

WELL-BEING FOR SEASONED LEGAL PROFESSIONALS

JULIA L. ERNST*

INTRODUCTION

During the summer of 2017, my family tragically lost our beloved son, Shuwang. In an attempt to endure the devastation wrenching my heart, I threw myself into the traditional coping mechanism of burying myself in my work.¹ About six years later, in the spring of 2023, I realized that focusing so intensely on my undertakings as a professor and associate dean at the University of North Dakota (“UND”) School of Law had taken a significant toll on my personal well-being. In the aftermath of our tragedy—despite seeking grief counseling and therapy for our family, which had helped us cope with the immediate heartbreak—I had refused to allow myself to slow down enough to heal and care for my own physical, mental, and emotional health.

Therefore, beginning in the summer of 2023, I have conscientiously embarked upon a journey of enhancing my own well-being. As a fifty-five-year-old empty nester, I have particularly explored resources addressing the needs of individuals at mid-life and beyond, seeking to develop a more sustainable, balanced, and healthy lifestyle. Maintaining good health and increasing the likelihood of longevity will enable my husband and me to serve as a positive support system for our daughter for as long as we are able. For years, my husband has half-jokingly expressed his intention to live to 120. However aspirational that goal may be, I began to delve into how we both could raise our life expectancy and lead healthier lives. This investigation into expert advice for mature (aka “older”) adults has led us to make specific lifestyle changes that have already borne fruit, inspiring me to share these suggestions with family members and friends.

For several years, greater attention has spotlighted the topic of well-being for legal professionals nationally, in North Dakota, and at the UND School of Law. That said, much of the emphasis concerning lawyer well-

*Professor, University of North Dakota School of Law. This article is lovingly dedicated in memory of our beloved son, Shuwang Ernst Clement. He will forever remain in our hearts.

1. Instead of maintaining my own well-being, my spare time involved caring for my family, such as leading a small group and serving as a mentor in the five-year confirmation program at Sharon Lutheran Church throughout our daughter Cosette’s confirmation process, co-leading Cosette’s Girl Scout troop until her graduation from high school in 2022, caring for my aging parents, especially my mother after my father passed away in 2019, and so on. My situation is certainly not unique; countless people at this stage in life—known as the sandwich generation—juggle work with family responsibilities, which makes finding time and energy for self-care a challenge.

being has focused on law students or legal professionals in general, instead of concentrating on more seasoned members of the profession.² Therefore, I offered to the student leaders of the NORTH DAKOTA LAW REVIEW a proposal to submit a piece highlighting well-being for lawyers at mid-life and beyond, which I am grateful they accepted, culminating in this article.

Well-being encompasses flourishing within numerous aspects of life, including physically, mentally, emotionally, socially, and spiritually. The sections below provide concrete suggestions from experts to enhance multifaceted components of well-being. I also share some of the ways in which I have incorporated well-being practices into my own life, which is still very much a work in progress. The examples below offer a myriad of ways in which mid-career and older attorneys can thrive in both their professional and personal lives. The recommendations are not one-size-fits-all, but instead entail a selection of options that lawyers, judges, and others can pick and choose in order to tailor their well-being practices to suit their individual needs.³

While this article mainly provides succinct lists for the convenience of busy professionals, the resources mentioned at the end contain not only additional ideas, but also explanations of scientific research supporting these suggestions and reasons to adopt them, outlining specific gains in health and well-being. I encourage reading them to provide inspiration, awareness, understanding, and advice.

2. As people enter their fifth decade and beyond, their bodies and life circumstances change, impacting well-being in ways distinct from younger generations. *See, e.g.*, STEPHEN PERRINE WITH HEIDI SKOLNIK, *WHOLE BODY RESET* 1-6 (2022). *See also id.* at 4-5 (“There’s not much out there for people our age. . . . Despite the significant changes that occur in our bodies as we age—particularly in our hormonal, structural, and digestive systems—no program existed to address the specific needs of people our age.”).

3. DAN BUETTNER, *THE BLUE ZONES OF HAPPINESS* 9-10 (2017); SANJAY GUPTA WITH KRISTIN LOBERG, *12 WEEKS TO A SHARPER YOU: A GUIDED PROGRAM* 11, 46-47 (2022).

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I. ENHANCING PHYSICAL WELL-BEING FOR SEASONED LEGAL PROFESSIONALS

It goes almost without saying that physical health is a key component of overall well-being. Each individual has considerable control over the well-being of the body, including the brain: “our lifestyle choices contribute mightily to our aging process and risk for disease—likely as much or perhaps even more so than our genetics.”⁴

Importantly, busy professionals must schedule time in their calendars to visit the doctor and dentist at least once per year⁵ and “to keep up with immunizations, eye health, skin health, and . . . hearing.”⁶ In a profession that relies on brain-power, practitioners should note that conditions like high cholesterol or blood pressure negatively affect the brain⁷ as well as the body, as do oral hygiene and other health problems.⁸ The factors outlined below contribute not only to healthy physiology, but also to a healthy mind. As lawyers move through the life cycle toward their later years, maintaining this finely tuned instrument becomes even more crucial. This section highlights specific recommendations for people at midlife and older regarding nutrition⁹—both what to consume and what to avoid—as well as physical activity and sleep.

A. NUTRITION

- Adults need more **protein** spread throughout the day, especially early and mid-day.¹⁰ For breakfast, lunch, and dinner, eat “[a]t least 25 grams of protein at each meal for women, at least 30

4. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 9 (“Clean living can slash your risk of developing a serious mind-destroying disorder, including Alzheimer’s disease, even if you carry genetic risk factors. No matter what your DNA says, a good diet, regular movement, not smoking, limiting alcohol, social engagement, and other surprising lifestyle decisions can change that destiny.”).

5. BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 38; GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 152-54.

6. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 153.

7. *Id.* at 7, 17 (Risk factors for dementia include “less education, high blood pressure, hearing impairment, smoking, obesity, depression, physical inactivity, diabetes, . . . low social contact[,] . . . excessive alcohol consumption, traumatic brain injury, . . . air pollution,” and impaired vision.).

8. *Id.* at 64-65, 152-54; SANJAY GUPTA, KEEP SHARP 187 (2021) (highlighting the importance of flossing as well as brushing teeth every day, as gum disease can increase the risk of blood clots and having a stroke).

9. PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at back cover (Dr. Sanjay Gupta states, “*The Whole Body Reset* is the first program written specifically for people at midlife who want to stay lean, active, and strong for decades to come.”).

10. *Id.* at 6 (“[T]here’s plenty of science available to show exactly how we should eat to prevent age-related muscle loss, reverse age-related weight gain, and, most important, preserve our long-term health. It’s called ‘protein timing.’”), 7 (“[P]rotein timing—eating protein in the proper amounts throughout the day—triggers older bodies to spurn fat gain and hold on to lean muscle tissue. This approach, coupled with plenty of fiber, vitamins and minerals, and healthy fats, can help us not only reshape our bodies, but to reshape our very lives.”).

grams for men . . . [along with one or two snacks containing] an additional 7 or more grams of protein.”¹¹

- Protein powder (added to coffee, milk, or a low-sugar smoothie)¹²
- Peas, beans (black, black-eyed, red, chickpeas, fava, navy, pinto, kidney, soy, lentil), peanuts, peanut butter, and other legumes¹³
- Nuts (ideally unsalted), nut butters¹⁴
- Seeds (chia, flax, hemp, pumpkin, sunflower)¹⁵
- Fish and seafood¹⁶
- Eggs¹⁷ (veggie omelets, hard-boiled eggs, low-fat deviled eggs)
- Dairy (low fat and low sugar, such as milk, fat-free Swiss, cottage cheese, ricotta cheese, Neufchâtel cheese, plain Greek yogurt)¹⁸
- Soy (tofu, tempeh, edamame, soy protein powder)¹⁹
- Veggie burgers, seitan, and other meat substitutes²⁰

11. *Id.* at 11. Hummus or Greek yogurt dip with fresh veggies makes a great high-protein, high-fiber snack.

12. *Id.* at 59 (“Vegetarian, vegan, or not, you may also want to consider adding a plant-based protein mix—in powdered form added to a milk alternative or as a ready-to-drink beverage—to your diet. Look for mixes that are ‘complete’ proteins—a mix of various plant sources such as pea, soy, and rice protein. . . . Studies show that whey protein, derived from milk, may be the single best protein source for older people who want to retain muscle or rebuild muscle they’ve lost.”), 220 (“Many experts believe there’s a king of all proteins, at least when it comes to people 50+: Whey protein”). Plant-based protein powder mixes better into coffee than whey-based protein powder.

13. BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 25; GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 68. Some nutrition experts recommend one cup of this type of protein per day.

14. *See* GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 19, 81; PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 37. Similarly, some nutrition experts recommend a handful of mixed nuts per day.

15. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 19; GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 176. Add seeds to oatmeal, soups, salads, stews, and smoothies.

16. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 19, 68; PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 36 (“[A] portion of fish is about the size of a checkbook.”), 130-33, 342-43 (suggesting a wide variety of seafood). Several years ago, our daughter decided to become pescatarian, which my husband Rich—the cook in our family—and I have largely embraced as well. Rich and I consider ourselves “flexitarian,” as we occasionally eat meat. We stock our freezer with fish my brother catches from Lake Huron.

17. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 68. Hard-boiled eggs make a quick and easy high-protein breakfast or snack; prepare a dozen once per week to keep on hand in the refrigerator.

18. PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 35 (Choose plain yogurt with fresh fruit instead of flavored yogurt.), 60. *See id.* at 126-28 for information about whole-fat dairy products, as well as non-dairy substitutes, 138 (not recommending low-protein dairy substitutes like oat, almond, or coconut milk); GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 68. Plain, non-fat Greek yogurt is a wonderful addition to soups and substitute for sour cream.

19. PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 37, 73. Our family loves tofu marinated in soy sauce and lightly fried in olive oil along with peanut sauce and steamed vegetables.

20. *Id.* at 342. Try seitan, tempeh, crumbled tofu, walnuts, or lentils instead of meat in spaghetti sauce.

- Poultry and lean meat²¹
- Focus on plant-based proteins rather than meat-based proteins²²
- Mature adults require more **fiber** and nutrients in a **rainbow of colors**²³ from vegetables, fruits, and whole grains.²⁴
 - Strive for at least “30 grams of fiber per day,”²⁵ with at least five grams per meal and two grams per snack.²⁶
 - **Vegetables**—at least one and a half to two and a half cups per day²⁷
 - Especially leafy greens²⁸ (“spinach, chard, kale, arugula, collard greens, mustard greens, romaine lettuce, Swiss chard, turnip greens”)²⁹
 - Vary your selections (e.g., artichokes, asparagus, beets, bok choy, broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, cucumbers, eggplant, fennel, garlic, green beans, leeks, mushrooms, onions, peas, peppers—red/orange/yellow/green, potatoes with the skin, radish, rutabaga, snap peas, squash, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, turnips, watercress, zucchini)

21. *Id.* at 11, 36 (“[A] cooked portion of red meat or poultry should be a little bigger than the size of a deck of playing cards.”); GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 20.

22. BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 25 (In areas of the world where people live the longest, “[m]eat . . . is eaten on average only five times per month, and in a serving of three to four ounces, about the size of a deck of cards.”); GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 19; PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 84 (“[E]ating more protein—specifically, more plant protein—was linked to lower risk of death from any cause, including cancer and heart disease . . .”), 59 (“If you primarily eat a plant-based, vegetarian diet, it makes sense then to incorporate eggs and dairy into most meals to get all the complete protein you need.”).

23. PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 11; GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 80; GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 168 (“[A]im for seven different-colored foods . . . every day.”), 186.

24. GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 182; PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 15 (“[T]he more fruits and vegetables older adults eat, the lower their degree of muscle loss as they age.”). I wash and prepare fresh vegetables and fruits on weekends to keep in the fridge for the week.

25. PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 15-16. Psyllium fiber capsules also minimize trips to the restroom during long meetings or classes.

26. *Id.* at 11; Robert H. Lustig, *Ask a Doctor: Are Salads Actually Good For You?*, WASH. POST (Dec. 5, 2022 6:02 AM), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/wellness/2022/12/05/best-salad-dressing-lettuce/> [<https://perma.cc/8TDJ-7MFD>]. I often make a large salad with a variety of chopped vegetables to keep in the refrigerator for easy meals.

27. PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 38, 345-46; GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 19.

28. PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 65; GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 20. Whenever we buy fresh beets from our local farmers market, I sauté the beet greens in olive oil with lemon and minced garlic.

29. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 68; PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 101. Try greens in salads, soups, stews, stir-fries, sautéed, and on sandwiches.

- **Fruits**—at least two to four servings per day³⁰
 - Especially berries (blueberries, strawberries, blackberries, raspberries)³¹
 - Select a variety of other fruits (e.g., apples, bananas, cherries, clementines, grapefruit, grapes, kiwis, lemons, limes, mangos, melons, nectarines, oranges, papaya, peaches, pears, plums, pineapple, pomegranate, star fruit, etc., as well as dried fruits without added sugar³²)
- **Whole grains and starches**—four to eight servings per day³³
 - 100% whole grain bread, quinoa, wild or brown rice, barley, buckwheat, bulgur wheat,³⁴ whole grain pasta,³⁵ oatmeal,³⁶ whole grain cereal³⁷
- Have two servings of **healthy fats** per day,³⁸ which provide valuable omega-3 fatty acids and other nutrients³⁹

30. PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 38, 347-48; GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 19.

31. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 20; PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 347-48. Every year, my mother gathers and freezes several gallons of blueberries from a self-pick blueberry farm. In the evenings, she enjoys a bowl of frozen blueberries along with plain Greek yogurt instead of ice cream.

32. *See, e.g.*, PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 135-36, 347-48.

33. *Id.* at 11, 39, 138, 140, 349-50; GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 19. Rich bakes multigrain bread, freezes it, and crisps it before serving.

34. Rich and I first experienced bulgur wheat in a heavenly ambrosia-type salad at the Effertz ranch in Velva, ND, during a UND Bus Tour for a new faculty in 2011, which we adopted as a new Thanksgiving tradition.

35. PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 39; *see also id.* at 140 (recommending chickpea or lentil pasta).

36. *Id.* at 35 (“[T]oss out flavored oatmeal . . . for plain, topped with fruit and nuts and a sprinkle of cinnamon . . .”), 139. Turmeric, unsweetened applesauce, ground flax, hemp hearts, and chia seeds are also flavorful and beneficial additions to oatmeal.

37. *Id.* at 39. Original Cheerios, Grape Nuts, Shredded Wheat, and Fiber One are good options. Stefani Sassos & Amy Fischer, *9 Healthiest Whole Grain Cereals (That Meet the New FDA Guidelines)*, GOOD HOUSEKEEPING (Nov. 16, 2022) <https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/food-products/g4111/best-healthy-cereal/>; Brianna Elliott, *The 14 Healthiest Cereals You Can Eat*, HEALTHLINE (Oct. 24, 2023) <https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/15-healthiest-cereals> [<https://perma.cc/8BKY-HVR8>]; Jennifer Bowers, *The 5 Healthiest Cereals You Can Eat (Plus, 5 You Should Avoid!)*, TASTE HOME (Nov. 9, 2023) <https://www.tasteofhome.com/article/healthy-cereal/> [<https://perma.cc/3MRD-XSUA>].

38. PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 12. Healthy fats enhance a feeling of fullness and help the body absorb important nutrients. *Id.*

39. Note that some foods listed under proteins also provide healthy fats, including fatty fish, such as “salmon, trout, herring, sardines, anchovies, albacore tuna, mackerel, oysters, Arctic char, black cod,” as well as nuts. *See* GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 73.

- Extra virgin olive oil (which also contains other beneficial nutrients),⁴⁰ ensure it is 100% extra virgin⁴¹
- Other healthy oils (e.g., avocado, canola, flaxseed, safflower, sesame, peanut, and nut oils)⁴²
- Olives, tapenade⁴³
- Avocados⁴⁴ (e.g., eat out of the shell, on toast, in guacamole)
- **Fermented foods** support a healthy microbiome⁴⁵
 - Apple cider vinegar, pickles, sauerkraut, sourdough bread, yogurt, kombucha tea, kimchi, miso, lassi, kefir
- **Natural seasonings** (reduce salt)
 - “Use vinegar, lemon, aromatic herbs, and spices to increase flavor in food without increasing salt content.”⁴⁶
 - Turmeric (provides significant brain health benefits)⁴⁷
- **Hydrate wisely**⁴⁸
 - Non-sugary beverages (water, unsweetened tea, or coffee⁴⁹ (early in the day if caffeinated), herbal teas, flavored sparkling waters)⁵⁰

40. *Id.* at 19, 73; PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 35 (“[D]ump the premade salad dressing for olive oil and vinegar.”), 80 (“Make your own salad dressings with olive oil, lemon or vinegar, and spices.”).

41. PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 109, 132. Choose a dark container and store in a dark location to preserve its useful properties. *Id.*

42. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 73; GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 176, 187; PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 109-10. We have substituted avocado mayonnaise for regular mayonnaise.

43. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 73. For a non-alcoholic dirty martini, try olives with a splash of the liquid in sparkling water over ice. *Id.* We also add olives to salads, stir-fry meals, and vegetarian charcuterie boards.

44. *Id.* We keep avocados on hand for a quick, easy, and fulfilling snack.

45. *Id.* at 83.

46. *Id.* at 82. We regularly use minced garlic, sauteed onions, and lime, as well as fresh herbs from our aero garden.

47. GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 183-84 (A study found curcumin (the primary active ingredient in turmeric) boosts memory, attention, and mood.). Tablets provide convenience; powder is a delicious, economical addition to many dishes. I add turmeric powder to my coffee with protein powder and soy milk.

48. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 22, 59 (“Your brain is roughly 73 percent water (same for your heart), and that is why it takes only 2 percent dehydration to affect your attention, memory, and other cognitive skills.”); PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 70-72 (“Don’t Drink Your Calories (or Chemicals).”).

49. I add plant-based chocolate or vanilla protein powder along with soy milk and a dash of turmeric to my “half-caff” coffee, and in the fall, I add cinnamon, ginger, or nutmeg. Costco sells each at a reasonable price.

50. PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 12; GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 211 (“You can drink carbonated, flavored water as long as it does not contain any sugar or artificial sweeteners. In the morning, coffee and tea are fine.”); GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 72 (“We often mistake hunger for thirst . . . Because our brains are not really that good at distinguishing thirst from hunger, if there is food around, we generally tend to eat. As a result, we walk around over-stuffed and

- **Healthy desserts:**
 - fruit, baked apples/pears, plain Greek yogurt with berries
 - dark chocolate (at least 70% cacao)⁵¹
- Have a large breakfast with protein and fiber daily, a morning snack, a medium lunch, an afternoon snack, a small dinner, and nothing afterwards.⁵²
- Every week, try to include at least thirty different plants in your diet,⁵³ including vegetables, fruits, whole grains, nuts, and seeds.
- Exercise portion control and eat until only eighty percent full—enjoy leftovers.⁵⁴
- Frequent the farmers market and support local farmers; grow your own garden; participate in a community garden; store home-canned vegetables.⁵⁵
- Stock frozen vegetables and fruits in the freezer for easy ingredients and meals.⁵⁶
- Do not keep junk food in the house (enlist family members to join you).
- Only shop when not hungry (grab a healthy snack to eat on the way) and use a list to minimize impulse purchases.⁵⁷

chronically dehydrated.”). While accompanying my daughter Cosette (then 7 years old) to her dental checkup, the dental hygienist told her how terrible pop—especially diet pop—is for dental and overall health. Cosette glanced at me accusingly, aware of my addiction to Diet Coke. Then when the dentist told Cosette she would have to stop soothing on her “blankie” because it was shifting her front teeth, she nearly burst into tears. We pinkie-promised to cease these bad habits, and although initially extremely challenging for both of us, our mutual reinforcement helped us overcome them.

51. PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 45, 122-24. Aldi offers 85% cacao chocolate bars at a reasonable price; one bar contains three grams of fiber, three grams of protein, and only three grams of sugar—a healthy treat!

52. *Id.* at 43-47; BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 25; GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 207 (“[E]at breakfast like a king, lunch like a prince, and dinner like a peasant.”). My husband often notes we should try not to eat after 7:00 p.m. See GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 76, 82 for a similar suggestion (“Avoid eating anything within two to three hours of bedtime.”). I also sleep better when I do not consume anything (food or beverages) before bedtime.

53. PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 78.

54. GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 179-81, 186 (use small plates); PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 217-18; BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 25; GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 21 (reduce portions), 74 (my father used to ask for a leftover container at the beginning of the meal and divided half his food to take home). I now use smaller plates, take small initial portions, and tell myself I can go back for more (I usually refrain). At Thanksgiving, I take one bite-sized sample of everything, then have seconds only if I am still hungry. In restaurants, my husband and I often order one appetizer and one dinner to share with each other. At buffets (which we normally avoid), I survey everything, have a salad, then take small samples of select vegetable, seafood, and non-fried dishes.

55. GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 213.

56. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 82. We freeze excess produce from our garden to enjoy in the winter.

57. PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 115-16. Rich, Cosette, and I share a joint shopping list on the To Do app on our cellphones.

- Plan and cook ahead; it is easier to prepare healthy food if not starving.⁵⁸
- Have plenty of healthy, grab-and-go meals and snacks on hand.⁵⁹
- Look for healthy options at events and in vending machines or bring your own small bag of dried fruits and nuts.
- When travelling by airplane, pack low-sugar, high-fiber protein bars along with packets of dried fruits and nuts.
- When traveling by car, instead of eating fast food, stop at grocery stores along the way and buy a vegetable tray with hummus, bananas, apples, pre-cut fruit, cottage cheese, yogurt, mixed nuts, or selections from the salad bar.
- For snacks, eat fruit or a handful of unsalted mixed nuts (or lightly salted nuts or pumpkin seeds when experiencing a salt craving).
- Substitute hummus, guacamole, tapenade, salsa, lentil dip, or Greek yogurt dip instead of a high-fat dairy-based dip with raw vegetables.⁶⁰
- Avoid comfort eating (e.g., eating while working or due to stress), recreational eating (e.g., popcorn or candy at the movies, ice cream while watching television, chips while playing games),⁶¹ or mindless eating.⁶²

B. MINIMIZATION OF PROBLEMATIC CONSUMPTION

- **Sugar** (avoid added sugar; substitute healthy foods)⁶³

58. GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 181-82.

59. My sister-in-law makes “egg muffins”—chopped bell peppers, mushrooms, onions, and other vegetables in a muffin tin lightly coated with olive oil, along with 12 scrambled eggs (one per “muffin”), to keep in the refrigerator and warm up for breakfast or a healthy snack.

60. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 81.

61. GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 207 (dismissing recreational and comfort eating); PERRINE & SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 225-26 (discussing emotional eating).

62. PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 221-22 (“[P]late your food . . . [and] do not eat out of the container or bag.”). I take a small portion telling myself I can return for seconds, which I usually then avoid doing.

63. Decline high-sugar beverages (soda/pop/soft drinks, sweetened teas, energy and sports drinks, juices, smoothies, shakes, blended coffees), brownies, cakes, candy, cereals, condiments, cookies, doughnuts, dressings, energy bars, fruit canned in syrup, granola bars, ice cream, jams, jellies, muffins, pastries, pies, preservatives, protein bars, sauces, spreads, sweet rolls, etc. Substitute fresh fruit instead of syrup. Honey or maple syrup is better than corn syrup. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 19, 70-71; GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 171-72, PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 25 (“Granola bars are a ‘health halo’ food. They sound healthy, but that’s only if you’re comparing them to Snickers bars.”), 35 (“Swap energy bars for a mix of nuts and berries . . .”), 105-06, 117-19 (“[T]here are three pillars that form the very heart of the Whole Body Reset: [e]at more protein, [e]at more fiber, [and e]at less sugar.” On food labels, add the grams of protein and fiber, then look at the grams of sugar. “The healthiest choices . . . have higher totals of protein and fiber than sugar.”).

- **Sugar substitutes** (avoid aspartame, saccharin, sucralose; instead, try natural, no-calorie sweeteners such as stevia, allulose, and monk fruit)⁶⁴
- **White/refined flour** and other non-whole grains (white bread, white rice, crackers, bagels, pretzels, many cereals)⁶⁵
- **Salt** (avoid saltshakers, salty snacks, canned soups, frozen prepared foods, pizza, bread, crackers, sandwiches, restaurant food)⁶⁶
- **Saturated fat and trans-fat** (fried food, fast food, frozen pizza, butter, margarine, whole-fat cheese, less-healthy oils (soybean, corn, palm, coconut, and vegetable oils))⁶⁷
- **Processed foods**⁶⁸
- **Red meats** (beef, pork, lamb, and buffalo) and **processed meats** (bacon, sausage, salami, bologna, lunch meats, breaded chicken, and breaded fish)⁶⁹
- **Alcohol** (select mocktails; favor non-alcohol events; if drinking, do so in moderation; choose red wine instead of other alcoholic beverages)⁷⁰
- **Caffeine** (fine if does not cause anxiety or interfere with sleep; after 2:00 p.m. drink non-caffeinated beverages; some medicines have caffeine)⁷¹

64. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 23, 71.

65. PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 80, 140, 169; GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 80-81; GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 171.

66. PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 107-08, 139, 141, 165; GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 186; GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 81; elect low-sodium soy sauce and other seasonings.

67. GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 168-69, 187; GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 19-20, 69; PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 80, 106, 138.

68. PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 12, 35 (describing processed foods as “the stuff with lots of ingredients and empty calories”), 116-17 (“The middle of the [grocery] store is a big waist-land. The perimeter of the store is where the most nutritious foods are found, while the center aisles . . . contain most of the refined foods. . . . The checkout aisle is the last temptation.”). Shop around the perimeter of the store offering healthy whole foods.

69. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 20, 69; PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 128-29 (encouraging lean meat rather than high-fat meat), 137. Remove all visible fats from beef, pork, and poultry (including the skin).

70. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 20, 72-73 (“Recent studies have shown that alcohol reduces overall brain volume even at light-to-moderate consumption. If you drink alcohol, drink in moderation. For men, doctors recommend they drink only up to two drinks a day (a drink is 12 ounces of beer, 5 ounces of wine, or 1.5 ounces—one shot glass—of liquor); for women, it’s one drink.”); GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 174-75, 210.

71. GUPTA, *supra* note, 8, at 174. I make a pot of coffee using one tablespoon of regular and the rest decaf coffee.

- **Tobacco or drugs** (use employer assistance program to quit)⁷²
- **Sleep Aids** (beware of negative effects on the brain)⁷³
- **Dietary supplements** (unregulated; not a substitute for good nutrition)⁷⁴

C. PHYSICAL FITNESS AND NATURAL MOVEMENT

- **Cardio/aerobic** (raising your heart rate) (e.g., brisk walking, jogging, bicycling, swimming, stairs, exercise classes)⁷⁵
 - Minimum of one hundred fifty minutes per week (thirty minutes five times per week); better is an hour per day—even simply brisk walking⁷⁶
 - High-intensity interval training (HIIT), interspersing high intensity with lower intensity aerobic exercise⁷⁷
 - Find comfortable headphones and create an upbeat playlist of your favorite music.⁷⁸
- **Strength training** at least two days per week (weights, resistance bands, squats/lunges/pushups/sit-ups, exercise machines, Pilates)⁷⁹

72. BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 115, 149 (“Smokers are measurably less happy than nonsmokers . . .”).

73. GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 139-40 (“Virtually all sleep aids, whether they are prescription or over-the-counter (OTC), will help you fall asleep faster, but they do not allow you to experience sleep as restful as natural sleep. Some even increase the risk for brain decline and dementia . . . [Some] are habit forming[,] . . . [others] have been shown in clinical studies to impair thinking and balance[,] . . . [and still others] have been linked to a higher chance of developing Alzheimer’s.”).

74. PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 62 (“Many doctors generally recommend we get our vitamins and minerals from foods rather than pills [in part because] whole foods provide a variety of nutrients that work synergistically to keep us healthy.”), 69, 90, 104.

75. *Id.* at 12, 180, 186-87, 201-03; GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 30, 91; GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 100, 111. I recently joined Planet Fitness to boost my cardio (stair machine, rowing machine) and strength (weight machines).

76. GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 100, 113-14. Nearly every day, I walk around my neighborhood while talking on the phone with my mother, while she walks at the same time around her neighborhood in Michigan (or on a treadmill if either of us have adverse weather).

77. PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 180, 187-89, 203-08.

78. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 100-01.

79. PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 12, 180, 185-86, 189-201; GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 24-26, 30, 91-92 (“You can buy some three-, five-, and eight-pound free weights (dumbbells) or resistance bands, or use your body weight as resistance and follow a program or class (live or prerecorded) streamed online from a screen.”). GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 104 (emphasizing the importance of building muscle mass, particularly in older adults), 111. My mother and I have set a goal of videoconferencing twice per week for strength training and stretching exercises together.

- **Flexibility and balance** (stretching, yoga, standing on one leg)⁸⁰
- **Increase natural movement** (not just blocks of “exercise” time).⁸¹
 - When working while seated,⁸² get up from the chair every 30 minutes (use the Pomodoro method).⁸³
 - Stand or walk around while talking on the phone.⁸⁴
 - Invite colleagues to have walking meetings.
 - Work at a standing desk or a desk on a treadmill.⁸⁵
 - Take the stairs, park further away, walk during breaks.
 - Do housework,⁸⁶ yard work, or gardening.
- Engage in active hobbies—camping, hiking, canoeing, pickleball, golf, tennis, hockey, skating, skiing, curling, tubing, rock climbing.
- Sign up with friends for fundraising races and walks.⁸⁷

D. SLEEP

- Aim for at least seven hours each night.⁸⁸

80. GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 111; GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 30; PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 180, 209-14. I stretch and stand on one leg in small increments throughout the day, such as while heating up leftovers in the microwave.

81. BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 24.

82. GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 103 (discussing the adage “sitting is the new smoking”); PERRINE WITH SKOLNIK, *supra* note 2, at 178-79 (addressing the hazards of sitting for long periods of time), 228-29 (providing suggestions for people who sit during work).

83. GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 152-53 (“Simply pick a task—hopefully your most important one of the day—and set your timer for twenty-five minutes. Work solely on that task with no distractions until the timer rings. Then take a five-minute break and repeat as necessary.”). During the breaks, walk up and down the stairs, stretch, do jumping jacks, or if working at home—complete physical tasks like emptying the dishwasher.

84. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 98; GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 206.

85. BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 157 (some employers offer standing desks with optional treadmills).

86. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 10 (noting the health benefits of “household chores like cooking, cleaning, and washing the dishes”).

87. *Id.* at 97 (noting the benefits of walking or playing sports with others). Kathryn Rand and I have participated in the Home Run benefiting the Northlands Rescue Mission. Rich and I joined the Greater Grand Forks Women’s Leadership Cooperative’s team in the TEARS walk for suicide prevention; a friend and I did the Alzheimer’s Walk.

88. *Id.* at 102 (“[M]ost adults need seven to nine hours a night.”).

- Set regular times for going to sleep (not past midnight) and waking up.⁸⁹
- Do not eat or drink—especially alcohol—for several hours before bed.⁹⁰
- Avoid electronics for at least an hour before bedtime, as well as work, vigorous exercise, or other stimulating activities.⁹¹
- Read calming books or magazines (no upsetting or exciting topics), engage in light stretching, listen to calming music.⁹²
- Use aromatherapy (lavender or sandalwood pillow spray).
- Practice mindfulness meditation: “simply sit in a comfortable, quiet place and take notice of your thoughts and feelings.”⁹³
- Write in a journal (e.g., record your daily nutritional intake, exercise, and blessings for which you are grateful).⁹⁴
- Optimize your bedroom: minimize light (from outside and inside) and set the room temperature between sixty-five to sixty-seven degrees.⁹⁵
- Maintain a quiet bedroom or use relaxing sound such as white, green, or other “colors” of noise (fan, rain, wind, waterfalls, waves, streams).⁹⁶
- Try a calming app or sleep app.⁹⁷

89. *Id.* at 102-03 (“The older you get, the earlier your bedtime will be and the earlier you will naturally wake up, but the overall number of hours you sleep should not change.”); GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 143-44; BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, POOR RICHARD’S ALMANACK 6 (1914) (“Early to bed, early to rise, makes one healthy, wealthy, and wise.”). My ideal routine is to finish activities by 9:00 p.m., watch a show until 10:00 p.m., get ready for bed and read until lights out at 11:00 p.m.

90. *Id.* at 102; GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 144 (“While alcohol can make you feel sleepy, its effects on the body disturb normal sleep cycles and they particularly disrupt the restorative slow-wave sleep.”).

91. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 105-06; GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 145-46.

92. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 106.

93. GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 212 (“No judging, no problem solving, no list making—just a few quiet moments of stillness and focusing on your breath.”). *See also* DALAI LAMA & DESMOND TUTU WITH DOUGLAS ABRAMS, THE BOOK OF JOY 307-48 (2016) (providing examples of meditation practices).

94. *Id.*

95. *Id.* at 145; GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 105; BUETTNER, *supra* note 2, at 199 (recommends sixty-five degrees). Try a cooling mat and pillow.

96. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 105; GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 145; Marisa Sloan, *Noise Colors: Which One Is Best For Sleep?*, DISCOVER (Mar. 27, 2023, 8:00 AM), <https://www.discovermagazine.com/health/noise-colors-which-one-is-best-for-sleep> [https://perma.cc/NK9B-B6U4]; Stacey Colino, *Beyond White Noise: How Different ‘Color’ Sounds Help or Hurt*, WASH. POST (Oct. 9, 2023, 6:00 AM), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/home/2023/10/09/white-noise-color-sounds-brown-pink/> [https://perma.cc/JU6K-PLBB]; GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 145.

97. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 107-08. When I cannot sleep, I listen to a yoga nidra YouTube recording on my cellphone to help me relax and find contentment.

- In the morning, exercise and expose yourself to sunlight⁹⁸
- Stop drinking caffeinated beverages by 2:00 p.m.⁹⁹
- Do not take long naps, and do not nap in the late afternoon or evening.¹⁰⁰ If you are tired in the afternoon, take a brisk walk or try other exercise, and ensure you are well-hydrated and not hungry.¹⁰¹
- See a specialist for additional assistance regarding various sleep issues.¹⁰²

II. ENHANCING OTHER ASPECTS OF WELL-BEING FOR SEASONED LEGAL PROFESSIONALS

In addition to nutrition, movement, and sleep, flourishing professionally and personally encompasses other facets of well-being.¹⁰³ Significantly for older individuals, this includes defining and fulfilling your purpose in life—that which gives your life meaning. Well-being also entails nurturing meaningful relationships; fostering traits such as gratitude, kindness, generosity, forgiveness, and spirituality; heightening discovery and a sense of wonder¹⁰⁴ by developing hobbies, cultivating interests, and learning new skills; and enhancing positive emotions, particularly joy and happiness, while minimizing negative emotions and stress. This section also explores finding time to implement these changes, in part by examining the adage “less is more” and putting one’s affairs in order.

98. *Id.* at 102; GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 144. I now use a full-spectrum light therapy lamp while working.

99. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 72, 104.

100. *Id.* at 103 (“[L]imit napping to thirty minutes in the early afternoon . . . before 3:00 p.m.”); GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 143. Several friends extol the benefits of short power naps in the afternoons.

101. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 103-04.

102. *Id.* at 108. For example, in my mid-thirties my dentist informed me that I grind my teeth at night and recommended I use a mouthguard while sleeping. Local drug stores sell inexpensive athletic mouthguards.

103. JOHN PIERRE, *THE PILLARS OF HEALTH: YOUR FOUNDATIONS FOR LIFELONG WELLNESS* 2 (2013) (“To experience exceptional vitality and lasting energy well into our later years, it’s important to learn how to strengthen the “pillars” which support our lives. These include a healthful diet, positive mental habits, physical movement that engages the body in challenging and fun ways, and a compassionate connection with ourselves and others.”).

104. University of North Dakota President Andrew Armacost often encourages “a sense of wonder.”

A. YOUR PURPOSE AND REASON FOR BEING

- Develop and intentionally strive to fulfill your purpose in life—that which makes life meaningful for you.¹⁰⁵ In Japan, the term *ikigai* “means your reason for being.”¹⁰⁶
- Richard J. Leider, author of *The Power of Purpose*, developed purpose workshops to help people discover their talents and passions, enabling them to focus more of their time and energy on what is truly meaningful for them.¹⁰⁷ He suggests using a formula to clarify your purpose:
 - Gifts (what you have to offer) +
 - Passion (what really excites you) +
 - Values (what you find most important) =
 - Your Calling, or $G + P + V = C$.¹⁰⁸
- Senior legal professionals could mold their practice into areas of law aligned with their values, enabling them to pursue a calling versus simply a career.¹⁰⁹ When I graduated from

105. BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 24 (“In all the Blue Zones, people had something to live for beyond just work. Research has shown that knowing your sense of purpose is worth up to seven years of extra life expectancy.”); GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 37-38 (“Having a sense of purpose will also help keep your brain plastic and preserve that cognitive reserve. With purpose comes a love for life and all the experiences it offers. Purpose also puts a damper on depression, which can be common in one’s later years and is a huge risk factor in itself for memory decline, stroke, and dementia.”). *See also* GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 135-40 for further information on “finding your flow” by discovering your purpose.

106. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 138 (“I think of it as the thing that makes me want to jump out of bed in the morning . . . and keeps me going all day. We would all do well to define our *ikigai*, because it is a daily reminder of our purpose here on earth. It’s often used to help people define what they should be doing in their life by highlighting what they love, what they’re good at, what they can get paid for, and what the world needs.”) (punctuation in original). *See also* GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 129.

107. BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 40. I attended a Blue Zones Project’s Purpose Workshop in Grand Forks, North Dakota, in 2023. Among other activities, we each sorted through a deck of cards that included various talents or “gifts,” selecting the top five that pertain to each of us as individuals. We were asked to choose the most important, and then to arrange the others in support of that top choice in the following pre-set statement: “With my gifts of _____, _____, _____, and _____, I am here to facilitate change for the benefit of _____.” The outcome of my participation in this exercise resulted in the following aspirational purpose statement: “With my gifts of empowering others, building relationships, advancing ideas, and bringing joy, I am here to facilitate change for the benefit of achieving compassion and justice throughout my community, state, nation, and world.” For a fuller description of the purpose workshops, *see id.* at 214-16.

108. *Id.* at 238 (“When you find where your greatest abilities, passion, and values intersect, you’re on purpose.”). In our Professional Foundations course taken by all first-year students at the UND School of Law, we provide our students with an exercise enabling them to identify and articulate their own core values, and we encourage them to develop a lifelong practice of self-reflection so they can remain true to their values.

109. *Id.* at 164; *see also* GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 127-29; ARTHUR C. BROOKS, FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH 208-09 (2022) (“[W]e should seek work that is a balance of enjoyable

the University of Michigan with a political science master's degree, Antonia Novello¹¹⁰ gave a memorable commencement speech¹¹¹ urging us not simply to pursue a career—which would merely bring extrinsic rewards such as money or prestige,¹¹² but instead to pursue our calling—which would give us purpose in life and infuse our work with meaning.¹¹³

- Do not be too quick to retire.¹¹⁴
- Provide *pro bono* legal services, including in retirement, such as through:
 - Free Legal Answers¹¹⁵ and

and meaningful. . . . Something that truly interests you is intensely pleasurable; it also must have meaning in order to hold your interest.”).

110. Mariana Brandman, *Antonia Novello*, NAT'L WOMEN'S HIST. MUSEUM (Oct. 2021), <https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/antonia-novello> [<https://perma.cc/8FMP-ZGYZ>]. Born in Puerto Rico, Antonia Novello suffered from a severe medical condition. *Id.* Her father died when she was eight, and her mother could not afford the corrective surgery until she turned eighteen, inspiring her to become a doctor and help other children who could not access critical healthcare. *Id.* Taking note of her distinguished career, President George H.W. Bush appointed her as the first Hispanic person and first female to serve as U.S. Surgeon General. *Id.*

111. *December 1994 Winter Commencement. Speaker & Honorary Degree Recipient Antonia Novello, Former Surgeon General.* (photograph), U. MICH. LIBR. (Dec. 1994), https://quod.lib.umich.edu/p/psdalic/x-27d212cf41/STOCK_2005_16103_FAMOUS_ALUM_I_12392-4_3A [<https://perma.cc/B8N2-B7WG>].

112. BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 270 (“The satisfaction people expect to get from extrinsically motivated choices [e.g., ‘the acquisition of wealth, or materialistic consumption’] tend to be overrated, relative to the satisfaction they get from intrinsically motivated choices,” including other-oriented social behavior such as volunteering.).

113. *Id.* at 40 (Finding one’s purpose “‘requires a goal outside ourselves’ and that ‘only when our focus—our purpose—is larger than ourselves can meaning be deeply savored and long lasting, not just a goal completed and then forgotten.’” (quoting RICHARD J. LEIDER, *THE POWER OF PURPOSE* (1985)), 168 (“If you feel stuck in your current position, take a chance on something new to see how you like it. Look for a job that feeds your passions, values, and talents, rather than simply giving you a big office or title. Put a high priority on working with people you like. Consider the concept of ‘good work’—a job that fits your identity, allows you to pursue excellence, and benefits society.”), 90 (“Do things to benefit others. Make a positive difference to society. Dedicate yourself to a cause, rather than for your self-interest like personal glory.”).

114. GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 115-16; GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 36 (“For each additional year you keep working, the risk of getting dementia is reduced by 3.2 percent. . . . The study behind this finding included nearly half a million people, showing that someone who retired at age sixty-five had about a 15 percent lower risk of developing dementia compared to someone retiring at sixty, even after other factors were taken into account. Staying engaged in a job, especially one that’s satisfying, tends to keep people not just mentally challenged and socially connected but also more physically active—all things known to protect cognition. Takeaway: Retire late, or never at all. (Queen Elizabeth II worked until her death at ninety-six!)” (footnote omitted)).

