

Allard Law Student Wellbeing *Orientation and Education*



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'Wellbeing' is ...

Canadian Bar Association leading healthy and balanced lives in a demanding profession

UBC people achieving their full potential in teaching, learning, working, and research. It is foundational to success as individuals, as a university, and as a community

Allard School of Law law students integrating IQ and EQ to grow their academic, social, emotional and behavioral skills for personal and professional actualization

Definitions

Why focus on wellbeing?

Wellbeing is a Key Component of

Academic Success (IQ)

and

Emotional Success (EQ)

Wellbeing and Academic and Emotional Success

Wellbeing and Academic Success (IQ)

Students who experience a greater sense of wellbeing have:

- More ability to learn and integrate information in effective ways
- Better academic performance and cognitive functioning
- Enhanced test performance
- Improved study habits and homework quality
- Long-term academic success

Wellbeing and Academic Success

Wellbeing and Emotional Success (EQ)

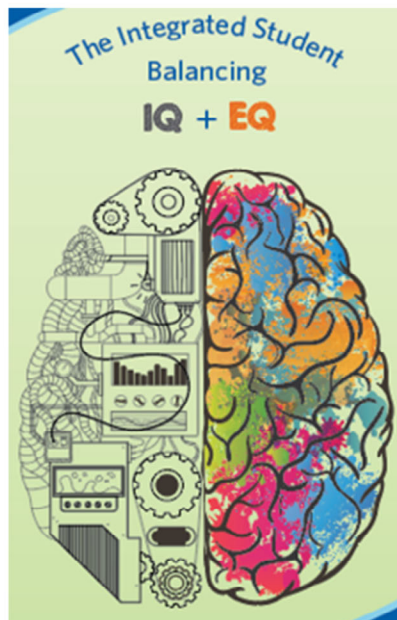
The greater the sense of wellbeing, the more positive outcomes are seen in:

- Relationships
- Resilience
- Self-esteem
- Self-regulation

For lawyers this relates to:
networking skills, relationships with
colleagues, supervisors, clients, etc.

Wellbeing and Emotional Success

Why focus on wellbeing in law school?



Academic learning comes with **many stressors/demands**

A healthy EQ allows you to **meet those stressors/demands**


A balanced IQ and EQ
allows you to
thrive in law school

- The integrated law student balancing academic success (IQ) and emotional success (EQ)
- In law school you will further develop your **IQ** through academic learning. This learning comes with **many stressors/demands**, particularly at this time of remote learning, and surviving a pandemic.
 - Having a healthy **EQ** allows you to **meet those demands**. Knowing how to be self aware, to self regulate, to decrease stress, and to communicate effectively will **balance your wellbeing and allow you to thrive in law school.**

Link to next section: first let's explore general wellbeing and mental health in more depth



Stress Awareness



Stress is the body's reaction to any change that requires an adjustment or response (positive or negative)

What are my stressors?

STRESS AWARENESS:

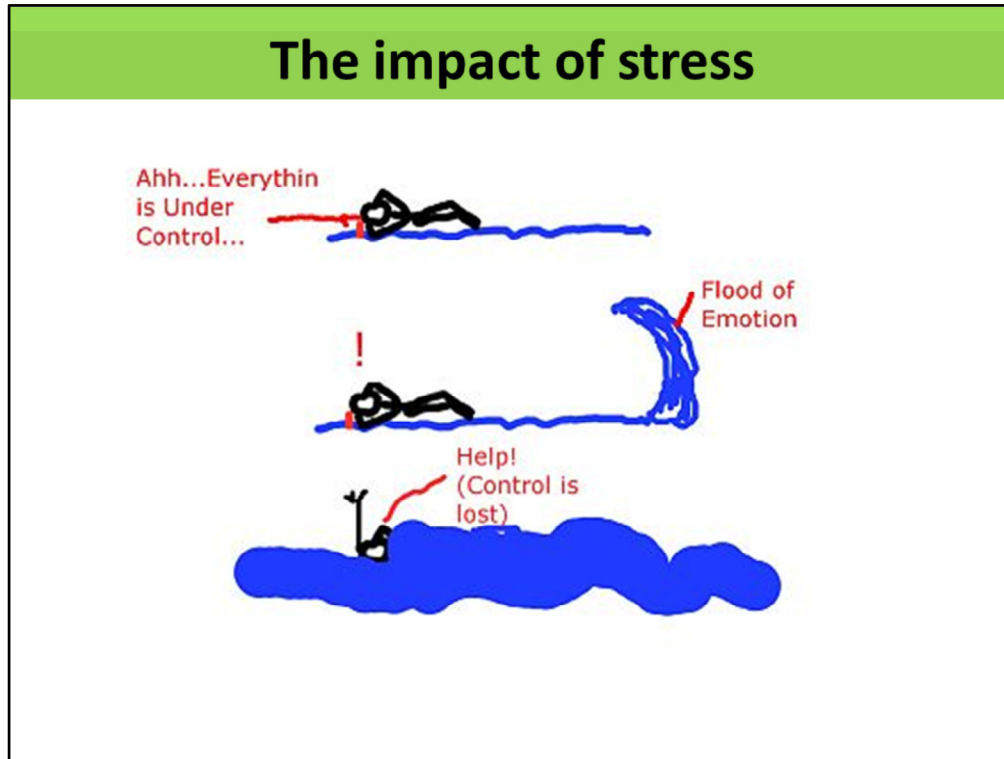
- . Lets start by looking at stress
- . Many stressors/demands right now in life generally, and many stressors throughout law school

Take a moment to be aware of what is worrying you or is a demand on you. Make a list.

- These are all valid and normal stressors but they can take a toll on you (even positive demands)

Link to next slide: Need to pay attention to these stressors as they can flood your system and derail you

