

# Working Well

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## The 'Culture' of Law

Most people only think about their physical and mental health when thinking about “working well,” but there is so much more to one’s overall well-being. Cultural awareness and connections are other essential aspects of attorney well-being and performance.

How do you interact with others you work with who may have dissimilar backgrounds from you in terms of ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, and age? Do you avoid stereotyping and/or implicit bias against others who are culturally different from you? How do you maintain and value your own cultural identity (at work and home)?



If you can respect, accept, and value the different cultural aspects of others with whom you work and at the same time celebrate your own culture at work, you will enhance your own well-being. If your place of work supports you to express your religion, language, customs, and identity, you will feel better connected and more comfortable at work. Indeed, you will perform more competently and happily in your practice of law. Similarly, it is incumbent upon us as individuals to respect others’ culture and beliefs at work.

It is important that the workplace creates an environment for these opportunities and for employers to promote programs and education

supporting diversity and varying cultural tradition. Stakeholders should develop initiatives that foster respectful engagement and inclusivity. Attorneys should feel the freedom to express their identity and heritage and not be made to feel pressured into cultural norms that may be inconsistent with their own beliefs.

Making time outside of work to participate in recreational, creative, and cultural activities is also essential. Though we all know that an attorney’s schedule is quite demanding, there needs to be time set aside for connection to family and friends through cultural expression. There is a whole world of cultural offerings in art, history, food, music, and dance that one may explore to activate joyfulness and connectedness. Studies indicate that those folks who have a strong sense of cultural identity are happier and more fulfilled.

It is important that lawyers make efforts to create connections with those who have different backgrounds. These experiences will facilitate relationships within the community at large as well as with prospective clients and colleagues alike. In short, cultural well-being (professionally and personally) enhances one's ability to be happier, more empathetic, feel more connected, and in turn to be a more successful attorney.