115. *How It Works*, N.D. FREE LEGAL ANSWERS, <https://nd.freelegalanswers.org/> [<https://perma.cc/36WQ-HCDL>] (last visited Feb. 12, 2024).

- Legal Services of North Dakota¹¹⁶
- Volunteer¹¹⁷—follow your passion; cultivate a commitment to a cause:¹¹⁸
 - Join bar association committees, commissions, assistance programs, boards, mentorship opportunities, and other entities¹¹⁹
 - Engage in civic education opportunities (high school mock trials,¹²⁰ ABA Law Day, and Constitution Day).¹²¹
 - Support law students (mentoring, judging moot court competitions, recruiting prospective new law students).¹²²
 - Contribute time to local charitable or religious organizations.¹²³
- Become involved in the political process, whether engaging with your elected officials, participating in city council or school board meetings, assisting with elections, actively supporting a political party and candidates, or running for office yourself.¹²⁴
- Galvanize support for and participate in a Senior Lawyers Section of your state or local bar association.

116. *Pro Bono Opportunities*, LEGAL SERVS. N.D., <https://lsnd.org/give-help/pro-bono-opportunities/> [<https://perma.cc/4U2B-2R6K>] (last visited Mar. 7, 2024).

117. GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 151 (“Those who volunteer tend to have less anxiety, depression, loneliness, and social isolation, as well as a sense of purpose. The 2018 AARP survey found that adults age fifty or older who volunteer at least once a year have higher mental well-being scores than those who don’t volunteer at least once a year.”); BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 136 (“Research has shown that volunteering is good for you, especially as you get older. Besides keeping you engaged with others and fortifying your sense of purpose, it also tends to reduce your risk of health problems and boost your well-being.”).

118. BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 102-03.

119. STATE BAR ASS’N N.D., <https://www.sband.org> (last visited Feb. 12, 2024).

120. *SBAND High School Mock Trial Competition*, STATE BAR ASS’N N.D., <https://www.sband.org/page/HighSchoolMockTrial> (last visited Mar. 7, 2024).

121. *Law Day 2024*, ABA, https://www.americanbar.org/groups/public_education/law-day/ (last visited Mar. 7, 2024); *Celebrating Constitution Day*, NAT’L ARCHIVES (Sept. 22, 2023), <https://www.archives.gov/news/topics/constitution-day> [<https://perma.cc/4PEJ-LRTP>].

122. *See* BROOKS, *supra* note 109, at 30-31 (“[C]onsider the wisdom of the first-century BC Roman statesman, lawyer, scholar, and philosopher Marcus Tullius Cicero. . . . Cicero believed three things about older age. First, that it should be dedicated to *service*, not goofing off. Second, our greatest gift later in life is *wisdom*, in which learning and thought create a worldview that can enrich others. Third, our natural ability at this point is *counsel*: mentoring, advising, and teaching others, in a way that does not amass worldly rewards of money, power, or prestige.”).

123. BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 240.

124. GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 197; *see also* BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 116 (One measurement of well-being is whether “[i]n the last 12 months you have received recognition for helping to improve the city or area where you live.”).

- Having a sense of purpose enables a sense of “flow”—the term popularized by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi to describe:

a mental state that has you totally immersed in an activity without distraction or any sense of agitation. You’re deeply focused, enjoying a feeling of intense energy as you’re absorbed in the activity. You’re not necessarily stressed; rather, you can feel blissfully relaxed while at the same time being challenged or “under the gun.”¹²⁵

B. MEANINGFUL SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS¹²⁶

- Make family a priority, especially as you age:¹²⁷
 - If you live with family members, spend quality time together and engage in meaningful conversations.¹²⁸
 - If you have adult children, strengthen those relationships (e.g., through texts, emails, letters, phone calls, visits, travel).
 - Take care of senior relatives who could use your assistance.
 - Make time for extended family members.
- Also prioritize friends:
 - Invite a friend who lives nearby to share a meal, beverage, walk, or other in-person activity.
 - Make a list of people who have been important to you at different times in your life and reconnect; we “underestimate how much friends appreciate

125. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 135; GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 129-30.

126. GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 195 (“What happens naturally as we age is that we lose connections due to deaths, challenges with mobility, and geographical separation. Our social networks can shrink from the effects of retirement or an illness. Seeking out new connections can counter those developments. . . . Close relationships protect people from life’s discontents, help delay mental and physical decline, and are better predictors of long and happy lives than social class, IQ, financial status, or even genes.”). *See also* BROOKS, *supra* note 109, at 111-45.

127. GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 189-99; BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 25 (“Successful centenarians in the Blue Zones put their families first. They keep aging parents and grandparents nearby or in the home, which also lowers the disease and mortality rates of their children. They commit to a life partner . . . , and they invest in their children with time and love, which makes the children more likely to become caretakers when the time comes.”).

128. *See, e.g.*, JOHN M. GOTTMAN & NAN SILVER, *THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES FOR MAKING MARRIAGE WORK* 11 (2d ed. 2015).

hearing from us,” especially if we have not been in touch recently.¹²⁹

- Interacting with others with whom you are not as close is also beneficial, such as collaborating at work with colleagues, volunteering, and talking with neighbors.¹³⁰
- Socialize three or more hours per day with people you enjoy, whether at work, through religious entities, at events, or with family and friends.¹³¹
- Socializing while engaging in challenging projects stimulates cognitive development more than simply socializing.¹³² “Focus on the relationships and activities that you enjoy the most, such as a team sport, interest groups, or political activities.”¹³³
- Surround yourself with people who support positive lifestyle choices, and foster healthy, happy relationships—not unhealthy, negative associations with people who spread bad habits. It is important to “have someone in your life who encourages you to be healthy.”¹³⁴
- Support others and allow yourself to be supported: “our most profound relationships are often with people with whom we

129. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 109 (“The mere act of saying a brief ‘hello’ and asking someone how they are doing through a phone call, email, or text can be surprisingly meaningful.”), 110 (“Small moments of connection matter, even if it’s time consuming or awkward[.]” including contact with people who do not have a close relationship.); see BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 181, 172 (“Socially engaged people are the happiest, and happy people enjoy higher quality friendships. . . . [I]f your goal is greater happiness, about the most important thing you can do is to curate a social network of healthy, happy friends who care about you.”), 114; GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 195.

130. BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 51 (“[Alejandro Zuniga’s] work life [as an avocado vendor] affords him an optimal six or more hours of social interaction with people he likes.”). If you do not already have close friendships, try a temporary moai—a group of five to seven people who gather once per week for ten weeks for a walk or healthy potluck meal and can ask each other for advice about life issues (whether personal or professional). *Id.* at 182-83. Participants “agree to be each other’s personal board of advisers and commit to confidentiality.” *Id.*; see also *id.* at 26 (“Okinawans create *moais*—groups of five friends that commit to each other for life.”), 174 (“The traditional Okinawan moai . . . was a small group of lifelong friends who got together on a regular basis to chat, share news, give advice, and lend a helping hand in times of need.”).

131. *Id.* at 38, 167-68 (conscientiously cultivate those relationships).

132. GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 192.

133. *Id.* at 197.

134. BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 115. See also *id.* at 16, 26 (“The world’s longest-lived people choose, or were born into, social circles that support healthy behaviors. . . . Research shows that smoking, obesity . . . and even loneliness are contagious. By contrast, social networks of long-lived people favorably shape their health behaviors.”), 174-75; GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 38 (“Social contact enhances cognitive reserve and encourages beneficial behaviors. . . . And it’s not just the number of social connections you have. The type, quality, and purpose of your relationships can affect your brain functions as well.”).

can be vulnerable, flawed, and at times, in need of help.”¹³⁵ Asking for advice or assistance can deepen relationships, as well as reduce stress and improve life in other ways for both parties (such as giving the helper a sense of purpose and of feeling needed).¹³⁶ Invite friends or family members to walk and talk about problematic issues and seek their input.¹³⁷

- Different people will play different roles in your life.¹³⁸
- Especially cultivate relationships with people in whom you can confide, particularly about life’s challenges, and “have at least one trustworthy and reliable confidante to communicate with routinely (e.g., weekly)—someone you can trust and count on.”¹³⁹
- Spread joy and minimize negativity.¹⁴⁰ For example, think and speak positively of others and avoid harmful gossip. Forward only optimistic memes and do not send pessimistic versions. Smile instead of frowning.
- To develop relationships with colleagues in the legal profession, attend the state bar annual meeting and become active in a section. For example, the SBAND Women Lawyers Section provides book clubs, networking gatherings, speed

135. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 39.

136. *Id.* (“The second lesson is that our most profound relationships are often with people with whom we can be vulnerable, flawed, and at times, in need of help. Asking my parents for help, even though I am a grown man in his fifties, was a simple way to show my vulnerability and deepen our relationship in the process. Over and over again, you will hear it’s not the quantity of relationships that matters as much as the quality, and this is one strategy to improve the quality.”).

137. GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 193.

138. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 111-12 (depicting four important types of relationships everyone should have, as described by the author’s brother, Suneel Gupta, in his book *Backable*: “The *Collaborator* is someone who’s going to help you expand your thoughts and practice how to deliver your ideas. They’re not going to agree with everything you say, but their feedback is going to be constructive. . . . The *Cheerleader* is the person who is going to make you feel confident. . . . The *Coach* will help you figure out if your thinking or idea is right for *you*. Remember, just because an idea is a good fit for the outside world doesn’t mean it’s a good fit for you. . . . Your *Cheddar* is the person who will deliberately poke holes in your ideas, be brutally honest, and offer suggestions that at times may feel unsettling.”) (emphasis added).

139. GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 197, 195 (With respect to brain health as you age, “being in a securely attached relationship to another person . . . is protective . . . where they really feel they can count on the other person in times of need . . . [T]hose good relationships don’t have to be smooth all the time. Some of our octogenarian couples could bicker with each other day in and day out, but as long as they felt that they could really count on the other when the going got tough, those arguments didn’t take a toll on their memories.” (quoting Robert Waldinger, *What Makes a Good Life? Lessons from the Longest Study on Happiness*, TEDXBEACONSTREET, (Nov. 2015), https://www.ted.com/talks/robert_waldinger_what_makes_a_good_life_lessons_from_the_longest_study_on_happiness?language=en [<https://perma.cc/SLW7-DUX7>]), 197; BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 38.

140. BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 178-79. See also LAMA & TUTU WITH ABRAMS, *supra* note 93.

mentoring programs, and other events at the annual meeting and throughout the year. Again, consider becoming involved in a Senior Lawyers Section of the state bar association encompassing both active and retired members of the legal profession.

- Participate in the local bar association, Inn of Court, and other professional organizations such as the Greater Grand Forks Women’s Leadership Cooperative—including after retirement.

C. GRATITUDE, KINDNESS, GENEROSITY, FORGIVENESS, AND SPIRITUALITY

- Thank others frequently through handwritten notes, emails, texts, calls, and on the spot in person.
- Write daily in a gratitude journal, either in the morning or evening.
- Pay someone a compliment, open the door for someone, smile, and engage in “random acts of kindness” daily.¹⁴¹
- “Most people underestimate the amount of satisfaction they get from being generous,” so happiness experts recommend including charitable contributions within one’s budget.¹⁴² “Another proven way to boost your sense of well-being . . . is to spend your money on others rather than on yourself.”¹⁴³
- As a related gesture, “[p]ractice the art of forgiveness.”¹⁴⁴ “There’s nothing healthful about holding grudges, suppressing anger, and dwelling on negative thoughts and emotions.”¹⁴⁵

141. BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 217. Recently the driver ahead of me at Starbucks paid for my coffee and made my day. When a person in front of me at a grocery store had trouble with her elderly friend’s credit card while picking up broccoli and cauliflower for her, I added their items to my bill. Their huge smiles and waves as they pulled out of the accessible parking space brought tremendous joy.

142. *Id.* at 205. *See also id.* at 50 (A study participant who had grown up in poverty and won the national lottery at age fifty-six ended up giving it all to others in the span of one year. “He was back to being broke—a twist of fate that might have crushed another man’s spirit. And yet, he insisted, ‘I couldn’t be happier.’”), 58 (An avocado merchant in a local produce market, after selling about three quarters of his product, when asked what he would do with the rest, “‘I’ll give them away,’ he said with a wave. ‘A giving hand is never empty.’”).

143. *Id.* at 206. *See also* LAMA & TUTU WITH ABRAMS, *supra* note 93, at 229-39.

144. GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 152 (“Positive psychology research has found that forgiving oneself and others promotes life satisfaction and self-esteem.”).

145. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 144 (“Granted, forgiving people can be hard. But hard things matter. Learn to let go. . . . [T]ry to practice small acts of forgiveness just by letting go of people’s transgressions that irk you and probably raise your blood pressure. For example, when someone is rude to you, or cuts you off in traffic, forgive them on the spot silently in your head and

- Practicing spirituality through any religious or belief system also provides significant benefits enhancing well-being in the practitioner.¹⁴⁶
- “Many people find that, in a midlife transitional state, their interest in religion and spirituality unexpectedly increases. Faith, religion, spirituality, or perhaps just an interest in the transcendent commonly grows in our hearts as we move into middle adulthood. . . . For many, the metaphysical begins to feel *real* as we get older”¹⁴⁷

D. DEVELOPING HOBBIES, CULTIVATING INTERESTS, LEARNING NEW SKILLS

- At UND School of Law, we frequently urge our students to go outside of their comfort zone. “Science shows why doing something that (safely) scares you helps your brain, as it taps different areas of the neural network, and can even promote the release of feel-good hormones.”¹⁴⁸
- Expand your opportunities to learn outside of the law.¹⁴⁹
- Options to engage in new hobbies abound, such as playing an instrument, restoring antique cars, painting, sketching, pottery, reading for fun, taking an adult education class, learning a new language, scuba diving, genealogy, ping-pong, surfing, crafting, photography, creating photo albums, scrapbooking, woodworking, knitting, quilting, in-line skating, chess, making miniatures, jigsaw puzzles, Sudoku, crossword puzzles, bird watching, participating in trivia contests, karaoke, cake decorating, chocolate molding—an Internet search provides countless examples.¹⁵⁰

move on. After all, sometimes we take things too personally and overreact to our detriment. Free yourself of these unnecessary reactions.”).

146. BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 25 (Regardless of which religion is practiced, “[r]esearch shows that attending faith-based services four times per month will add 4 to 14 years of life expectancy.”), 241. *See also* BROOKS, *supra* note 109, at 70-76 (emphasis added) (exploring the faith systems of Saint Thomas Aquinas and Siddhartha Gautama (the Buddha); “Note that neither Thomas nor the Buddha argued that there is something inherently evil about worldly rewards But as *attachments*—the focus of our life’s attention and as ends instead of means—the problem is simple: they cannot bring us the deep *satisfaction* we desire.”).

147. BROOKS, *supra* note 109, at 153; *see generally id.* at 147-70.

148. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 141. *See also id.* at 42 (“Sometimes the best moments in life come from doing the things that scare us the most. Even if you stumble or epically fail at first, it can be the initial step to success.”).

149. *See* GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 206 (emphasizing engagement in cognitively stimulating activities).

150. For additional ideas, *see* GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 115-16.

- Utilize the exploration of interests to support other well-being goals, such as weightlifting, taking a Pilates class with a friend, dancing, developing your music playlists to use while exercising, yoga, meditation, mindfulness practices, journaling (e.g., at the end of day, when you can also record nutritional intake and exercise), walking dogs for the local animal shelter, gardening, landscaping, cooking healthy meals with friends, adult coloring books with friends or colleagues,¹⁵¹ performing in a musical, singing in a chorus, participating in book clubs, hosting dinner parties and receptions, and so on.
- Caring for a pet provides numerous benefits, for example, “dog owners get more than five hours of exercise a week.”¹⁵²
- Grow houseplants: “A study comparing life habits in environments with and without houseplants found that indoor plants can increase productivity, lower blood pressure, and improve well-being.”¹⁵³
- Other ideas include:
 - Enjoying nature (golfing, camping, canoeing, fishing)
 - Attending performing arts events (concerts, musicals, plays)
 - Planning trips (local, regional, national, or international)¹⁵⁴
 - Attending Renaissance Festivals, conventions such as AniMinneapolis or Comic Cons, and other events focused on specific interests, such as the Pride of Dakota shows
 - Playing board games (e.g., Settlers of Catan, Rising Sun), cards (Uno, Euchre, a family favorite is Gin-13), role-playing games (Gloomhaven, Dungeons & Dragons), interactive video games¹⁵⁵
 - Decorating your home for changing seasons and holidays

151. For example, seasonal pictures to be recycled when finished; a meeting of the University Council on Women+ at UND offered this activity during a brainstorming discussion, which participants enjoyed—even initial skeptics.

152. BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 198-99.

153. *Id.* at 195.

154. *Id.* at 115.

155. GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 122-27.

- Tackling household projects such as purging and donating unused items,¹⁵⁶ completing a renovation, reorganizing your filing system, learning how to repair a household appliance
- Reading self-improvement books—I always have more motivation when reading about physical fitness, nutrition, spirituality, and other well-being practices.

E. ENHANCEMENT OF POSITIVE EMOTIONS, ESPECIALLY JOY AND HAPPINESS

- Happiness has multiple meanings: it can entail a feeling of enjoyment (experienced happiness/positive affect/pleasure), a sense that one’s life has meaning (life goals/reason for being/purpose), or an overall estimation of accomplishment and that one’s life is going well (evaluative happiness/life satisfaction/pride).¹⁵⁷
- Positive emotions, such as “joy, gratitude, serenity, interest, hope, pride, amusement, inspiration, awe, and love,”¹⁵⁸ “expand[] your awareness . . . [a]nd that broader perspective help[s] you to make discoveries, acquire knowledge, form alliances, and pick up skills”¹⁵⁹ They “make us more creative, more open to new relationships, more sympathetic to people from other cultures, and more flexible in solving problems, such as making management decisions . . . or conducting negotiations.”¹⁶⁰ “[A] wealth of studies show[] that

156. We store items in a corner of our basement to donate to the annual Sharon Lutheran Church rummage sale.

157. BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 20-22 (describing various aspects of happiness as “pleasure, purpose, and pride”), 30-31, 74; *see id.* at 11 (“Rather than being a luxury to be pursued only after we take care of the more important things in life, happiness is beneficial to everything else we desire: It aids our health and helps us live longer; it aids our social functioning and makes us better citizens; it helps us perform better at work; and it builds up our resilience, which enables us to bounce back after setbacks and or when bad events occur in our lives. The happier we are, the better we are for our friends and family, our workplaces, our communities, and our society as a whole. By contrast, angry and depressed people do not function as well as those who enjoy life and find it rewarding and meaningful. People who frequently experience negative emotions suffer from worse health, tend to be less cooperative, and are found to be less helpful to others on the job, while happy workers tend to be more creative, energetic, and productive. The happiest people are superstars of giving support to others, which makes everyone perform better. It is important for business leaders to understand that employees who enjoy their work are likely to outperform others, and that companies with many such employees are more likely to thrive.”).

158. *Id.* at 223.

159. *Id.* at 222.

160. *Id.* at 224.

happiness contributed to higher incomes, greater productivity, higher quality work, longer marriages, more friends, stronger immune systems, lower stress levels, less pain, and greater longevity.”¹⁶¹

- Cultivating happiness, engagement, and meaning in life are skills that can be learned.¹⁶² Scientific studies attribute about forty percent of the difference in happiness levels between people to factors within people’s control.¹⁶³ “The more you acted and thought like the happiest people—those who spent time with family and friends, acted generously toward others, maintained optimistic outlooks, lived in the moment, remained physically active, and pursued worthy goals—the happier you would become.”¹⁶⁴ Cultivate the power of positive self-talk¹⁶⁵ and humor.¹⁶⁶
- “Positive psychology offers several evidence-based strategies for improving our well-being, including mindfulness, meditation, cultivating gratitude, developing resilience, [and] learning to savor experience”¹⁶⁷
- Positive thinking includes “being optimistic about the future[,] looking on the bright side when coping with difficulties[, b]eing appreciative[,] expressing gratitude[, and] . . . not . . . dwell[ing] on negative thoughts.”¹⁶⁸
- Happiness also emerges from an “[a]daptive coping style. That means confronting problems directly, appraising them honestly, and dealing with them directly without excessive rumination, unhealthy emotional reactions, or avoidance behavior.”¹⁶⁹

161. *Id.* at 222.

162. *Id.* at 216-17 (“Consider how much time and commitment many people devote to physical exercise, whether it’s going to the gym, jogging, kickboxing, or yoga,” [Sonja Lyubomirsky of the University of California, Riverside, author of *The How of Happiness*,] writes. According to her research, if you want greater happiness, you need to be similarly dedicated.”).

163. *Id.* at 219. *See also id.* at 34, 218-20 (studies attribute about fifty percent to genetics and about ten percent to life circumstances including childhood experiences).

164. *Id.* at 219-20. *See also id.* at 256 (“Individuals should remember that happiness is not a goal but a byproduct of other activities . . .”).

165. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 170 (“Here are some fun affirmations to keep in mind: I got this! I am resilient. I am capable and worthy. Anything is possible. The world needs my gifts and talents. I am smart, kind, and joyful. I am loved. My life is beautiful. Things will work out. Attitude is everything. I believe in myself. The best is yet to come.”).

166. GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 152.

167. BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 34. *See also* LAMA & TUTU WITH ABRAMS, *supra* note 93.

168. BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 218.

169. BROOKS, *supra* note 109, at 116-17.

- Another predictor of happiness is education. “More education leads to a more active mind later on, and that means a longer, happier life. That doesn’t mean going to Harvard; it simply means lifelong, purposive learning, and lots of reading.”¹⁷⁰

F. MINIMIZATION OF NEGATIVE EMOTIONS

- Negative feelings, such as worry, sadness, or anger, detract from happiness and overall well-being,¹⁷¹ as well as guilt (which is bad for the brain¹⁷²) and depression.¹⁷³ Loneliness and isolation are increasing in our society, especially among older adults, due to lack of authentic connections with others.¹⁷⁴
- These emotions can be countered through counseling and mental health therapy, such as many services offered through various employee assistance programs.¹⁷⁵
- Another issue common in the legal profession entails workaholism.¹⁷⁶
- For individuals who prefer to study self-improvement on their own, numerous books offer guidance on managing negative emotions¹⁷⁷ and replacing them with positive emotions.¹⁷⁸
- For people impacted by seasonal affective disorder (SAD), natural light or a full-spectrum lamp can be effective.¹⁷⁹

170. *Id.* at 117.

171. BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 31-32. *See also* LAMA & TUTU WITH ABRAMS, *supra* note 93, at 81-188.

172. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 21; GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 160.

173. BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 229-31.

174. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 40; BROOKS, *supra* note 109, at 118-24 (“[I]n terms of health outcomes, loneliness is comparable to smoking fifteen cigarettes per day and is worse than obesity. It is also strongly associated with cognitive decline and dementia.”), 119 (footnotes omitted).

175. For example, legal professionals working for the State of North Dakota can access the North Dakota Public Employees Retirement System (NDPERS) Employee Assistance Program at <https://www.ndpers.nd.gov/active-members/insurance-plans-active-members/ndpers-employee-assistance-program-eap>.

176. *See* BROOKS, *supra* note 109, at 43-63 (addressing workaholism).

177. *See, e.g.*, HOWARD KASSINOVE & RAYMOND CHIP TAFRATE, *ANGER MANAGEMENT: THE COMPLETE TREATMENT GUIDE FOR PRACTITIONERS* (2002).

178. For a classic book on this topic, *see* NORMAN VINCENT PEALE, *THE POWER OF POSITIVE THINKING* (1952). I keep a copy in my office where I can easily refer to it.

179. BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 196; *Seasonal Affective Disorder*, JOHNS HOPKINS MED., <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/seasonal-affective-disorder> [<https://perma.cc/8GGM-LBJV>] (last visited Mar. 7, 2024).

- One does not need to live a life free from trauma in order to experience a life of joy and happiness; instead, “happiness and satisfaction could evolve from a mix of hardship and hope.”¹⁸⁰

G. STRESS REDUCTION¹⁸¹

- A certain level of periodic stress enhances productivity. However, chronic stress is problematic.¹⁸²
- The following steps can help mitigate stress:
 - Deep breathing¹⁸³
 - Meditation and mindfulness¹⁸⁴
 - Journaling¹⁸⁵
 - Gratitude journaling (list items for which you are grateful—being mindful of the blessings in life)¹⁸⁶
 - Worry journaling (keep a notepad to write down stressors, especially by the bedside at night)¹⁸⁷
 - Mental health or meditation apps¹⁸⁸
 - Yoga,¹⁸⁹ including yoga nidra¹⁹⁰
 - Prayer¹⁹¹
 - Stretching¹⁹²

180. BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 32. *See also* LAMA & TUTU WITH ABRAMS, *supra* note 93, at 109-13. Considering our family’s experience with trauma due to the loss of our son, Shuwang, this insight has been particularly meaningful.

181. *Id.* at 24-25 (“The world’s longest-lived people have routines that shed stress: Okinawans take a few moments each day to remember their ancestors, Adventists pray, Ikarians take a nap, and Sardinians do happy hour.”).

182. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 119.

183. *Id.* at 32, 121; GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 150.

184. BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 232-37 (discussing a guided form of meditation called Vipassana), 240-41; GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 32, 120-22 (Gupta describes practicing an analytical meditation, where with closed eyes, he mentally places a problem into a clear bubble floating before him, dispassionately breaks it down, and comes up with creative solutions); GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 147-51.

185. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 32, 122.

186. *Id.* at 125.

187. *Id.* at 124.

188. *Id.* at 122, GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 211.

189. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 32.

190. During the pandemic, UND provided a faculty and staff workshop introducing the practice of yoga nidra, which I now use during stressful times and when I cannot sleep. Several years ago, UND began offering a “Zen in 10” program providing yoga, meditation, and stretching in ten-minute sessions for staff and faculty throughout campus.

191. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 122.

192. *Id.* at 32.

- Progressive muscle relaxation¹⁹³
- Nature therapy¹⁹⁴ (walk outside in a park or woods), forest bathing¹⁹⁵
- Exercise
- Slowing down and not taking on too much at once (individuals will have more years of productivity through healthy longevity)
- Reading for pleasure¹⁹⁶
- Listening to or playing music or singing¹⁹⁷
- Talking to a close friend or relative¹⁹⁸
- Spending time with a pet¹⁹⁹
- Going to a spa²⁰⁰
- Having a massage
- Taking a hot tub (such as in hotels while travelling) or bath²⁰¹
- Having a sense of control over your life can also reduce stress.²⁰² Each weekend, schedule time on next week’s calendar for important and time-sensitive tasks (including sleep and physical activity), eliminate unimportant items, then fill in the rest of the time with non-urgent yet important initiatives.²⁰³
- Reserve morning time for creative work instead of emails.²⁰⁴
- Eliminate cognitive multitasking (although physical exertion along with focusing on one mental task works well).²⁰⁵
- Arrange your home and workspace to reduce stress by eliminating clutter—donate, recycle, or throw away all unneeded space-takers (papers, clothing, kitchen gadgets, knick-

193. *Id.* at 122.

194. *Id.* at 32, 123-24.

195. *Id.* at 123-24; GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 150-51.

196. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 32.

197. *Id.* at 32, 131-33.

198. *Id.* at 32.

199. *Id.*

200. *Id.*

201. GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 207.

202. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 120.

203. *Id.* at 128-30 (“What goals do I need to accomplish in the next seven days for me to feel this week was a success?”).

204. *Id.* at 134; GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 154.

205. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 127-28; GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 153 (“[I]f you want to get more done using less effort, aim to . . . focus and concentrate on one sequence—one task—at a time and avoid distractions.”).

knacks); only keep those that are productive or bring you joy.²⁰⁶

H. FINDING TIME

- Work reasonable hours.²⁰⁷ For example, consider accepting fewer clients, even if it results in a reduction in income.²⁰⁸
- Spend less on material goods, helping minimize clutter in the home.²⁰⁹
- Reduce TV, social media, and video games.²¹⁰
- Reduce alcohol consumption (which can increase fatigue and diminish both energy and motivation).
- Combine one cognitive task with physical movement, such as walking meetings (in person or via cellphone) and standing or treadmill desks.
- Hire people to do housework, home maintenance, or yard work.²¹¹

I. MORE IS NOT ALWAYS BETTER

- Adhere to the adage “do fewer things better.”²¹² Say “no” to non-priority requests for your time, in order to say “yes” to your priority items.²¹³

206. BUETTER, *supra* note 3, at 192-95; GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 154.

207. BUETTER, *supra* note 3, at 80, 162-63, 168-69.

208. *Id.* at 207 (“[T]he bottom line, according to researchers around the world, is that seeking to maximize your income may not be the ultimate answer in your quest for the happiest life. What you gain in terms of pulling in a bigger paycheck might well be offset by a lack of joyful emotions in your life.”).

209. *Id.* at 79-80.

210. *Id.* at 197.

211. When our daughter was young, we engaged a house cleaning service once per month to help us keep on top of everything. Once she was old enough to start contributing to household chores, we stopped the house cleaning service and divided up the chores among our family members, so Cosette would learn how to do household chores and the importance of working together as a family. We continued this practice with Shuwang.

212. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 169.

213. *Id.* at 148-49. *See also* LINDA BABCOCK ET AL., THE NO CLUB: PUTTING A STOP TO WOMEN’S DEAD-END WORK (2022).

- Avoid the “striver’s curse”²¹⁴ and becoming emotionally attached to professional prestige.²¹⁵
- Similarly, reduce attachment to worldly possessions or attractions, such as money, power, pleasure, and fame.²¹⁶
- Although people sometimes think they desire large homes, a big house²¹⁷ means more cleaning and maintenance; a larger mortgage and greater costs to pay for furniture and other items in the house, garage, and yard; and more empty, unoccupied rooms (unless one has a sizable family).
- Regardless of the size of one’s home, having too much “stuff”²¹⁸ can cause disorder and untidiness, make it difficult to find things when you need them, result in a lack of time to use the things you have, and cause angst when things break down, expire, or become obsolete without having been fully used.
- A “keep up with Joneses” attitude means that an individual will feel like they never have enough. The pleasure that comes from buying something will always be ephemeral, because there will always be someone else with a bigger, “better,” more expensive version.²¹⁹
- While financial security can help bring a feeling of contentment and enable a person to satisfy basic needs and fulfill other goals, more money than needed may bring correspondingly greater problems. For example, wealthy individuals may question whether friends and family value them intrinsically or are attracted by their affluence.

214. BROOKS, *supra* note 109, at xiv (“I came to call this the ‘striver’s curse’: people who strive to be excellent at what they do often wind up finding their inevitable decline terrifying, their successes increasingly unsatisfying, and their relationships lacking.”), xv (“Instead of denying change in your abilities, you can make the change itself a source of strength. Instead of trying to avoid decline, you can transcend it by finding a *new* kind of success, . . . a *deeper* form of happiness than what you had before; and, in the process, *true* meaning in life—maybe for the first time.”). For example, I now realize that I no longer have the ability constantly to “burn the candle at both ends,” as I have tried to do for years, and that realization allowed me to grow and develop.

215. *Id.* at 19.

216. *Id.* at 65-94 (describing the theology of St. Thomas Aquinas and philosophy of Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha’s Middle Way). See also LAMA & TUTU WITH ABRAMS, *supra* note 93, at 135-44.

217. See BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 34.

218. *Id.* at 187.

219. *Id.* at 41 (“Americans seem to be more prone to the trap of ‘keeping up with the Joneses.’ . . . [O]ne key to an upward spiral of positive emotion may be to set up our daily routines to increase satisfaction with what we have while avoiding negative comparisons with others.”).

- That said, basic financial well-being contributes to overall well-being:²²⁰
 - “More money wasn’t the answer; what counted was managing that money well[.]”²²¹ and living within one’s means.²²²
 - Stick to a budget and minimize impulse buying.²²³
 - “Do your best to minimize debt and maximize savings.”²²⁴
 - Consider downsizing the house to reduce or eliminate any mortgage, vehicle, and education debts.
 - Eliminate credit card debt and pay off credit cards each month.²²⁵
 - Emphasize savings, especially for a rainy day (three to six months’ salary)²²⁶ and retirement.²²⁷
 - Enroll in automatic savings²²⁸ and automatic charitable giving opportunities.²²⁹

J. PUTTING YOUR AFFAIRS IN ORDER

- Well-being practices, particularly for those advanced in years, include knowing we have arranged our own legal affairs and papers to carry out our wishes should we become incapacitated, as well as when our inevitable demise occurs. The following are important items to complete:
 - Advanced health care directive/living will (“These documents tend to be long and detailed because they specify some of the most practical but difficult decisions such as care facilities, types of treatment, end-

220. *Id.* at 201-11.

221. *Id.* at 202. My family frequents thrift shops such as GoodWill and value stores like TJ Maxx to find bargains.

222. *Id.* at 115. Cost-conscious stores like Aldi and Costco help with our family budget, along with outlet stores such as DSW and Nordstrom Rack, as well as the clearance racks at regular clothing and department stores. I tend to wear the same clothes forever, including hand-me-downs from my grandmother and great-aunt, so I do not often shop for clothes.

223. *Id.* at 204-05.

224. *Id.* at 203.

225. *Id.* at 202-03, 209.

226. *Id.* at 205.

227. *Id.* at 202-03.

228. *Id.* at 208.

229. For example, Rich and I have enrolled in automatic giving plans supporting Legal Services of North Dakota, Sharon Lutheran Church, and the North Dakota Human Rights Coalition, as automatic donations provide organizations with greater stability in their annual budgets and make our charitable contributions easy.

of-life-care decisions (e.g., do you want feeding tubes?), and DNR (do not resuscitate) orders. Without instructions in place, expensive medical interventions are often routinely performed even if they are futile in extending life.”²³⁰

- Durable power of attorney for health care
- Durable power of attorney for legal, financial, or other decisions
- Disability insurance/long-term care insurance/life insurance
- Preparations for a caregiver and home maintenance, or eventually for an assisted living facility
- Documentation of wishes upon death:
 - Obituary (perhaps help draft one beforehand)
 - Notifications (provide a list with contact information)
 - Funeral/celebration of life (note preferences, like music)
 - Cemetery plot/headstone/cremation
 - Will, trust, beneficiaries
- Ensure a trusted individual knows where your documents are located and be sure to discuss your plans with the relevant family members and health care providers.²³¹ AARP provides wonderful resources for broaching these conversations with loved ones.
- Contemplating one’s own decline can help not only prepare one’s affairs for the inevitable, but also one’s spirit.²³²

230. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 160. *See also* GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 268.

231. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 162-63.

232. *See* BROOKS, *supra* note 109, at 95-109.

III. SEASONED LEGAL PROFESSIONALS' INFLUENCE ON WORKPLACES

A. REASONS TO CARE

- Flourishing employees are better employees, enabling workplaces to:²³³
 - Increase productivity and cultivate more effective legal professionals (collegiality enhances productivity)²³⁴
 - Heighten creativity and receptiveness²³⁵
 - Elevate optimism²³⁶
 - Improve resilience in the face of inevitable setbacks²³⁷
 - Reduce health costs²³⁸ and absenteeism

B. WAYS TO ENHANCE WELL-BEING IN THE WORKPLACE

- Provide employees with more freedom and control over the type of work they do, as well as how and when they do it²³⁹
- Build an environment of trust, community, and cooperation instead of cynicism, isolation, and competition²⁴⁰
- Strengthen relationships among colleagues²⁴¹

233. GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 7; *see also* BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 11 (“The happier we are, the better we are for our friends and family, our workplaces, our communities, and our society as a whole . . . It is important for business leaders to understand that employees who enjoy their work are likely to outperform others, and that companies with many such employees are more likely to thrive.”).

234. *See* BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 11 (“The happiest people are superstars of giving support to others, which makes everyone perform better.”).

235. *See* GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 4 (“[A] healthy brain . . . has a wide circle of ‘you’—a brain inclusive to new ideas and new people. A brain less dismissive, and more welcoming.”); GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 2 (“[B]uild a brain that connects patterns that others might miss . . . able to toggle back and forth between short-term and long-term views of the world . . .”); *see also* BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 11 (“happy workers tend to be more creative, energetic, and productive”).

236. GUPTA, *supra* note 8, at 2.

237. *Id.* (Develop a brain that “helps you better navigate life . . . [and is] highly resilient in the face of life experiences that might be disabling to someone else.”), 11-12 (“A resilient brain can withstand ongoing trauma, stave off brain-related illnesses including depression, and retain cognitive memory for peak performance.”); *see also* BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 11 (Happiness “builds up our resilience, which enables us to bounce back after setbacks and or when bad events occur in our lives.”).

238. BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 28 (In a community of 18,500 people in Minnesota that implemented a Blue Zone project, “the average life expectancy . . . increased by three years, residents had shed at least two tons of weight, and health care costs for city workers fell by some 40 percent.”).

239. *Id.* at 38.

240. *Id.* at 77, 94.

241. *Id.* at 98.

- Arrange for excellent healthcare, dental, and vision insurance plans for employees and families²⁴²
- Offer paid parental leave and support access to high-quality, affordable childcare²⁴³
- Deliver professional development opportunities (CLEs on relationship skills, resilience, positive outlook; life coaches)²⁴⁴
- Allow reasonable work hours,²⁴⁵ generous paid vacation time,²⁴⁶ adequate paid leave to care for family members,²⁴⁷ and paid time off for preventative health care²⁴⁸
- Add bike racks outside offices, provide convertible standing desks, offer under-desk walking treadmills, inculcate a culture of fitness (walking meetings), stretch breaks, consider adding table tennis/foosball/air hockey games²⁴⁹ to breakrooms
- Provide healthy vending machines, healthy food at events, flavored sparkling water instead of soda²⁵⁰
- Give employees vouchers for the local farmers markets (support local agriculture and healthy foods)²⁵¹
- “The Public Health Law Center at the Mitchell Hamline School of Law (publichealthlawcenter.org) has practical suggestions for improving local policies on food and tobacco.”²⁵²
- As an example of a successful workplace tactic, one company:
 - created 21 moais and assigned six to eight workers to each one based on shared interests rather than on titles or departments. The idea was for members to get to know one another through biweekly conference calls, potlucks, and other off-site activities. . . .
 - As an effort to boost well-being, the experiment was a big success . . . ‘[p]eople were happier, more engaged and more collaborative.’ . . . The company

242. *Id.* at 95.

243. *Id.* at 163, 259 (urging “more generous parental leave and a professional child care system”).

244. *Id.* at 170 (life coaches).

245. *Id.* at 80, 168-69.

246. *Id.* at 78.

247. *Id.* at 106-07 (discussing support for families).

248. *Id.* at 107.

249. *Id.* at 157 (one company offered standing desks, some with treadmills, along with table tennis and foosball games). We now understand sitting for extensive periods throughout one’s career is a silent killer.

250. *Id.* at 147 (urging people to “drink water instead of sugary beverages”).

251. *Id.* at 129 (discussing farmers markets).

252. *Id.* at 151.

also offered free purpose workshops, life coaching, happy hours, volunteering events, and nine-minute meditation sessions, which turned out to be surprisingly popular.²⁵³

- Encourage employees to live their values²⁵⁴
- Enable employees to develop legal expertise that suits their individual passions, interests, and skills²⁵⁵
- Give credit for *pro bono* work
- Use work time to volunteer in the community²⁵⁶ “One of the most effective things a community can do to keep you happy is to make it easier for you to volunteer.”²⁵⁷ For example, organize a clean-up drive to eliminate litter in parks and along sidewalks—encompassing exercise, volunteerism, and beautification of the community²⁵⁸
- Sponsor events when employees ask (great PR, too!)²⁵⁹
- Have teams of employees join fundraiser walks/runs/charity golf tournaments, etc.
- Encourage employees to join clubs and pursue social hobbies, such as playing in the local chamber orchestra, chorus, or theater group²⁶⁰
- Encourage employees to devote their time to civic endeavors such as voting, helping with the polls, attending city council or school board meetings, being involved in city or state legislative initiatives, running for school board, city council, or the state legislature²⁶¹
- Enhance the aesthetics in the workplace:
 - Incorporate plants²⁶² and natural light
 - Support local artists (North Dakota Museum of Art auctions, The Art of Giving auction at the Grand Forks Curling Club, the Grand Forks Art Walk)
 - Make available a free, confidential, and effective employee assistance program to all employees, providing them with

253. *Id.* at 156.

254. *Id.* at 94.

255. *Id.* at 89.

256. *Id.* at 102-03.

257. *Id.* at 136.

258. *Id.* at 148 (“Join or initiate local efforts to clean up parks, maintain sidewalks . . .”).

259. For example, my former law firm, Dickinson Wright, sponsored tables and events whenever I asked the managing partner.

260. BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 76.

261. *Id.* at 118 (discussing involvement with city government), 260 (indicating societies, in order to promote well-being, should “[m]aintain a democratic society through political participation. Protect individual rights. Decentralize political decision-making. Give people honest government. ‘You cannot force people to trust Government must behave in a good way. It must keep to the rule of law.’”).

262. *Id.* at 195-96.

help in addressing mental health, emotional well-being, parenting skills, marriage counseling, financial, alcohol and substance use, etc.²⁶³

- Provide a well-being program at work²⁶⁴
- Foster diversity and belonging²⁶⁵
- Instead of measuring the firm’s success by profits, measure it by employee satisfaction and well-being²⁶⁶
 - Institute an annual well-being survey of all employees in the workplace and adjust the firm’s policies and practices accordingly²⁶⁷
- Become a Blue Zones Project workplace²⁶⁸

IV. ASPIRATIONS FOR POLICIES SUPPORTING A FLOURISHING FUTURE

As I have delved into how to improve my own health and well-being as a “seasoned” legal professional in recent months, I have also considered how to contribute to the well-being of others in my community, state, nation, and world. Knowing that our time on this earth is limited enables us to put into perspective our own lives; to consider the moral, spiritual, and—for those of us who believe—religious imperative of caring for our fellow human beings

263. UND offers a wonderful employee assistance program through The Village Family Service Center in Grand Forks that my family and I have used.