The impact of stress

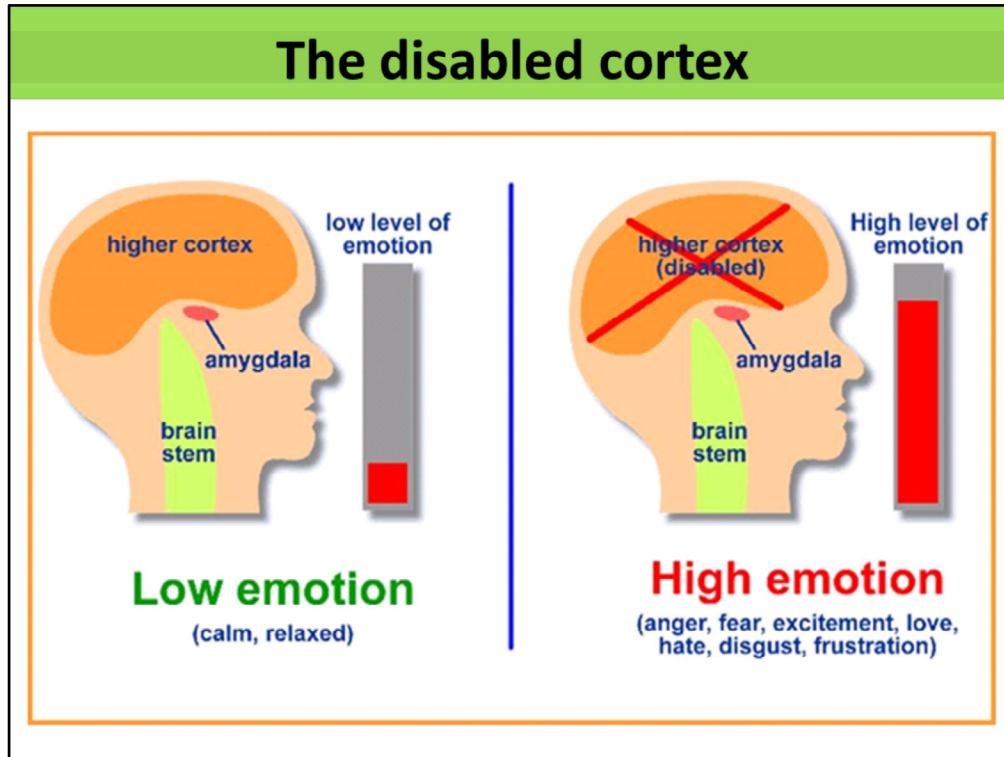


The impact of stress:

Flooding initiates the fight or flight response:

- The part of the brain that takes over (the old brain or reptilian brain) optimizes our functions that are necessary for survival:
 - energy is redirected to parts of our body which are needed for survival.....heart, hearing, seeing, etc. Resulting in: rapid heart rate, adrenalin release, cold fingers and toes (blood is redirected to heart), tense muscles, sharper eyesight, sharper hearing, inability to sleep deeply
 - energy is directed away from parts of our body which are not needed for survival..... Digestive system shuts down, immune system shuts down, not lonf term memory access.....

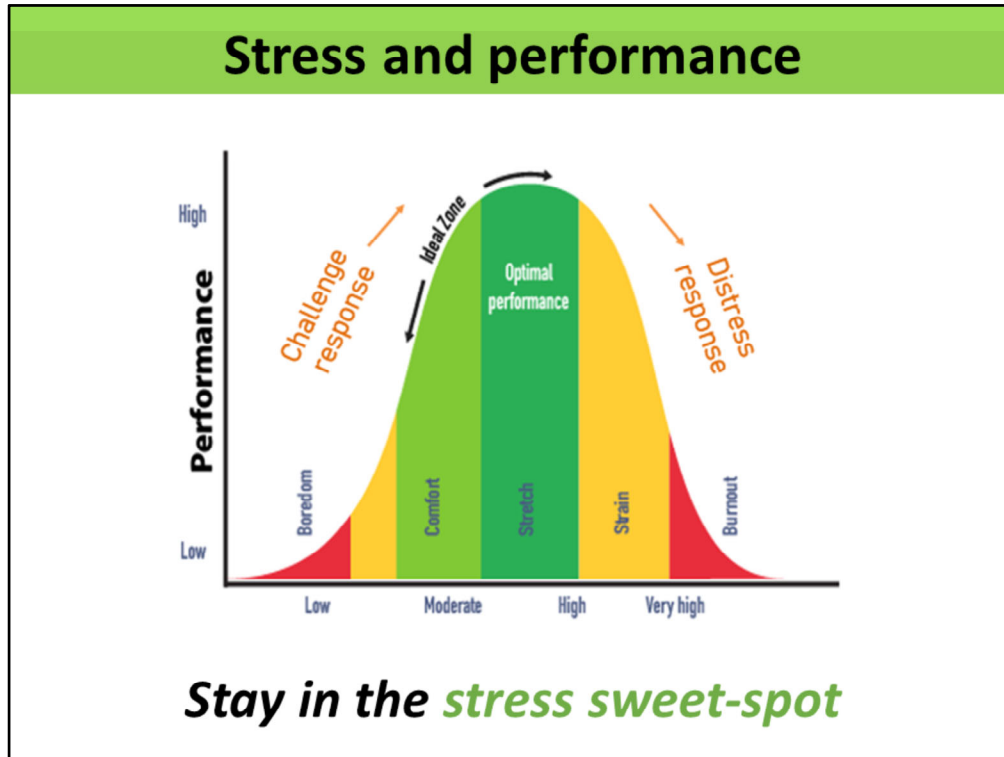
Link to next slide: Our reptilian brain also overrides our higher cortex



The disabled cortex:

- Our reptilian brain overrides our higher cortex. Research demonstrates that acute, uncontrollable stress sets off a series of chemical events that weaken the influence of the prefrontal cortex while strengthening the dominance of older parts of the brain. In essence, it transfers high-level control over thought and emotion from the prefrontal cortex to the hypothalamus and other earlier evolved structures.
- **Have you ever had difficulty remembering things when you are stressed? Find yourself in front of the cupboard and wonder what you came to get. Stare at the computer screen with no recollection of what you are working on...** That's because your cortex is shut down..... Lots of these pieces of information are not required for survival.... The knowledge of law is not required to fight a bear
- As the reptilian brain takes over we may find ourselves either consumed by paralyzing anxiety or else subject to impulses that we usually manage to keep in check: indulgence in excesses of food, drink, drugs or a spending spree at a local specialty store. We can also find ourselves using negative emotional thinking without our IQ to balance our thoughts - "I am no good, I'll never pass", this can lead to depression, emotional soothing, anger, etc.

