.

- Plan for back-up: Plan and delegate so that your team can support your efforts to truly unplug from work.
- Advance shipments of necessities: If you have small children, ship boxes of travel necessities ahead of time (diapers, essential snacks) so you can travel light.
- Launch a "Plan Your Vacation" Month: University of California-Davis has designated January as "Plan Your Vacation Month" for its staff. Believing that vacations help employees be happier, healthier, more creative, and better able to avoid burnout, it encourages group planning in which everyone on the team takes out a calendar. Because it takes a team effort for employees to truly unplug while on vacation, their vacation scheduling is a team activity (UC Davis Human Resources, n.d.).

## **Itinerary Planning Tools**

- **Trip Advisor:** This is a widely used website and app with information about thousands of destinations, including things to do, where to stay, where to eat, and helpful reviews.
- **Triplt app:** Once you book an aspect of your travel—accommodations, flights, car, etc. forward your confirmation email to TripIt, and all the information uploads into the app automatically. You also can enter the information manually.
- Wanderlog app: Wanderlog is a free travel app (with an optional subscription) for planning every kind of trip, including road trips and group travel. Helps you create a trip itinerary, budget costs, organize flight and hotel reservations, view places to visit on a map, and collaborate with friends.
- **Sygic Travel app**: You tell the app what you want to do and then it provides an itinerary that will reorganize your day in a way so you spend the least amount of time on transportation. The app also gives you directions from place to place. You can let the app know whether you'd like to walk, use public transportation, or drive.
- Visit A City app: Type in a destination (7000 are available), and you'll be given options of popular attractions in the city, day tours and trips, things to do, walking and biking tours, and customized itineraries. You can tell the app how many days you plan on being in that city and it will create a custom suggested itinerary of the things to do and see for you.
- **GPSmyCity app:** Self-guided city walks in 1,000+ cities worldwide. The app includes detailed tour route maps and navigation features. You can follow GPSmyCity's expert guides or take their suggestions and create your own custom walking tours.
- WikiVoyage website: A free web-based travel guide for travel destinations and travel topics written by volunteer authors. It's a sister project of Wikipedia.
- **The Dyrt app:** Planning app for camping trips.
- **AllTrails app:** Planning app for hikes. You can create lists of hikes, download trails to use in offline mode, and read reviews.
- The NPS (National Park Service) app: You can download maps for every national park, find

the most interesting stops, and check out where to stay.

- **Itinsy.com**: A community of travelers who share their itineraries and inspire others to explore. Filter by destination, month, length of stay and trip type to find the perfect itinerary.
- **Stippl app:** All-in-one travel app that allows you to plan itineraries, share your trips with friends and family, discover and personalize other travelers' itineraries.
- **Travel guidebooks:** Old school travel guides (e.g., Frommers Travel Guides).
- **Travel blogs:** Search for online travel blogs you like for recommendations that align with your interests.
- YouTube travel vlogs: If you're more of a visual person, travel vlogs are good way to research a potential destination. Just like blogs, there is a vlog channel to fit different travel styles.
- **Borrow itineraries:** Use itineraries from high-end tour companies like Abercrombie and Kent to get a sense of the must-see places and how best to get from one place to another.
- **Google Sheets:** Save your itinerary and tips to Google Sheets. Inputting all information that you discover into one sheet helps organize and access your travel itineraries. If you're going on the trip with others, you can share the sheet and work on it together.

## **Navigation Tools**

- **Rome2Rio app:** Provides all transportation options and alternative routes, itineraries, cost, and seasonality. Finds routes to some of the most remote places. The app has local bus, train, and ferry route details. With direct links to timetables of local transports, the app lets you plan off-the-beaten path adventures.
- **Roadtrippers app**. Recommends best possible routes between locations, estimates how many miles you can expect to drive, and calculates how much money you'll spend on gas.
- **Citymapper app**: Useful for finding the easiest, quickest, cheapest, or fastest way around in any one of 41 cities around the world, including Paris, Berlin, Rome, Istanbul, Vancouver, Tokyo, Sydney, Mexico City and Singapore and other popular destinations. The app merges information on every available type of transport in that city.
- **Google Maps & My Map:** Find your way around. Google Maps also allows you to create a My Map and drop pins at all your lodging spots and excursion locations throughout the trip. You can share it with others.
- **Park Mobile app:** This is a parking meter app. Pay your meter via the app, increase your time, and even reserve parking for later.

## **Tour Guides & Group Experiences**

- Intrepid Travel: Tour guides for small group tours.
- Viator: Tour guides for more general tours to any destination or attraction.
- Take Walks website: Local-led tours by expert storytellers.
- MORE travel groups: MORE's founding purpose is to cultivate a community of Gen Xers who

want to grow, create their "what's next," and get more out of life. MORE organizes group travel events to help people navigate middle age and get ready for the next move.

 Travel groups: Explore the diverse collection of travel groups that can be found on the internet and Facebook (e.g., EF Go Ahead (adult travel groups), FTLO Travel (solo travelers in groups, ages 25-39), Women Solo Travelers, JourneyWoman (solo travel for women over 50), Black & Abroad, Black Girls Travel Too.

### **Places to Stay**

- Airbnb
- VRBO
- HotelTonight: Lets you book a hotel for a night for cheap. It has hotel rooms that aren't yet sold listed cheaper than you'll find them elsewhere.

## **Flight Booking & Tracking Tools**

- **Google Flights website:** Flight planning and price tracking.
- Skyscanner website: Research and book your flights.
- **Yestheory website**: Another website for finding cheap flights.
- Hopper app: For cheap airline tickets.
- FlightAware website: Flight tracking platform so you can check to see if your airplane has arrived and is ready for departure.