264. UND provides outstanding wellness initiatives. See *Wellness Programs*, UND, <https://campus.und.edu/work-well/programs/programs.html> [<https://perma.cc/726U-KA2R>] (last visited Mar. 7, 2024).

265. BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 104. See *Minority Justice Implementation Committee*, N.D. CTS., <https://www.ndcourts.gov/supreme-court/committees/minority-justice-implementation-committee> [<https://perma.cc/VH96-3ACH>] (last visited Mar. 7, 2024); Order Establishing Gender Fairness Implementation Committee, Supreme Court No. 20060059, (2011), <https://www.ndcourts.gov/legal-resources/rules/ndsuptadminorder/7> [<https://perma.cc/S7RY-HVAR>]; NAT’L CONSORTIUM ON RACIAL & ETHNIC FAIRNESS CTS., <https://www.national-consortium.org> [<https://perma.cc/W66J-6H27>] (last visited Mar. 7, 2024); LAW FIRM ANTIRACISM ALLIANCE, <https://www.lawfirmantiracismalliance.org/> [<https://perma.cc/2EQK-T3NG>] (last visited Mar. 7, 2024); *Diversity & Inclusion*, UND: <https://und.edu/student-life/diversity/index.html> [<https://perma.cc/NW4Z-S529>] (last visited Mar. 7, 2024).

266. BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 98-100 (noting the trend of governments placing more emphasis on the well-being of society instead of gross domestic product (GDP) as the primary indicator of a nation’s success).

267. *Id.* at 103 (discussing the measurement of national well-being: “By instituting well-being measurements, governments gain a tool to observe the effect of policies on people’s life satisfaction or daily experience, thus grounding efforts to try new policies or eliminate old ones.”), 151 (“[I]f you can show annual incremental improvement, people stay motivated and organizations are assured of a return on their investment. And, most important, if you can track gains in well-being and then match them to policies and programs, you can better see what’s working and what isn’t.”).

268. *Id.* at 155-61.

and our planet; and to derive meaning from leaving a legacy that will foster the flourishing of future generations. Senior lawyers not only can nudge our workplaces toward becoming better environments for our present and future colleagues as discussed above, but also can nudge our communities and society toward becoming better environments for everyone. Through their leadership skills, senior legal professionals can make a significant difference in the lives of others.²⁶⁹

According to Dan Buettner, founder of the Blue Zones Project studying communities where people regularly live to 100, those people “live longer . . . because their surroundings nudge them into the right behaviors.”²⁷⁰ Moreover, “[t]heir lives are imbued with a sense of meaning from age 10 to age 100, and their brand of purpose is not just hobbies or golf. It also includes a sense of responsibility: for their community, family, or the next generation.”²⁷¹ Adopting that sense of responsibility for the well-being of others as well as oneself, one could consider supporting policies and programs that enable the entire community (local, state, national, and global) to flourish.²⁷² Examples of such programs include the following:

- Access to high-quality, low-cost or free essential public services, including:
 - Healthcare²⁷³

269. BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 47 (Research has shown that in “the world’s statistically happiest places . . . none of these places is happy by chance or dumb luck. In each case, an enlightened individual—or group of individuals—set in motion one marquee project or policy that showed people they had control over their own happiness . . . [H]appiness had a genesis, a falling domino that set into motion a chain of events that first changed the environment to one that favored well-being and then changed the lives of everyone there.”).

270. DAN BUETTNER, *THE BLUE ZONES KITCHEN* 19 (2019).

271. *Id.* at 20.

272. BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 69-70 (I fully acknowledge and embrace the responsibility I would share with others who can afford to pay additional taxes to support such programs for the benefit of everyone in our society, especially those most in need.). For Christians, *see also* Matthew 25:35-36 (NIV) (“For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.”). Moreover, governmental reforms could eliminate waste and reallocate spending to support programs to enhance flourishing—especially among those most in need—without increasing taxes.

273. *Id.* at 70 (“Danes grow up believing they have the right to health care.”), 51 (“[I]n Costa Rica . . . an alchemy of geography and smart social policies has created a powerful blend of family bonds, universal health care, faith, peace, equality, and . . . generosity.”), 53 (With the arrival of universal health care in Costa Rica in the 1940s, “[e]ven the most remote villages had a health outpost to serve pregnant mothers and infants.”), 54 (“Since 1970, Costa Rica has seen life expectancy jump from 65 to 80 years and child mortality drop by a factor of seven. Cardiovascular mortality among middle-aged individuals is about half that of the United States, even though Costa Rica spends one-fifteenth as much on health care as the United States.” According to the former president who implemented the program, Jose Maria Figueres, Costa Rica’s health care program functions so effectively because it emphasizes preventative care and maintaining a healthy populace.

- Education, including higher education²⁷⁴
- Parental leave²⁷⁵
- Childcare²⁷⁶
- Retirement income²⁷⁷
- Healthy food options²⁷⁸
- Access to jobs with adequate pay and working conditions²⁷⁹
 - Reasonable work hours²⁸⁰
- Ability to live in a clean and healthy environment²⁸¹

““In the U.S. incentives are aligned to drive up costs,” he said. “Here, for years, the emphasis has been on the preventative health system, because, quite frankly, the objective of a good health policy is for people not to get sick.””).

274. *Id.* at 70 (“Danes grow up believing they have a right to . . . education. . . . University students . . . draw a government stipend in addition to free tuition. It takes the average university student a leisurely 6.6 years to graduate in Denmark, which gives students the time they need to find the vocations and hobbies that will truly satisfy them for the long term.”); 52 (Education is also central to Costa Rica’s high rates of longevity and happiness. “It has Latin America’s highest literacy rates and lowest corruption rates, is home to one of the world’s longest-lived populations (on the Nicoya Peninsula), and is on its way to becoming the first carbon-neutral country on Earth.”).

275. *Id.* at 70 (In Denmark, “[n]ew parents can take a yearlong government-paid parental leave at nearly full salary; this includes gay and lesbian parents, who’ve been free to marry since 1986.”).

276. *Id.* at 69-70 (“During the past century and a half, the Danish government has plowed funds into generous social programs, creating a prosperous welfare state with the world’s highest gross national product per capita, the highest percentage of the national budget spent on child care, the lowest levels of corruption, and the highest levels of trust in one another—all factors closely linked to happiness.”).

277. *Id.* at 74 (In Denmark, “[t]hey, by and large, don’t have to worry about paying for health care, education, or retirement, so they’re free to pursue jobs they love and to enjoy plenty of recreation time.”), 53 (In Costa Rica, “[t]he 1940s brought universal health care and social security.”).

278. PIERRE, *supra* note 103, at 23 (Programs providing healthy food options can also result in significant reductions in healthcare costs. Supporting whole food farmers and eating “foods grown from the earth: fruits, vegetables, grains, beans, peas, lentils, nuts, tubers, and seeds” instead of animal products and processed “foods” leads not only to healthier and longer lives but also saves money: “Preventative medicine is pennies on the dollar compared to our financially draining health-care system. Our need for the protective components found in fruits and vegetables has never been greater.”).

279. BUETTNER, *supra* note 3, at 51 (For example, according to an economist at the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences Institute in Mexico City, “Costa Rica’s social system takes care of most people’s needs . . . It leaves them feeling safe, comparatively healthy, free of most of life’s biggest worries, while providing an environment where most people can still make a living.”) Despite relatively low incomes, “[i]n countries like Costa Rica, social connections, family gatherings, and an ability to create happy moments and laugh at adversity seem to make up for a lack of income . . . People don’t get into the trap of overworking, overspending, and undersocializing [sic].”).

280. *Id.* at 70 (“People work hard in Denmark, but they rarely put in more than 37 hours a week or skip vacations.”).

281. *Id.* at 59 (“Costa Rica has adopted innovative measures to protect its natural environment and extraordinary biodiversity. Since 1996, 3.5 percent of the nation’s gas tax has been used to support its forests, which have nearly doubled in extent during the past 30 years. Besides contributing to the well-being of Costa Ricans, these policies have also boosted tourism, which has become a leading source of national income. In 2015, Costa Rica became the world’s first country to produce 99 percent of its electricity from hydroelectric, geothermal, wind, biomass, and solar sources.”).

- A culture grounded in trust, peace, generosity, and equality²⁸²

V. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR ENHANCING WELL-BEING

To maintain my dedication to enhancing my well-being, I found it helpful to continue learning about, and improving, the multiple facets of well-being. I believe doing so will be a lifelong process and a steadfast commitment to developing myself, not only for my own benefit, but also to benefit my family and community. If you are interested in additional ideas to enhance your own well-being, as well as information about the science supporting these recommendations, I suggest the following books as excellent places to start:

- *The Whole Body Reset: Your Weight-Loss Plan for a Flat Belly, Optimum Health, and a Body You'll Love at Midlife and Beyond*, by Stephen Perrine and Heidi Skolnik (2022)
- *Keep Sharp: Build a Better Brain at Any Age*, by Sanjay Gupta (2021)
- *12 Weeks to a Sharper You: A Guided Program*, by Sanjay Gupta with Kristin Loberg (2022)
- *The Blue Zones of Happiness: Lessons from the World's Happiest People*, by Dan Buettner (2020)
- Grand Forks Blue Zones Project²⁸³

282. *Id.* at 52 (“In short, Costa Rica produces longer, happier lives for less money than any other place in the world . . . Here, a combination of strong religious beliefs, an extended sense of family, good health, peace, and a sense of equality, trust, and generosity—all statistically associated with well-being—delivers more happiness per GDP dollar than anywhere else.”), 57 (According to former president Jose Maria Figueres, Costa Rica’s phenomenal success is attributable partly to the fact that “we’ve created a very egalitarian society in terms of our social behavior. Everybody talks to everybody else in this country. There is no shyness because this person may have a higher standing in society and this person may have a lower standing. There are none of those barriers Another reason . . . is that . . . a culture of peace has found its way into our DNA . . . if we have a disagreement, we talk about it. A third component . . . is the very important investment we made in education, which again goes in the same direction of . . . good manners, good social manners.”), 55 (Costa Rica’s current president highlighted his country’s emphasis on peace. “He pointed out that almost everyone in Costa Rica gets a free education and that his newly instituted policies giving gays [and transgender individuals] more rights enabled Costa Ricans to live largely without fear.”).

283. *Grand Forks: Welcome to Blue Zones Project*, BLUE ZONES PROJECT, <https://grandforks.bluezonesproject.com/> [<https://perma.cc/Y4HU-CVFA>] (last visited Feb. 19, 2024).

- *From Strength to Strength: Finding Success, Happiness, and Deep Purpose in the Second Half of Life*, by Arthur C. Brooks (2022)
- *The Pillars of Health: Your Foundations for Lifelong Wellness*, by John Pierre (2013)
- *The Book of Joy*, by His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu with Douglas Abrams (2016)
- *Checklist for My Family: A Guide to My History, Financial Plans, and Final Wishes* (from AARP and the American Bar Association)²⁸⁴
- *The Other Talk: A Guide to Talking with Your Adult Children about the Rest of Your Life* (from AARP and McGraw Hill)²⁸⁵
- National Institutes of Health's Advanced Care Planning website²⁸⁶

VI. CONCLUSION²⁸⁷

As noted above, toward the end of the 2022-2023 academic year, I decided to step back from my position as Associate Dean that summer to take time to heal from the grief our family experienced after the loss of our son, Shuwang—a process I had postponed far too long. Throughout my four-year tenure serving as Associate Dean, I also continued to teach a full courseload and maintain my comprehensive scholarship and service commitments, leaving little time for anything else. Moreover, helping the law school navigate the pandemic during that timeframe, as well as assisting our students in coping with many other crises and conflicts our world has continued to confront, also took a toll on my personal well-being. Therefore, instead of trying to burn the candle at both ends as a method of escaping the pain of our family's loss, I conscientiously attempted to maintain a more reasonable work schedule over the past year. This concerted reallocation of time enabled me not only to research mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being for

284. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 161.

285. *Id.*

286. *See id.*; *Advance Care Planning*, NAT'L INST. ON AGING, <https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/advance-care-planning> [<https://perma.cc/ZS82-AMUR>] (last visited Feb. 19, 2024).

287. Although much of the information in this conclusion would normally appear at the beginning of an article as explanatory material introducing the topic, I decided to include this material at the end, so busy legal professionals can dive into the important recommendations from the start and then choose whether to read the explanatory material at the end if they have time.

people at my stage in life during my free time, but also to put into practice many of these well-being initiatives. As I shared these practices with family members and friends, I realized the eagerness with which other people my age and older also want to embrace such lifestyle enhancements. This article is a way to impart these benefits to others in our legal community, that will hopefully not only help enrich the lives of those who are interested in improving their own well-being, but also help enhance our society as a whole.

This article also aligns with the recent focus throughout the United States on the importance of well-being in the legal community. For example, according to the letter introducing the 2017 report from the National Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being entitled *The Path to Lawyer Well-Being: Practical Recommendations for Positive Change*:

To be a good lawyer, one has to be a healthy lawyer. Sadly, our profession is falling short when it comes to well-being. The two studies referenced above reveal that too many lawyers and law students experience chronic stress and high rates of depression and substance use. These findings are incompatible with a sustainable legal profession, and they raise troubling implications for many lawyers' basic competence. This research suggests that the current state of lawyers' health cannot support a profession dedicated to client service and dependent on the public trust.²⁸⁸

A flurry of activity and interest surrounded the release of this report.²⁸⁹ For example, the American Bar Association launched a Well-Being Pledge Campaign:

The ABA Well-Being Campaign was launched to improve the substance use and mental health landscape of the legal profession, with an emphasis on helping legal employers support a healthy and sustainable work environment. The primary vehicle for the Campaign is a Pledge calling upon legal employers (including the judiciary, law firms, law schools, corporate entities, government agencies, and

288. Letter from Bree Buchanan & James C. Coyle, Task Force Chairs, Nat'l Task Force on Law. Well-Being, introducing *The Path to Lawyer Well-Being: Practical Recommendations for Positive Change 1* (Aug. 14, 2017), https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/professional_responsibility/lawyer_well_being_report_final.pdf.