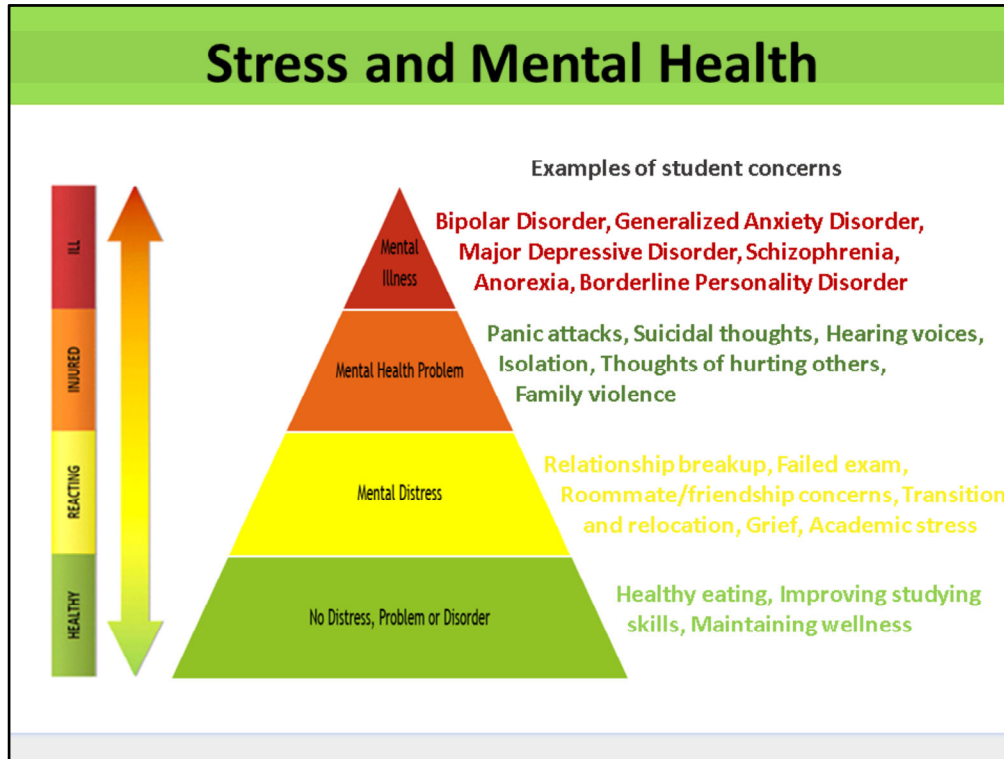
Link to next slide: When the cortex is shut down this can negatively impact academic performance (as access to IQ is disabled).



Effects of stress on performance

- Any emotion produces the same response in the body. **Notice this is “good” and “bad” emotions – same response in the brain and body. Our brain attributes good and bad - distress or eustress.**
 - Too little stress = ‘rusting out’, boredom, apathy and fatigue.
 - Optimal stress = high productivity, alertness, concentration, excitement, enthusiasm.
 - Too much stress = ‘burning out’, decrease in productivity, health, emotional, psychological problems.
- This is not time based, can appraise a situation to be high and go straight to high and very high levels (red distress zone)
- **Challenge response:** Can reframe stress as a ‘Challenge response’. Your body is gearing up to help you face and overcome the challenge. Reframe stress as your body’s helping response, and be proactive to maintain your stress response in this zone, without tipping into distress. This takes awareness of your responses and a commitment to wellbeing balance.
- If not addressed prolonged, excessive or cumulative stress can lead to burnout and other mental health issues.

Link to next slide: mental health issues and stress

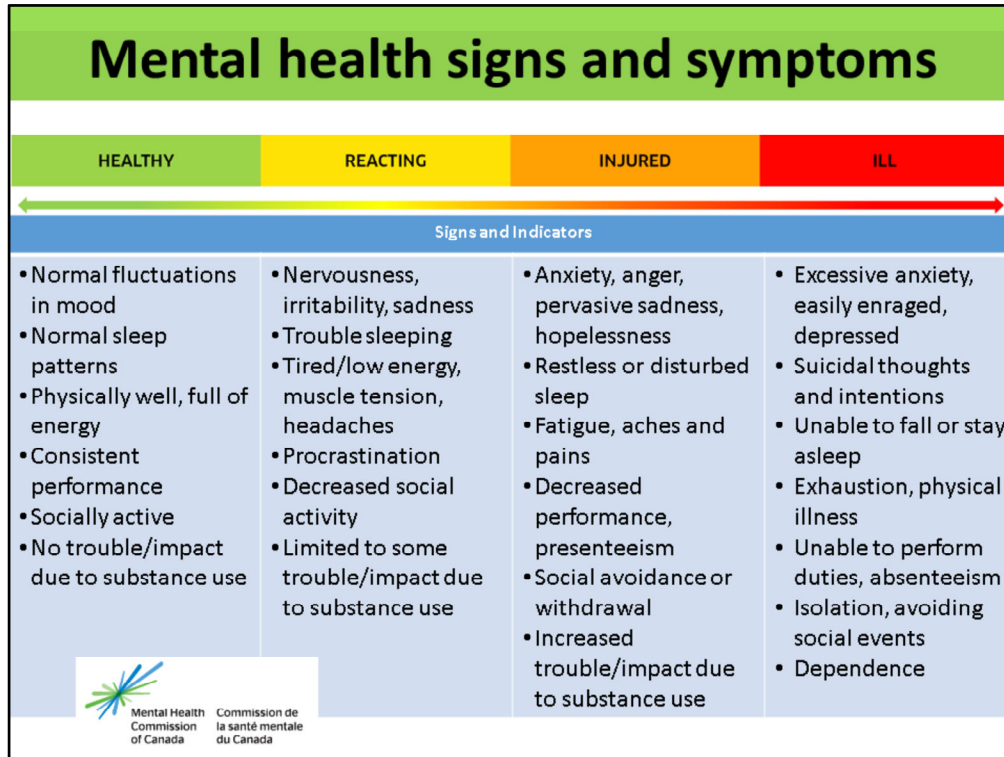


Stress and mental health:

- Define “**mental health**” as **neutral term** – good mental health to mental illness range with common issue examples
- Mental health is something we ALL have. ‘Positive’ mental health means we are coping and thriving in our life while ‘negative’ mental health means we are experiencing challenges to psychological and emotional thriving. These challenges can be temporary or can endure and become more serious. Mental health is like a continuum from green (no distress) to yellow (distress) to orange (problem) to red (illness). We can move up and down the continuum throughout our lives.
- It’s important to note that these categories are **not mutually exclusive**. They are all aspects of mental health and **can be experienced at the same time**. An individual can have Generalized Anxiety Disorder (red), grieve the loss of a family member (orange), feel distressed for not making a team (yellow), and enjoy watching a movie with friends (green) all in the same day. We can move from level to level depending on circumstances.
- Range of symptom intensity - **Can be feeling depressed without a diagnosis of depression**
- **It’s important to note that these categories are not mutually exclusive. They are all aspects of mental health and can be experienced at the same time. An individual can have GAD, grieve the loss of a family member, feel distressed for not making a team, and enjoy watching a movie with friends all in the same day. We can move from level to level depending on circumstances.**

Link to next slide: symptoms in each level

- **Bipolar Disorder:** episodes of depression and episodes of mania (periods of great excitement, euphoria, delusions, and overactivity)
- **Generalised Anxiety Disorder:** unexpected, unhelpful and intense feelings of worry and fear that seriously impacts our lives, including how we think, feel, and act (includes phobias, panic disorders, social anxiety, OCD).
- **Depression:** feelings of severe despair over an extended period of time. Signs of depression include feeling sad, worthless, hopeless, guilty, or anxious.
- **Schizophrenia:** a complex biochemical brain disorder affects a person’s ability to determine what is reality and what is not. Symptoms include delusions, hallucinations, social withdrawal and disturbed thinking.
- **Anorexia nervosa :** is an eating disorder characterized by weight loss and, in many individuals, distorted body image. Some people with the disorder also exercise compulsively, purge via vomiting and laxatives, and/or binge eat. (**Bulimia nervosa** is a serious, potentially life-threatening eating disorder characterized by a cycle of bingeing and compensatory behaviors such as self-induced vomiting designed to undo or compensate for the effects of binge eating.)
- **Borderline personality disorder:** is an illness marked by an ongoing pattern of varying moods, self-image, and behavior. May experience intense episodes of anger, depression, and anxiety that can last from a few hours to days. Characterised by impulsive actions, difficulty in relationships, abandonment issues, instability of identity, and dissociation.



