



WELL-BEING WEEK IN LAW PARTICIPATION GUIDE FOR ORGANIZATIONS

MON



STAY STRONG
Physical Well-Being

Welcome to the Well-Being Week in Law (WWIL) team! Participation by legal employers, associations, task forces, and other organizations like yours is essential for making WWIL a success. This Guide provides guidance and content that organizations can use to participate.

TUES



ALIGN
Spiritual Well-Being

WHAT IS WELL-BEING WEEK IN LAW?

WWIL first launched in May 2020, and it's now organized annually by the Institute for Well-Being in Law (IWIL). It occurs the first week of May to align with Mental Health Awareness Month.

The aim of WWIL is to raise awareness about mental health and encourage action and innovation across the profession all year-round to improve well-being.

WEDS



ENGAGE & GROW
Career & Intellectual
Well-Being

WHAT ARE WWIL'S DAILY THEMES?

Each day of WWIL focuses on a theme that corresponds to a distinct dimension of holistic well-being for legal professionals:

- **Monday: STAY STRONG (Physical Well-Being):** Striving for regular activity, good diet and nutrition, enough sleep and recovery. Limit addictive substances and seek help for physical health when needed.
- **Tuesday: ALIGN (Spiritual Well-Being):** Cultivating a sense of meaning and purpose in work and nonwork life. Aligning our work and lives with our values, goals, and interests.
- **Wednesday: ENGAGE & GROW (Career & Intellectual Well-Being):** Seeking personal satisfaction, continuous learning and growth in our professional and personal lives, and financial stability. Engaging in creative or intellectually challenging activities that foster ongoing development and monitoring cognitive wellness.
- **Thursday: CONNECT (Social Well-Being):** Building connection, belonging, and a reliable support network and contributing to our groups and communities.
- **Friday: FEEL WELL (Emotional Well-Being):** Valuing emotions. Developing an ability to identify and manage emotions for health, to achieve goals, and to inform decisions. Seeking help for mental health when needed.

THURS



CONNECT
Social Well-Being

For each day and theme of WWIL, this Guide recommends **Well-Being Social Prescriptions** for legal professionals to try out. IWIL will distribute the Social Prescriptions daily via social media and other channels. Organizations should also feel free to distribute them and build organizational activities around them.

FRI



FEEL WELL
Emotional Well-Being

WHAT IS THIS YEAR'S OVERALL THEME?

This year's overall theme is *The Social Rx: Boosting Well-Being with Connection*.



Social Connection is a Key to Well-Being: High-quality interpersonal relationships and a sense of group belonging are chief sources of psychological well-being. From decades of research that reflects this conclusion, we pulled some highlights that are available [here](#).

Social Connection is a Well-Being Amplifier: Social connection can bolster all well-being dimensions—including physical, spiritual, career and intellectual, social, and emotional well-being. Social connections:

- Influence our health-related behaviors (including giving information and support, monitoring, and helping to hold us accountable)
- Give social support—supporting us emotionally with care and empathy and through guidance, help, and feedback
- Bolster self-esteem and confidence to face challenges and bounce back from setbacks
- Create a sense of responsibility to ourselves and others
- Aid emotion regulation
- Positively impact physiological indicators of health (e.g., immune, endocrine, and cardiovascular functioning)

Social Connections Support Positive Change: As in prior years, WWIL 2025 encourages concrete actions toward positive change. Mental health education is helpful. Alone, though, it rarely causes people to make the real-life changes needed to improve their well-being.

So, although we'll still provide education, we invite you to engage in experiments and use behavioral psychology tools to support change toward greater well-being. High-quality social support makes it more likely that you'll all achieve your goals and is itself a well-being booster.

WAYS FOR ORGANIZATIONS TO PARTICIPATE

To participate, organizations can join events organized by IWIL and create their own events and activities. Below are a few ideas.

Raise Awareness & Anticipation: Use email, intranet, social media, or other communication channels to build anticipation for upcoming WWIL activities. Logos, infographics, and other marketing materials are freely available for download on the WWIL website. We encourage use of the hashtag #WWIL25 for social media posts!

Host Lunch & Learn Sessions: Host in-person or virtual lunch and learn sessions that focus on the WWIL themes.

Pose A Well-Being Challenge: Each day, invite your members to participate in a group challenge or activity that relates to that day's well-being dimension. Invite participants to post comments or photos of their activities on internal electronic bulletin boards or on social media.