289. See, e.g., *Report from the National Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being*, AM. BAR ASS'N (Nov. 9, 2018), https://www.americanbar.org/groups/lawyer_assistance/task_force_report/ (providing an overview of some of the publicity and articles published in 2017 surrounding the release of the report).

legal aid organizations) to: (a) recognize that substance use and mental health problems represent a significant challenge for the legal profession and acknowledge that more can and should be done to improve the health and well-being of those in the legal community (including judges, lawyers, staff, and students); and (b) support and prioritize the Pledge's seven-point framework for building a better future.²⁹⁰

The following year, the ABA published a *Well-Being Toolkit for Lawyers and Legal Employers* providing a wealth of best practices to support healthy work environments for legal professionals.²⁹¹ In 2020, the Institute for Well-Being in Law emerged as a new non-profit organization with the following mission statement:

The Institute for Well-Being in Law (IWIL) is dedicated to the betterment of the legal profession by focusing on a holistic approach to well-being. Through advocacy, research, education, technical and resource support, and stakeholders' partnerships, we are driven to lead a culture shift in law to establish health and well-being as core centerpieces of professional success.²⁹²

Subsequently, articles highlighting the importance of lawyer well-being have appeared in the ABA JOURNAL, such as the following examples:

- “How to release self-destructive thoughts and cultivate optimism” by Jeena Cho (February 1, 2021)
- “Walking meditation is a step toward calm” by Jeena Cho (April 1, 2021)
- “How to integrate well-being throughout your organization” by Kendra Brodin (October 1, 2021)
- “Warm welcome: law firms are using wellness programs to recruit new lawyers” by Danielle Braff (August 1, 2022)

290. *Well-Being Pledge Campaign*, AM. BAR ASS'N, https://www.americanbar.org/groups/lawyer_assistance/well-being-in-the-legal-profession/well-being-pledge-campaign/ (last visited July 7, 2024).

291. Anne M. Brafford, *Well-Being Toolkit for Lawyers and Legal Employers*, AM. BAR ASS'N (Aug. 2018), https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/lawyer_assistance/ls_colap_well-being_toolkit_for_lawyers_legal_employers.pdf.

292. *How It All Began: The Evolution from the National Task Force to the Institute for Well-Being in Law*, INST. FOR WELL-BEING IN L., <https://lawyerwellbeing.net/how-it-all-began/> [https://perma.cc/637U-54ZE] (last visited July 7, 2024).

- “Firms are employing burnout advisors to keep their attorneys from getting overwhelmed” by Danielle Braff (December 1, 2022)
- “Law schools should take on students’ mental health and substance abuse from day 1” by David Jaffe (May 17, 2023)
- “Changing the culture at law firms to promote wellness and mental well-being” by Victor Li (August 16, 2023)
- “Self-care gap expands as female lawyers spend less time on themselves, report more burnout” by Debra Cassens Weiss (October 3, 2023)
- “How reckoning with trauma can help you, your clients, and the legal profession” by Lee Rawles (October 25, 2023)
- “ABA Well-Being Pledge Turns 5: Progress has been made, but more is needed” by Patrick Krill (February 1, 2024)

Recent law review articles have also highlighted lawyer well-being, such as the following example:

- *Capitalizing on Healthy Lawyers: The Business Case for Law Firms to Promote and Prioritize Lawyer Well-Being* by Jerrod Reich, 65 VILL. L. REV. 361 (2020)

The State Bar Association of North Dakota (SBAND) has similarly embraced the movement to improve lawyer well-being. SBAND provides both long-standing programs as well as newer initiatives:

- SBAND Member Assistance Program
 - The SBAND Member Assistance Program offers confidential, professional counseling services in locations across the state of North Dakota for variety of concerns, including marital and parenting concerns, emotional crises, financial and family difficulties, substance abuse evaluations and work-related problems. Members and their families are entitled to receive up to eight counseling sessions per identified problem area at no charge.

Calls for appointments are taken Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 4:30 pm, at (701) 530-7195 or (800) 327-7195, the St. Alexius Employee Assistance Program. Calls for an

emergency or crisis situation are taken 24 hours a day, seven days a week, at these numbers.²⁹³

- SBAND Lawyer Assistance Program
 - This free program for SBAND members “is designed to help judges and attorneys who are having issues with alcohol or drug abuse, stress, depression, or practice management. In 2014, the program [was expanded] to assist UND Law Students as they begin their career.”²⁹⁴
- Examples of SBAND continuing legal education (CLE) programs:
 - Wellness Webinar Series: Mindfulness at Work (2021)
 - Wellness Webinar Series: The Effects of Alcoholism (2021)
 - Mental Health, Well-Being, Implicit Bias, and Ethics in a Post-COVID Environment (2022)
 - Reducing Stigma to Avoid Chronic Stress and Burnout (2023)

Despite the emphasis on lawyer well-being, little attention has been paid to the overall well-being of more seasoned legal professionals. Instead, most well-being initiatives focusing on senior lawyers have addressed dealing with cognitive impairment and succession planning (and not preparation for overall vitality and flourishing in one’s later decades of life). The emphasis on cognitive decline and transition from practice may be due to the 2014 report by a joint committee appointed by the National Organization of Bar Counsel (NOBC) and the Association of Professional Responsibility Lawyers (APRL). The report analyzed the adequacy of disciplinary proceedings to address issues raised by “a ‘senior tsunami’ of age-impaired lawyers, some of whom were expected to generate an inordinate number of complaints and disciplinary proceedings around the country.”²⁹⁵ A 2024 article in the ABA Journal tackled the topic.²⁹⁶ As another example, while the Senior

293. *SBAND Member Assistance Program*, ST. BAR ASS’N N.D., https://www.sband.org/page/mem_assist_prog (last visited July 7, 2024) (bold omitted).

294. *About the Program*, N.D. LAW. ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.sband.org/resource/resmgr/docs/for_lawyers/LAP_Brochure.pdf [<https://perma.cc/UE3M-XS8R>] (last visited July 7, 2024).

295. JAMES C. COYLE ET AL., NOBC-APRL-COLAP SECOND JOINT COMMITTEE ON AGING LAWYERS: FINAL REPORT 1 (2014), https://cdn.ymaws.com/www.inbar.org/resource/resmgr/Conclave/Grey_Matters_ls_colap_nobc_a.pdf [<https://perma.cc/2DXG-4CX6>].

296. Rod Kubat, *Am I Losing My Mind? How to Maintain Cognitive Abilities as Senior Lawyers Age*, ABA J. (Feb. 8, 2024, 2:46 PM) <https://www.abajournal.com/voice/article/am-i-losing-my-mind-maintaining-cognitive-abilities-as-senior-lawyers-age> [<https://perma.cc/8AT6-8LFS>].

Lawyers Division of the State Bar of Wisconsin has co-produced a webinar on “Mental Health and Wellness for Senior Lawyers” in 2023,²⁹⁷ the 2021 report entitled “Lawyer Well-Being: Changing the Climate of Wisconsin’s Legal Profession” simply reiterated the recommendations for older lawyers made by the National Task Force focusing on cognitive decline and transitioning practice.²⁹⁸ I believe a greater emphasis on overall well-being of senior legal professionals is warranted.

This article on well-being also fits well within UND’s current strategic plan entitled “UND LEADS: A Strategic Vision for UND.”²⁹⁹ Five core values form the pillars of UND’s strategic vision, producing the acronym “LEADS”:

- Learning
- Equity
- Affinity
- Discovery
- Service

The core value of “Affinity” includes the importance of well-being for all members of our UND community, including our UND School of Law alumni, many of whom are members of the State Bar Association of North Dakota:

When our people feel heard, supported, and connected to UND, our communities and state benefit. By attending to the **well-being**, development and support of our UND community, we demonstrate how we value each individual’s dedication to achieving our

297. *Mental Health & Wellness for Senior Lawyers 2023*, ST. BAR WIS., <https://marketplace.wisbar.org/store/products/cle-seminars/ca3563d-mental-health-wellness-for-senior-lawyers-2023-ondemand/c-25/c-78/p-33833#product-detail-description> [https://perma.cc/N4KF-8TNG] (last visited July 7, 2024).

298. LAWYER WELL-BEING: CHANGING THE CLIMATE OF WISCONSIN’S LEGAL PROFESSION, TASK FORCE ON WIS. LAWYER WELL-BEING 16-17 (2021) (“Guide and support the transitions of older lawyers. The State Bar of Wisconsin’s Senior Lawyers Division, the State Bar, and the State Bar’s WisLAP Committee are responding to the growing demand for services and programming to support senior lawyers in transitions from practice, succession planning, addressing cognitive impairment, and with other issues associated with age and retirement. *See infra* app. C.”), 34 (“Appendix C: NTF Recommendations for Guiding and Supporting the Transitions of Older Lawyers”), <https://www.wisbar.org/NewsPublications/Documents/Lawyer%20well-being%20-%20changing%20the%20climate%20of%20wisconsins%20legal%20profession%20-%20dec%202021%20-%20bog%20report.pdf> [https://perma.cc/U8XJ-CCGQ].

299. *UND LEADS Strategic Plan*, UND, <https://und.edu/about/strategic-plan/index.html> [https://perma.cc/UD9A-MZJ5] (last visited July 7, 2024).

collective university mission. We recognize the vital role the physical and online campus environments have in influencing behavior, impacting success, and building traditions. UND will be a leader in creating accessible and welcoming environments that foster a meaningful sense of belonging for all. We will celebrate the unique contributions that each of us bring to UND and build a campus culture that can adapt to meet the changing needs of our UND community.

UND leads by embracing people as the true drivers of excellence and environments that promote belonging. We will:

Cultivate physical and online campus environments that are **welcoming, safe, healthy, and inclusive**. Promote sustainable practices critical to the long-term **health, well-being, and success** of the University community.³⁰⁰

This focus on well-being also complements the current version of our evolving UND School of Law Strategic Plan.³⁰¹

OUR MISSION (Why we exist)

The University of North Dakota School of Law exists to **develop excellent legal professionals** who will promote justice and contribute, through leadership, collaboration, and expertise, to the communities within the state of North Dakota, the tribal nations in our region, and the broader nation and world.³⁰²

As the National Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being spotlighted, “[t]o be a good lawyer, one has to be a healthy lawyer;”³⁰³ therefore, for UND School

300. *UND LEADS: A Strategic Vision for the University of North Dakota*, UND 10 (Jan. 2023), https://und.edu/about/strategic-plan/_files/docs/und-leads-strat-plan-v2.pdf [<https://perma.cc/3XGE-ET7X>] (emphasis added).

301. *UND School of Law Strategic Planning Session*, UND, https://calendar.und.edu/event/und_school_of_law_strategic_planning_session [<https://perma.cc/4GPG-TZD3>] (last visited July 7, 2024).

302. UND School of Law Strategic Plan (version 5) (on file with author) (emphasis added).

303. Bree Buchanon & James C. Coyle, *National Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being: Creating a Movement to Improve Well-Being in the Legal Profession* (Aug. 14, 2017), https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/professional_responsibility/lawyer_well_being_report_final.pdf.

of Law to produce excellent legal professionals, we must focus on enhancing the well-being of our students, staff, faculty, and alumni, as well. My colleague, Professor Jennifer Cook, developed significant expertise and research on the topic of well-being for law students. For several years, Professor Cook led a session on well-being for all first-year law students in our Professional Foundations course, and she has also added a corresponding session on well-being during the law school's orientation for our incoming students before they begin their legal education. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to Professor Cook for her leadership in this field.

In conclusion, as the old saying goes, “the only constant is change,”³⁰⁴ which seasoned legal professionals readily understand, as likely all have experienced both positive and negative changes in their lives. As noted by Dr. Sanjay Gupta:

[I]t's important to acknowledge that we all go through phases in life that bring different challenges. With each passing year and decade comes transitions punctuated by events like the birth of children, the death of loved ones, shifts in relationships, changes in our finances, retirement, accidents, illness, perhaps the loss of some independence such as the ability to drive. People who can adapt to life-changing circumstances and experiences are more likely to maintain their mental well-being. Never-ending sadness or stress is not a normal response to these transitions and raises the risk for cognitive impairment. It's important that you do what you can to keep track of your mental well-being and continuously strengthen your resilience.³⁰⁵

Dr. Gupta highlighted the following quotation from Alexander Graham Bell to encourage all of us to embrace change: “When one door closes another door opens; but we so often look so long and so regretfully upon the closed door, that we do not see the ones which open for us.”³⁰⁶ Similarly, Gupta exhorts us to take charge of our lives, our happiness, and our well-being, and to look to the future instead of dwelling on the past:

304. Attributed, perhaps with some misunderstanding, to the Greek philosopher Heraclitus. See Keith Begley, *The Only Constant Is . . . Misunderstanding of Heraclitus*, EDINBURGH UNIV. PRESS (July 19, 2021) <https://eupublishingblog.com/2021/07/19/misunderstanding-of-heraclitus/> [<https://perma.cc/9AMQ-JRXd>].

305. GUPTA WITH LOBERG, *supra* note 3, at 147.

306. *Id.* at 168.

The people I meet who keep sharp brains their entire lives are the individuals who see the glass as half-full despite challenges, setbacks, and disappointments. They look forward to the future with resolve, and don't spend too long reflecting on [the] past They work on their happiness and take full ownership of their lives.³⁰⁷

As I continue along my journey toward greater well-being, I hope to continue not only putting many of the recommendations listed above into place, but also learning about more ways to enhance the well-being of the community. I anticipate this will be a lifelong endeavor, which I welcome with enthusiasm. I now conclude this article, so I can go work-out at Planet Fitness with my daughter. I wish you all the best in your own well-being journey!

307. *Id.*