General signs and indicators (mental health continuum model - Mental Health Commission of Canada):

- No Distress: (GREEN)** a place of good mental health. It's important to remember that "no distress" doesn't mean not feeling sad, unhappy, annoyed, angry, etc. Often the ability to experience a full range of negative and positive emotions is an indication of good mental health.
- Mental Distress: (YELLOW)** All of us experience mental distress from time to time. It's normal, expected, and happens to everyone - usually daily.
- Mental distress occurs when the brain signals to us that we have a problem or stressor in our environment that we have to deal with, eg. studying for an exam, going on a first date
- This signal in our brain tells us we need to adapt in order to solve the problem. eg: you are late for your morning class. Your brain signals that this is distressing and that you need to figure out how to solve this. The next morning, you might set your alarm earlier or catch a bus instead of walking. You adapt!
- Mental Health Problem: (ORANGE)** This occurs when a substantial emotional, mental, or behavioural difficulty (or all three) causes you significant life challenges and usually requires you to invest lots of resources including help from friends, family or people you trust, eg. death of a loved one, getting fired from your job
- These also elicit a stress response and this stress response is also normal. Eg. when someone dies, it's normal to grieve. When you lose your job, it's normal to feel

demoralized.

- What does that mean? It can look like: Not being able to fulfill day-to-day tasks, significant change in sleep or eating patterns, not feeling like yourself for a sustain period of time, high emotional reactivity
- It is important to seek professional mental health support when the impact of stressors are sustained and significant.
- **Mental Illness: (RED)** means you've received a diagnosis from a professional mental health provider and are currently trying to manage the symptoms.
- **It's important to note that these categories are not mutually exclusive. They are all aspects of mental health and can be experienced at the same time. An individual can have GAD, grieve the loss of a family member, feel distressed for not making a team, and enjoy watching a movie with friends all in the same day. We can move from level to level depending on circumstances.**
- ***Link to next slide:*** These are general signs and symptoms, which may not be specific to you. Feeling mental well or mentally distressed is different for different people, so it's important to know yourself. This way you can be more aware of when things start to go awry.

My mental health signs and symptoms

P Physical: heart racing, muscle tension, fatigue, nausea, chest pain, shortness of breath, stomach aches, headaches, sweating, trembling, deterioration in personal hygiene, low energy, mania.

A Actions: procrastination, increase in alcohol/coffee/ comfort foods, avoidance, violent/aggressive behaviors, obsessive behaviors.

C Cognitions: trouble concentrating or remembering, negative or self-critical thinking, hallucinations, SI, disorganized thinking, out of reality thinking.

E Emotions: anxious, crying, depressed, irritable, hypervigilant, angry, frustrated, happy, rapid mood changes.

Your role is to observe changes in PACE

MY SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS:

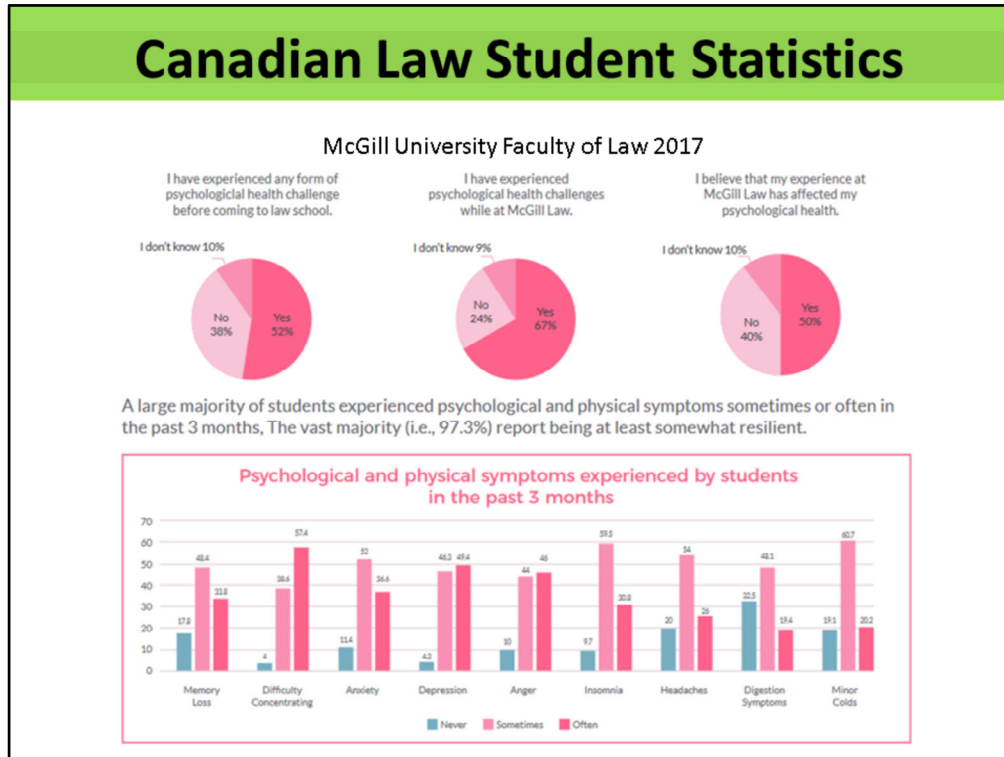
- Know your “normal” by identifying your normal PACE based on your green zone (no distress) and your yellow zone (distress), and maybe orange and red.
- If you don’t know your distress PACE, you can just identify changes from your normal PACE.
- After identifying your normal PACE, its good to continually check in on how you’re doing. Ask yourself “what is my PACE today?”.
- **Be aware of changes in PACE. We’re looking for change. We’re looking for what shifts in normal functioning**
- ***Take a moment to be aware of your stress response. What are you particular PACE responses when you become stressed.***



- Added layer for law students..... reality – 100% exams, 7 subject course load in 1L, networking events, OCI's etc – how do you cope with what's on your plate
- When you are aware you can prepare