Recommend Resources: Each day, recommend a well-being activity, article, book, video, podcast, tip, or gadget.

Inspire Them: Post inspirational quotes related to each day's well-being dimension or a short story about an exemplar of lawyer thriving.

Help Them Plan: Distribute a WWIL News Briefing that provides a schedule of activities and tips for participation.



Below are science-based Social Prescriptions for Well-Being to recommend to your members and/or to organize WWIL activities around.



*Striving for regular activity, good diet and nutrition, enough sleep and recovery.
Limit addictive substances and seek help for physical health when needed.*

SOCIAL PRESCRIPTION # 1

Get Active With Others

Team up with others to support a daily goal of at least 30 minutes of physical activity. You can get started today by joining the free Well-Being Week in Law Move Together virtual activities, scheduled for 1-3 pm ET. **Registration is available on the WWIL website.**

- All kinds of physical activity boost mood and vitality. When we do it regularly, it can prevent and improve symptoms of depression and anxiety and can boost memory, attention, learning, and cognitive processing.
- Strive for at least 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity per week—ideally, aim for 300 minutes. This translates to 22 to 42 minutes per day. (See [U.S. DHHS's 2018 Physical Activity Guidelines](#)).
- Recruiting others to join you makes it more likely that you'll achieve your activity goal. (See [U.S. DHHS's 2015 'Step It Up' Call to Action](#)). Also, when we become absorbed in synchronized movement with others, our brains release chemicals that boost feelings of connection and belonging and reduce pain.

SOCIAL PRESCRIPTION # 2

Keep the Fun Happy Hours; Ditch the Hangover

Having fun with colleagues after work is a great idea. It can [reduce stress](#) while promoting social bonding, a sense of belonging, work engagement, and well-being.

Often, though, after-work fun includes booze. And, whether we realize it or not, workplace [drinking norms](#) can have a big effect on how much we drink. Among [lawyers](#), colleagues' drinking habits are a big predictor of one's own risky drinking.

Because even modest amounts of alcohol [can negatively impact](#) mental and physical health, many are choosing to drink less or not at all. In 2025, [nearly half](#) (49%) of American adults plan to drink less, and about 25% already don't drink at all.

Get started today planning fun after-work events that don't center on alcohol or make people feel awkward for not drinking. Here are a few tips:

- Brainstorm with colleagues about group activities that focus more on "happy" (social bonding, fun, stress-reduction) and less on alcohol.
- Try out an alcohol-free May.
- Don't ask others why they're not drinking alcohol or pressure them to drink.
- Curb the "polite" habit of offering or bringing drinks to others who didn't request them.

SOCIAL PRESCRIPTION # 3

4-Week Sleep Squad Challenge

Recruit a Sleep Squad of colleagues to participate with you in a 4-week challenge to collectively improve the quality and quantity of your sleep.

Many in the legal community are chronically sleep deprived—which can harm [mental and physical](#) health. To encourage improvement, we've created the [4-Week Sleep Challenge activity sheet](#) to help your group track and reward your progress.

Sleep Squad Challenge Instructions:

- Recruit your Sleep Squad and distribute the activity sheet.
- Each day, mark off whether you engaged in a listed sleep-boosting behavior.
- Each week, gather your group and focus on a different aspect of sleep hygiene. Share your bedtime routine tips and tricks with others.
- Assign points for achieving sleep goals each night (7-8 hours of sleep).
- Assign points for engaging in each sleep-boosting behavior. Reward group members who check off all actions for at least five nights. Perhaps give successful participants a prize or enter them into a prize drawing.
- Post on a virtual board or group chat about how your health and mood feel when you're successful with the daily challenge.



*Cultivating a sense of meaning and purpose in work and life.
Aligning our work and lives with our values, goals, and interests.*

SOCIAL PRESCRIPTION #1

Seize The Day With Gratitude and Service

Live today in gratitude and service. Be fully present to others, look for ways to benefit them, listen deeply, and say 100 thank yous before the day ends.

Most Americans (70%) say that they're [religious and/or spiritual](#). Many look to work as an opportunity to fulfill spiritual needs and enact spiritual values.

Scholars describe [workplace spirituality](#) as encompassing efforts to fulfill spiritual needs, experience meaningful work, and cultivate community. Research shows that spirituality at work functions like [a psychological resource](#) that promotes well-being, resilience, vitality, and connectedness to coworkers and workplaces.