## **Other Transportation Tools**

- DiscoverCars.com: Website for car rental around the world, with flexible pickup and dropoff options.
- **Turo app:** This is like Airbnb for car rentals. You rent from an individual and can ask for additional features like a cooler.
- FreeNow app: For ordering taxis.
- **Trainline:** An app and website to book train tickets across Europe. It sells train tickets and railcards and provides free access to live train times and railway station information.
- Seat 61.com website: A travel planning tool that offers a comprehensive guide on train travel around Europe and other continents. The website was created by an independent traveler who shares information, his experience, as well as gives advice on best train routes all around the world.

## **Money Conversion Tools**

- **XE Currency app:** For currency conversion. With this app, you plug in an amount in whatever currency you want converted, then select the currency you want to convert to.
- GlobeConvert: For currency conversion.

## Passport & Visa Tools

- **Passport Visa Express:** Get your visa for all countries.
- MPC (Mobile Passport Control): A free app from U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

### **Other Tools**

- WhatsApp: For staying in touch with each other and tourism workers when abroad.
- **Google Translate:** Type in the phrase you'd like to say in English (or your native language), and it will translate it into the language of your choice.
- **Timeshifter app**: Designed to mitigate the effects of jet lag by creating personalized plans based on neuroscience and sleep research. Provides advice on when to expose yourself to light, when to sleep, and when to avoid caffeine to help you quickly adjust to new time zones.
- AirTags: Track luggage location; find you way back to your hotel.
- **Radical Storage app**: Find local storage units to store your luggage for a few hours/days and explore the town a lot more easily.
- HappyCow app: Provides all the local vegan and vegetarian restaurants.



#### ΜΑΤΤ ΡΟΤΕΜΡΑ

**Matt Potempa** is a founding partner at MHPS in Nashville, TN. His practice has been devoted exclusively to probate and trust litigation for over twelve years. In addition to being a trial lawyer, Matt is a mediator in the area of probate litigation and also an adjunct law professor at Belmont University College of Law.

The Nashville Post named Matt as a "Law Leader Rising" in 2012. The Nashville Chamber of Commerce awarded him their Emerging Leader Award in the Legal Services category in 2015. He has been named "Best of the Bar" by the Nashville Business Journal from 2016 through 2023 and designated a "Super Lawyer" by Thomson Reuters from 2016 through 2023, a distinction achieved by less than 5% of Tennessee attorneys.

Matt is active in and a Fellow of the Nashville, Tennessee and American Bar Associations and has received numerous accolades for his service to the public and the legal profession.

Matt and his wife Kate live in the Historic Belmont neighborhood with their three sons, Philip, Patrick, and Penn.

#### CHAHIRA SOLH

**Chahira Solh** is a partner at Crowell & Moring LLP, working from the Southern California offices. She serves as a trusted advisor on antitrust issues for a number of the country's most recognizable companies, including in the auto, aviation, health care, and defense industries. Chahira is the Chair of the firm's Executive Committee and a member of the firm's Management Board. She is active in many professional organizations, including serving on the board of the Association of Business Trial Lawyers - Orange County Chapter and the Public Law Center. She has been recognized as a "Southern California Super Lawyer - Rising Star" in Antitrust Litigation since 2009. Chahira was selected for the 2016 Fellows Program of the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity (LCLD), a national organization comprised of the legal profession's top general counsels and managing partners and continues to be involved in the LCLD Alumni community.

#### LUIS PINEDA (MODERATOR)

**Luis Pineda** is a speaker and corporate trainer specializing in happiness sciences. He is the first Mexican to obtain a Master's degree in Applied Positive Psychology from the University of Pennsylvania. His work focuses on enhancing the performance of individuals and work teams, as well as create ecosystems of organizational well-being.

Luis' clients are transnational companies from various sectors, as well as educational institutions, and civil society organizations. He serves as an external consultant to the Institute of Happiness Sciences of the TEC Milenio System of the Tecnológico de Monterrey and as Senior Advisor to the "Awards of Happiness" Organization in the United States.

He also has successfully held managerial and directive positions in the private sector, the public sector, and academia, which has allowed him to know first-hand the dynamics, demands, and environment of the organizational world.

One of Luis' defining strengths is a passion for learning. He has a degree in hospitality from the University of the Americas-Puebla; an MBA from ESADE in Barcelona, Spain; a postgraduate degree in Neuroscience from the Braidot Center & Neuroscience of the University of La Plata, Argentina; and a Master's degree in Applied Positive Psychology (MAPP) from the University of Pennsylvania in the United States.

Luis' MAPP Capstone, *Positive Edventures*, focused on the connection between travel and wellbeing. It provides a science-based guide to designing more meaningful and enjoyable travel experiences.

Luis has been evaluated and consistently recognized as among the best speakers at events such as the Global World Meetings Conference in Cancun, the SITE Conference in Rotterdam, Holland, the Wellbeing 360° at Tec Milenio, and the Meeting Place México.

Luis is also passionate about good eating/drinking. He is a student of the phenomenon that surrounds the enjoyment of food and drink and an enthusiast of mezcal culture. He has trained in topics of Mexican culinary heritage at the CESSA in Mexico City, wine and food pairing at the Culinary Institute of America in Napa Valley, and founded, together with his brother, the *La Verema* Wine Bar In the city of Puebla, Luis. He obtained the "Diploma in Agaves and Mezcales of Mexico," awarded by the Center for Studies for Maguey el Mezcal of Oaxaca, and which accredits him as Promoter of Mezcal Culture.

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#### 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.