Link to next slide: Law student and lawyer stats

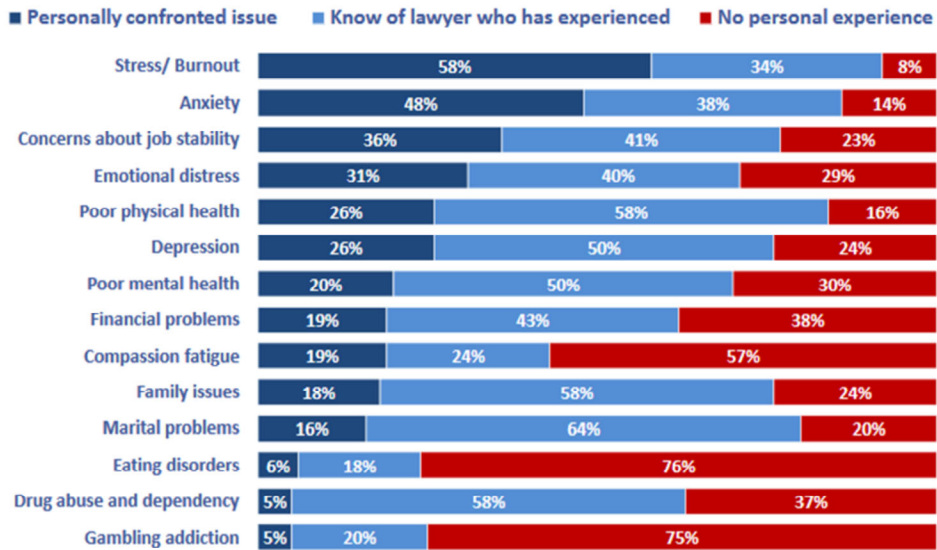
Canadian Law Student Statistics



- McGill University Faculty of Law Healthy Legal Minds Wellness Study 2017 (Source: <https://www.healthylegalminds.org/mental-health-survey>)
- U of Toronto and Allard Law also have statistics which for confidentiality reasons are not able to be made public as yet.
- **Law students across Universities show similar results: stress (burnout), depression, anxiety, problematic substance use**

Link to next slide: What's it like for lawyers?

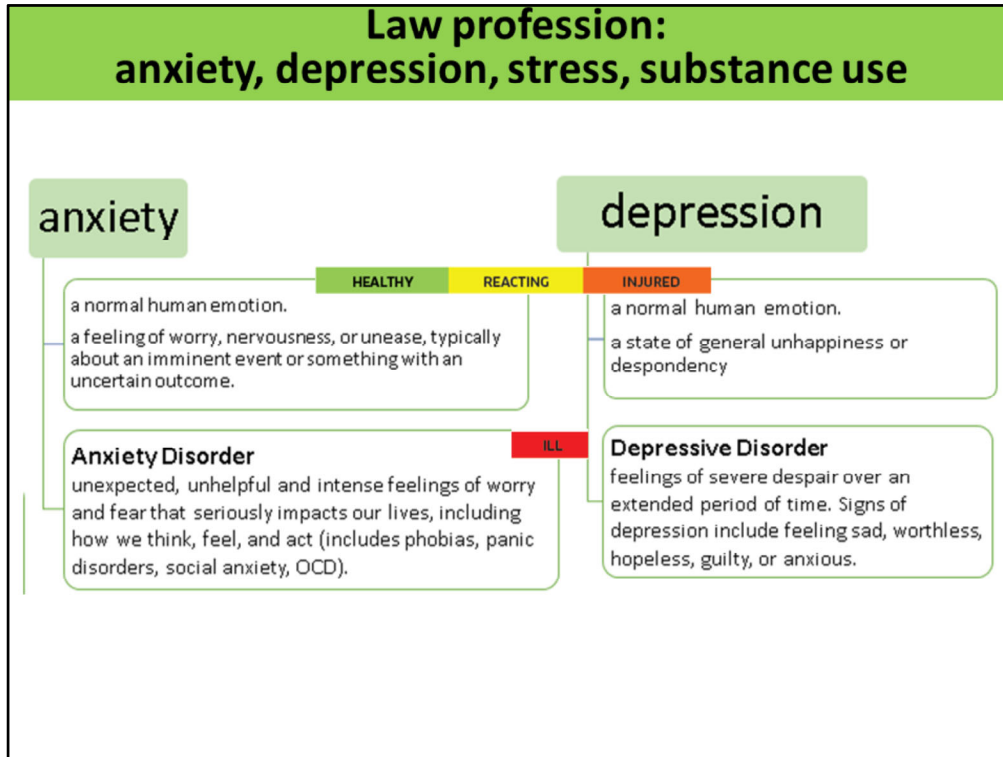
Canadian Lawyer Statistics



Q10. Please indicate whether you have personally confronted any of these issues, whether you personally know of lawyers in your practice who have or whether you personally know of lawyers outside of your practice who have.
 Base: All respondents n=1180

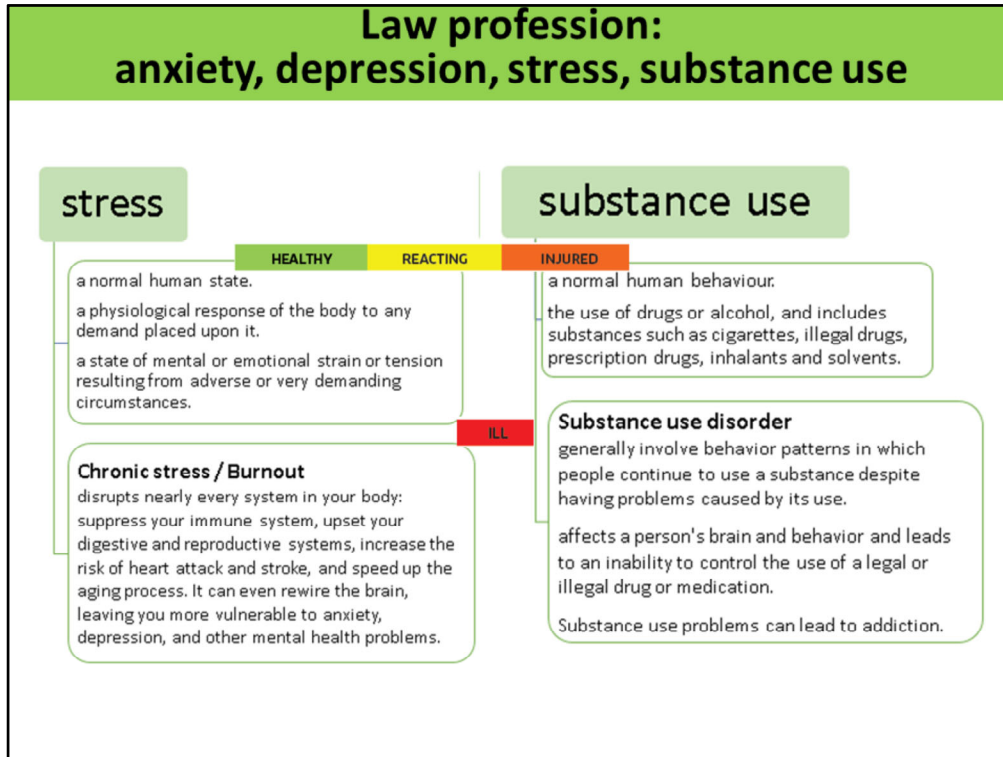
●Lawyers and law students show similar results: stress (burnout), depression, anxiety, problematic substance use