People describe their own spirituality at work as encompassing a variety of behaviors, such as respect, openness, kindness, performing meaningful work, and being in harmony with their values. In this [8-minute video](#), fellow legal professionals share how they integrate spirituality into their work lives.

To cultivate spiritual well-being today, look for ways to be grateful and of service to others:

- Give wherever you go—including your time, attention, appreciation, advice, talents, and patience.
- Before every meeting, say to yourself: May my words and actions be for the benefit of those who are here.
- Silently wish everyone you encounter happiness, joy, and laughter.
- Say 100 “thank yous” today. Thank others for their contributions and mindfully note all for which you’re grateful (e.g., my family, partner, health, home, job, food).

SOCIAL PRESCRIPTION #2

Revitalize Your Day With Contemplative Practices

Pick a new contemplative practice to experiment with today or focus on deepening a practice you’ve already adopted.

Spiritual practices [play an important role](#) in supporting not only spiritual well-being but also emotional, social, and psychological well-being. [Contemplative practices](#) are a type of spiritual practice used across religious and spiritual traditions.

Many everyday activities can be considered contemplative practices when they’re done with intent to:

1. Cultivate a personal capacity for deep concentration, presence, and awareness, and
2. Develop a stronger connection to one’s inner wisdom and/or God/Spirit/the Divine.

For ideas to try, download the free [Contemplative Practices Guide](#). Examples include:

- [Loving-kindness](#) (meta) meditation
- [Gatha practice](#)
- Yoga
- Qi gong
- Deep listening
- Prayer
- Sitting meditation
- Spending time in nature
- Religious rituals



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Aligning our work and lives with our values, goals, and interests.*

SOCIAL PRESCRIPTION #3

Encourage (and Personally Live) Team Values That Bolster Spiritual Well-Being

In addition to personally living spiritual values, coordinate work team activities designed to integrate human-centered values that bolster spiritual well-being.

How we prioritize and live our values can boost or undercut spiritual well-being. For example, [an orientation toward intrinsic values](#) and goals—such as personal growth, relationship quality, contributing to the community and the greater good, and self-acceptance—bolsters well-being. In work groups, [shared intrinsic values](#) predicts engagement, collaboration, and teamwork.

On the other hand, extrinsic values/materialism—focused on wealth, possessions, image, and status—harm team functioning and individual well-being:

- A power-prestige attitude toward money (viewing money as the ultimate symbol of success) [negatively predicts](#) spiritual well-being—strongly so.
- Materialism [harms mental well-being](#) and predicts loneliness, selfish behavior, and low-quality relationships and a tendency toward [racial and ethnic](#) prejudice.
- [Tunnel vision on profits](#)—that neglects other important values and priorities—predicts unethical behaviors and cheating, negative job attitudes, reduced work effort and collaboration, burnout, and an absence of engagement and experienced meaningfulness at work. Among [law firm lawyers](#), it's related to depressive symptoms and work-life conflict.

What this all suggests is that fostering shared intrinsic values within work teams can bolster spiritual well-being, other forms of well-being, and team motivation and functioning.

Resources to guide team values activities are available from Indeed's website—including [How to Create Team Values](#) and [12 Values Exercises for Teams](#). Individuals interested in prioritizing intrinsic values can refer to the [Aligning With Your Values Activity Guide](#).



Seeking personal satisfaction, continuous learning and growth in our professional and personal lives, and financial stability. Engaging in creative or intellectually challenging activities that foster ongoing development and monitoring cognitive wellness.

SOCIAL PRESCRIPTION #1

Put Down Your Smartphone, Uplift Your Career Well-Being

For a one-week trial period, aim to reduce your daily smartphone use by 60 minutes. Evaluate whether your experiment enhances your work experience and mental health.

- Last year, Americans spent an average of [over 5 hours per day](#) on their smartphones, and most (53%) want to cut down in 2025.
- Problematic smart phone use is related to symptoms of poor mental health and negatively predicts life satisfaction, sense of control, and empathy. Excessive phone time also can be a barrier to meaningful connections and activities that support well-being.
- A [recent study](#) found that participants who cut down their daily smartphone use by just 60 minutes experienced greater work satisfaction, work motivation, work-life balance, and positive mental health.
- The best way to sustain a reduction in phone time is to replace it with positive experiences. For example, in the study, participants who had the best results compensated for their reduced phone time by increasing their physical activity by 30 minutes.
- So, consider combining Monday's "Get Active With Others" activity with today's "Put Down Your Smartphone" recommendation. At the end of the week-long experiment, evaluate how you feel and whether you want to sustain these activities.

SOCIAL PRESCRIPTION #2

Celebrate Colleagues' Strengths

Today, get started on a new habit of strengths-spotting at work.

- Strengths-spotting—observing and celebrating others' strengths—can make people feel valued and affirm that their unique contributions are noticed, invited, and appreciated.
- Chances are good that many of your work colleagues are, in some ways, blind to their strengths. By spotting and expressing appreciation for their strengths, you may help them both feel recognized and spot their own strengths.
- Hundreds of studies have found that, when people consciously use characters strengths more and in new ways at work, they have more positive work experiences—including engagement, well-being, job satisfaction, and the experience of meaningfulness.
- To get started on a new strength-spotting habit, download the [Strengths-Spotting Worksheet](#). Also included are worksheets to identify your own strengths and use them more and in new ways at work. Consider sharing the worksheets with colleagues and working toward strengths-spotting as a new team norm.

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SOCIAL PRESCRIPTION #3

Engage in Team Vacation Planning to Bolster Well-Being

Plan vacations and take them—and encourage and enable others to do so.

A [study of 6,000 American lawyers](#) led by Prof. Larry Krieger inquired what factors related to lawyers' subjective well-being. Can you guess the strongest predictor of well-being of all activities measured? It was number of vacation days taken. Do you know what it beat out? Income level. Always trading work for vacation is not a great well-being strategy.

Other research (inside and outside the legal profession) shows that people need an opportunity to disconnect and regenerate. An inability to do so creates an increased risk for burnout, depressive symptoms, fatigue, energy loss, and cardiovascular disease. By contrast, people who feel recovered report better functioning and well-being.

So, take some time to plan to unplug. Team leaders should consider organizing group vacation planning:

- Get the group together with calendars ready.
- Ask everyone to come to the meeting prepared with their desired vacation dates.
- Discuss dates and resolve any conflicts with client work.
- Make plans to enable each team member to unplug while on vacation.

Additional guidance can be found in [5 Steps to Making Vacation Less Stressful](#) for Employees and [How to Manage Your Team's Vacation Request](#).



*Building connection, belonging, and a reliable support network.
It includes meaningful contributions to our groups and communities.*

SOCIAL PRESCRIPTION #1

Recipes for Connection: Share a Meal with Someone Today

Connect with people over food today. It can be as simple as coffee with a colleague or as celebratory as a fun dinner with your team.

- Today's "social prescription" builds on the U.S. Surgeon General's [Recipes for Connection campaign](#), which highlights the power of social bonds in combating loneliness. It also draws on a [global survey by Gallup](#) finding that people who regularly eat meals with others are happier.
- Can one meal solve loneliness? No. But it can be a **meaningful first step** toward deepening relationships, building belonging, and strengthening well-being—both individually and across the profession.
- Resources to help you plan your gathering are available on the WWIL website.

SOCIAL PRESCRIPTION #2

Send a Quick Gratitude Note to Tell Others They Matter

Take a few moments today to show others that they matter, are valued, and belong.

We suggest sending 3 notes of appreciation to colleagues, clients, friends, or family members. To make it easy, you can use IWIL's free e-message tool:

[Go to Gratitude E-Messages](#)

- A loneliness epidemic has hit American workplaces. Chronic loneliness is related to poor mental health and workplace functioning and is a clear barrier to team thriving.
- Attention has focused on employees being alone at home as a main cause of rising loneliness. But workplace loneliness is [not about being alone](#) but about feeling unseen, unheard, and insignificant.
- Feeling a sense of belonging and that one matters is the opposite of feeling lonely. It flows from [feeling accepted](#), included, respected, and contributing to our work and workplaces.
- Feeling and expressing gratitude to others also can benefit you. It can help protect and promote your own physical and psychological health and strengthen your relationships at work and at home.
- For more information and ideas about gratitude, see this brief article [How Gratitude Makes You Happier](#). For ideas about everyday acts of kindness to help people feel they matter, see the [Acts of Kindness Guide](#).



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It includes meaningful contributions to our groups and communities.*

SOCIAL PRESCRIPTION #3

Connect With Others Across Difference: Seek Discomfort for Personal Growth

When confronted with perspectives that conflict with your own, don't bail out: Recognize that your feelings of discomfort are a sign of personal growth.