Link to next slide: definitions of common lawyer issues



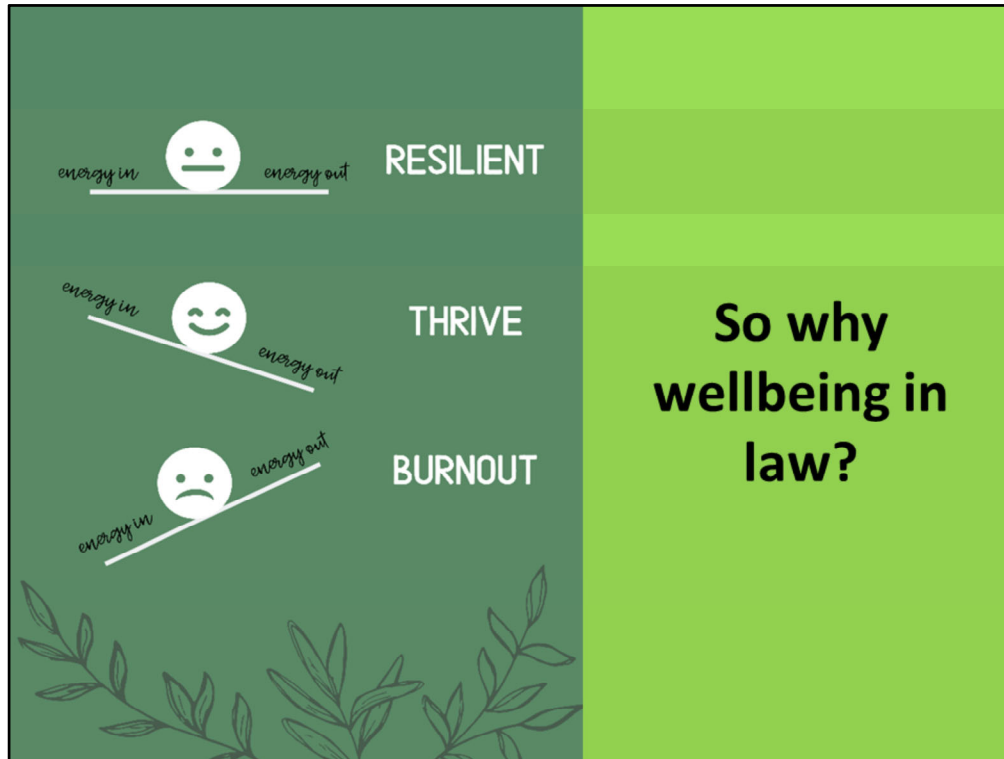
- Remember mental health continuum
- These are normal human emotions which are only diagnosable at red
- Diagnosable mental health issues in law profession

Link to next slide: continued definitions



- Remember mental health continuum
- These are normal human emotions which are only diagnosable at red
- Diagnosable mental health issues in law profession

Link to next slide: Can intervene when in yellow and orange zone to prevent red



- Can intervene when in yellow and orange zone to prevent red.
- Law school stressors are high, especially in 1L. When your energy out is going to be high you must focus on energy in to balance yourself. This is where your power lies. **You need to focus on wellbeing to thrive not survive not burn out.**
- Responding to the changes/stressors challenges our personal resources. We respond in numerous ways:
 - Burnout: is when our personal resources are not enough to cope with the challenges.
 - Resilience: is when our personal resources are enough to cope with the challenges and we return to pre-crisis status.
 - Thriving: is when our personal resources exceed the challenges and we develop and grow.
- Stress remains a part of the process. Being resilient or thriving does not mean you do not experience stress, it simply means you are aware of the energy it takes to meet the challenge and you can match or exceed it. Resilience and thriving behaviours, thoughts and emotions are those which anyone can learn and develop.
- You need to be aware of the energy you need to meet these new challenges, and as is often the case you will find that you need more energy at the beginning and less when things become more known and routine. As your energy is used up in the day, you need to replace it with more energy. Everyone will be different in what energizes them, but common sources are: food, sleep, connection, exercise, reading, baths, music, video games, etc

- *Think of your mind and body like a car:*
 - *Burnout is when you let it run out of gas and you push it around. Would you ever do this with your car? So why do it with your body?*
 - *Resilience is when you fill it with gas and drive along making sure you always refill.*
 - *Thriving is when you also check the oil, the windscreen fluid, the tire pressure, and give it regular maintenance and washes.*
- Be proactive to stay in the challenge response and not be flooded, and therefore keep your cortex open for increased performance (academic and emotional)
- Build your wellbeing toolkit to thrive

Link to next section: Empowered Prevention

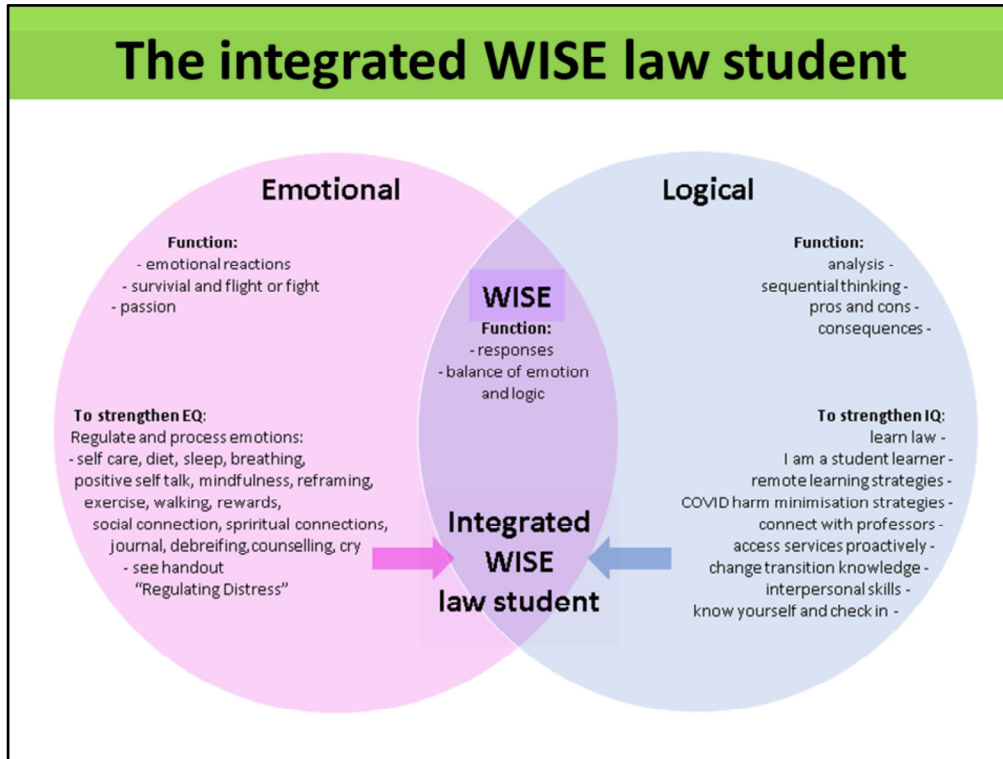
So be sure when you **STEP**,
Step with **CARE** and great **TACT**.
And remember that Life's
A great **BALANCING ACT!**
-Dr. Seuss



Part Four: Empowered Prevention

- Empower yourself to thrive
- You already have a list of stressors, and stress reactions
- Now we will create strategies for your wellbeing toolkit

Link to next slide: Start with a foundational concept of the Wise Mind



- The wise mind is a concept derived from the work of Marsha Linehan, a Professor of psychology, and an Adjunct Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the University of Washington in Seattle, as well as Director of the Behavioral Research and Therapy Clinics. She is the creator of Dialectical Behavior Therapy, DBT combines standard CBT techniques for emotion regulation and reality-testing with concepts of distress tolerance, acceptance, and meditative concepts like acceptance and mindfulness.
- The wise mind is the combination of your emotions and your logic. The goal of the Wise Mind is to learn to use emotion and logic together, in harmony. To bring balance between emotions and logic: what I know and what I feel, flexibility, awareness, open mindedness
 - **Have you ever had the experience when you've made a decision, and no matter what others said you just knew it was the right choice for you? The knowing and confidence that comes with this experience is an example of Wise mind. It feels good, it feels right, and you're in a state where you can acknowledge and honour both emotions AND reasonability.**
- Wise Mind is a skill that everyone can learn – you can develop strength each mind to be more integrated and wise as a law student

Link to next slide: logical mind strengthening

Strengthening the logical mind

To strengthen IQ:
learn law -
I am a student learner -
remote learning strategies -
COVID harm minimisation strategies -
connect with professors -
access services proactively -
change transition knowledge -
interpersonal skills -
know yourself and check in -
time management -

- There are processes and rules with are associated with learning some of these skills which you may be required to learn or to develop to thrive in law school and your law career:
 - Interpersonal skills
 - Communication skills
 - Study habits
 - Time management
 - Accessing services
 - COVID prevention skills
 - Stressor awareness and analysis
 - Organisational skills
- Awareness of these is primary, and then seeking resources to help you grow these skills. Allard and UBC has resources to help, eg., Small Group Mentors, Legal Buddies, Peer Tutors, <https://learningcommons.ubc.ca/>
- Remote learning skills - <https://keeplearning.ubc.ca/>
- Please feel free to connect with your advisors, peer mentors, and Student Wellbeing Counsellor for available resources

Link to next slide: emotional mind strengthening

Strengthening the emotional mind

To strengthen EQ:

Regulate and process emotions:

- self care, diet, sleep, breathing, positive self talk, mindfulness, reframing, exercise, walking, rewards, social connection, spiritual connections, journal, debriefing, counselling, cry
- see handout "Regulating Distress"

- Strengthening the emotional mind means building strong EQ – strong emotional resilience. It does not mean never getting upset nor stressed, it simply means you have the skills to process and regulate emotions when they are triggered., and to build emotional energy to be prepared for difficulties which are known (e.g., exams).
- You will want to be proactive and have as needed skills:
 - Proactive is consistently engaging in activities which are soothing (regular exercise)
 - As needed is a technique you can use in vivo (in the situation in which it occurs).
 - Your proactive and as needed techniques will differ – if you proactively run, you can't stop in the middle of an exam when you are stressed and go for a run. But you can proactively practice an as needed technique – regular breathing practice.

Link to next slide: this slide notes "regulating distress" handout - next two slides show these strategies – they are as needed strategies

Regulating distress in vivo

Regulating Distress in the Body in the Classroom

- **Deep Breathing** (turns off stress response)
- **Quick Progressive Muscle Relaxation** (relaxes the body)
- **Toe Breathing** (combines breathing and PMR)

Regulating Distress in the Body in the Classroom

- **Deep Breathing** (turns off stress response)
 - Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. Try to push the air down deep into your tummy.
 - Concentrate on moving your tummy and keeping your chest still. Focus on the sound and feel of your breathing...in.....out....in.....out.....in through your nose.....push the air deep into your tummy.....then breathe out through your mouth.....in and out.....in and out..
- **Quick Progressive Muscle Relaxation** (relaxes the body)
 - **Shoulders:** Push your shoulders back and down.....tighten the muscles.... hold..... feel the tension and then release. Let your shoulders return to their usual position.....feel the relaxation. Repeat as needed.
 - **Hands:** Tighten your hands into fists....very, very tight... as if you are squeezing a rubber ball tightly in each hand.... hold... feel the tension..... and then release. Shake your hands gently, shaking out the tension.....feel the relaxation. Repeat as needed.
 - **Jaw:** Tightly close your mouth, clamping your jaw shut, very tightly....your lips will also be tight and tense across the front of your teeth....hold....feel the tension in your jaws..... and then release. Wiggle your jaw....feel the relaxation. Repeat as needed.

- **Bottom:** Tighten your muscles in your bottom... hold..... feel the tension and then release. Let your bottom return to it's usual position....feel the relaxation. Repeat as needed.
- **Toe Breathing** (combines breathing and PMR)
 - Breathe in through your nose.
 - Visualise the air moving down your body all the way to your toes.
 - Use the air to push your toes into the ground. Feel the tension...hold.
 - Release your toes.
 - Pull the air back up your body and breathe out.