- The quality of our relationships suffers when we avoid people with whom we think we disagree, close our minds to different perspectives, or bail out of conversations at the first sign of conflict.
- A new study (summarized by [Greater Good Magazine](#)) has identified a mental habit that can improve our resilience: **Reframing our discomfort as a sign of growth.**
- In the study, all participants engaged in stressful activities—such as journaling about difficult topics or reading challenging information about COVID or gun violence from a news source they wouldn't usually read.
- Some participants were told that their goal was to feel uncomfortable, awkward, nervous, anxious, or even upset. They were asked to push past their comfort zone and know that feeling uncomfortable is a sign that the activity is working.
- The study found that, across activities, participants asked to positively reframe discomfort felt more engaged and motivated to persist.
- According to a study author: "Growing is often uncomfortable; we found that embracing discomfort can be motivating. People should seek the discomfort inherent in growth as a sign of progress instead of avoiding it."
- The study suggests that we "might be judging normal human experiences like nervousness, stress, and discomfort too harshly. While our inclination might be to avoid them, they seem to be part of becoming better people and living a rich life."

Valuing emotions. Developing an ability to identify and manage emotions for health, to achieve goals, and to inform decisions. Seeking help for mental health when needed.

SOCIAL PRESCRIPTION #1

For “Social Cure” Benefits, Strengthen Your Connection to Meaningful Groups

Take steps today to begin exploring how to strengthen your connection to meaningful groups—inside or outside the workplace.

- According to what’s been called “[Social Cure](#)” research, belonging to multiple groups that matter to us bolsters well-being. Benefits include reduced loneliness, less depression, greater life satisfaction, and better indicators of physical health.
- People with many group memberships have higher well-being than those with few—above and beyond the number of interpersonal relationships they have. In short, **groups are good for us.**
- All kinds of groups can be the source of Social Cure benefits. But the quality of our connections makes a big difference. Benefits come only from groups with which we experience a subjective sense of belonging or a meaningful shared identity.
- To help you get started, we’ve created a free activity guide, [5 Steps to Connect with Groups to Boost Well-Being](#). Consider recruiting a group of colleagues to do the activity together and share information about possible groups to join.

SOCIAL PRESCRIPTION #2

Join a Group Meditation

Join a meditation group to cultivate mental well-being while connecting with others focused on personal growth.

- The [Mindfulness in Law Society](#) offers weekly “Mindful Mondays” (3pm ET) and “Wakeful Wednesdays” (5 pm ET), which are virtual group sits.
- Anyone in the legal profession is welcome to attend. No experience is necessary. The format generally consists of about 20 minutes of guided meditation, with 5 minutes of gathering time at the beginning and 5 minutes at the end for questions and comments.

SOCIAL PRESCRIPTION #3

Giving and Receiving Through Community Service

Organize an activity for volunteers or join a community service project that sounds interesting and manageable to you.

Community service or volunteering supports others in need while boosting our own [mental and physical health](#), including reduced anxiety, depression, and loneliness and higher life satisfaction, purpose, and meaning.

Do you feel like you don’t have enough time to volunteer? This is a common obstacle. What you may find, however, is that [spending time on other people](#) actually increases your subjective experience of time.

Here are a few ideas:

- Organize a [blood drive](#) at your organization.
- Volunteer for a pro bono matter.
- When organizing conferences, ask attendees to bring gently-used business suits to donate to nonprofits for unemployed people.
- At baby showers, invite guests to bring extra baby items to donate to a local homeless shelter.
- At winter holiday parties, ask guests to bring cans of food to donate to the local food bank.

Valuing emotions. Developing an ability to identify and manage emotions for health, to achieve goals, and to inform decisions. Seeking help for mental health when needed.

SOCIAL PRESCRIPTION #4

Do a Mental Health Check-In With Yourself & Others

We can't fully show up for others as we'd like when we're not mentally well. Today, take some time to do a mental health check-in with yourself. You can start by taking a brief mental health self-assessment. Use a mental health checklist to evaluate any areas of risk for you and make a plan to take action. A few resources are provided below:

- [Mental Health America Mental Health Tests](#)
- [New York State Bar Association Personal Wellness Assessment](#)
- If you are in crisis or need immediate help, please call the Crisis Life-Line at 988. You can also reach out to your local [lawyer assistance program](#).

Also, educate yourself about signs that colleagues' mental health is suffering and how to respond appropriately. The [Challenging Conversations Guide](#) is one place to start.