Regulating distress in vivo

Regulating Distress in the Mind in the Classroom

- Thought Stopping (cognitive control)
- Mindfulness (being present and not ruminating about past, present or future)
- Affirmation (cognitive focus)

Regulating Distress in the Mind in the Classroom

- **Thought Stopping** (cognitive control)
 - **Stop!:**
 - *Aim:* to control negative persistent thoughts and emotions.
 - Say the word “STOP” loudly in your mind
 - You can combine this with a small pinch at the same time.
 - **Deep breath:**
 - *Aim:* to ground and calm yourself.
 - Breathe in through your nose, push the air down deep into your tummy, breathe out through your mouth.
 - Visualise yourself gathering up the negative thoughts (and emotions) and blowing them out with your breath. Say to yourself: “Blow it away” or “Let it go”
 - **Affirmation:**
 - *Aim:* To empower yourself and create positive energy.
 - Say your affirmation to yourself loudly in your mind: “I know this, I got this”.
- **Mindfulness** (being present and not ruminating about past, present or future)
 - Pay attention to the moment, open up your senses, and in your mind say:
 - “In this moment I can see....”

- “In this moment I can hear.....”
 - “In this moment I can smell....”
 - “In this moment I can touch/feel.....”
 - “In this moment I can taste....”
- **Affirmation** (cognitive focus)
 - A statement to help you to stay positive and create positive energy: Examples:
 - “Calm, calm, calm”
 - “This too shall pass”
 - “I can do it”
 - Can be used at the end of a negative thought, Examples:
 - “I am anxious but I can do it”
 - “I am stressed but I know my information”

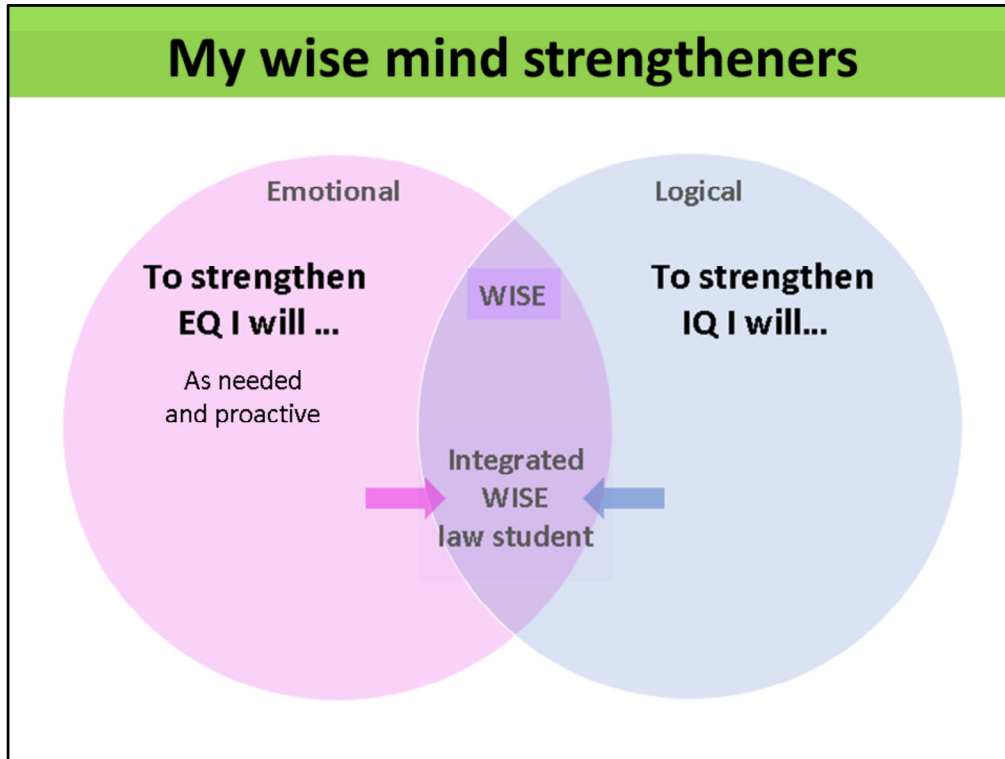
Link to next slide: pro active regulation strategies

Proactive strategies

- Nutrition
- Exercise
- Sleep
- Social support
- Hobbies
- Debriefing
- Check in with PACE

- Regulation techniques to assist staying in green zone
- Be proactive to build resilience to thrive

Link to next slide: making the strategies yours



- Note what you already do or would like to try
- Remember to identify at least one technique you can use in vivo

The Integrated Student
Balancing

IQ + EQ



Part 5:
**Student
Wellbeing
Resources**

Allard Law Student Wellbeing

Anna Kline, Student Wellbeing Counsellor

Allard 147b | 604.822.4928 | kline@allard.ubc.ca

Remote contact best through email

www.allard.ubc.ca/student-resources/student-wellbeing



[@allardwellness](https://www.instagram.com/allardwellness)



www.facebook.com/allardlawstudentservices/

Remote contact best through email: kline@allard.ubc.ca

- Lots of resources specifically directed at student wellbeing on the:
 - wellbeing website
 - Instagram page (which is student run by Natalia Mioduszewski, LSS Director of Wellness for 2020-2021)
 - And the facebook page covering lots of topics, including:
 - What you can and can't control
 - Wise mind and NVC communication
 - Tolerating Uncertainty
 - Processing Strong Emotions
 - Coping with Social Isolation
 - Resiliency
 - Compassion
 - Gratitudes
 - Acceptance
 - Things we can try when we feel lonely
 - Survival mode
 - Writing to COVID to process emotions
 - Systemic racism
 - Instead of "How are you"
 - COVID in person decisions

Allard Law Student Wellbeing Services

Your Wellbeing needs:

Physical | Emotional | Cognitive | Behavioral

*Wellbeing Services and Resources available to
Allard students for free:*

Counselling with Anna Kline:

- drop-in
- single session
- short term
- long term and other
mental health referrals

Proactive wellbeing initiatives:

- activities
- outreach
- promotion
- education
- workshops

Wellbeing support items available:

- books
- stress brains
- sensory rings
- coping cards
- sports equipment

To access counselling with Anna Kline, email kline@allard.ubc.ca

Counselling available via phone and zoom during remote learning.

Other counselling support

*As an Allard/UBC student,
the following additional resources are available to you for free*

- **UBC Counselling Service** 604.822.3811
<https://students.ubc.ca/health/counselling-services>
 - Same model as Allard counselling - Can choose to access counselling at either location
 - Indigenous Counsellor available through UBC Counselling, located at Counselling Services or the FNHL
- **Lawyers Assistance Program** 1.888.685.2171 <https://www.lapbc.com/>
- **Student Counselling Services (24/7)**
 - **EmpowerMe** 1-844-741-6389
http://www.studentcare.ca/rte/en/UniversityofBritishColumbiaAMSGSS_EmpowerMe_EmpowerMe
 - **Here2Talk** 1.877.857.3397 <https://here2talk.ca/home>

**If you have questions or would
like assistance creating your
proactive wellbeing plan, please
email me:**

**Anna Kline,
Student Wellbeing Counsellor
kline@allard.ubc.ca**