

LAWYER ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE RESOURCES: BAMC

Co Chairs: Bill Hewitt, 301-424-8520; billhewittjr@verizon.net

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Mission: The BAMC Lawyer Assistance Committee is comprised of members of our association whose sole purpose is to help our colleagues. We are a resource put in place to help lawyers, including those whose practices may be adversely affected, to better cope with such problems as depression, substance abuse, personal problems, stress, burnout, etc.

All referrals to the Committee are strictly confidential. This confidentiality is statutory. (See, Bus. & Occup. Art. § 10-502) The Maryland Attorneys Rules of Professional Conduct exempt from reporting requirements information received in the course of participation in our assistance program. (See, Rule 8.3 (c)) Referrals to our committee come from Judges, members of the Bar, family and friends. We respond whenever the need for assistance presents itself.

Our committee has resources, professional and otherwise, that can help colleagues who find themselves in crisis. We strive to assist so as to minimize any negative effect on lawyers and their practices.

1. Maryland State Bar Association: Lawyer Assistance Committee
<http://www.msba.org/committees/lawyerassist/default.aspx>

Toll free: 800-292-1964

Director: James Quinn, MS, 443-703-3041; jqinn@msba.org

Counsellor: Lisa Caplan, LCSW-C, 443-703-3042; lcaplan@maba.org

MSBA Bar Bulletin: monthly *Wellness Tip Sheet* articles republished as flyers:

- *Maintaining Your Sanity While Practicing Law*
- *Coping With Difficult People*
- *Stress and Compassion Fatigue in the Legal Profession*
- **Public Presentations:** *Handling The Stress of Solo Practice* at MSBA Solo Practice workshop
- **Mission** *If you or some you know needs help to address problems such as alcohol, drugs, stress, family or personal problems, emergency practice management, and/or*

health because these issues are affecting work productivity, the State Bar Lawyer Assistance Committee welcomes contacts and will make referrals.

- ***The State Bar Committee also has financial resources available to those with financial need.***

- MSBA Solo Practice workshop (Lisa Caplan LCSW-C)

- **Training Objectives**
 - Identify causes of stress
 - Work-life balance
 - Reframe thoughts to manage difficult and demanding clients
 - Discover techniques to be more productive
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- **Compassion Fatigue in Legal Profession:** Cumulative physical, emotional and psychological effect of traumatic client stories or events when working in a helping capacity.
 - **Reducing Stress** maintain professional boundaries, find balance, support, mentor, self-care (rest, exercise, die, breathe), have fun
 - **Understanding Difficult Clients** where client's behavior is coming from, can't solve all their problems, policies and procedures to set boundaries and provide structure
 - **Being More Productive By Reducing Stress**
 - Create blocks of uninterrupted time
 - Stop multi-tasking – focus on one thing at a time

2. District of Columbia Bar

Lawyer Assistance Program

<https://www.dcbbar.org/bar-resources/lawyer-assistance-program/>

“A free, confidential program for lawyers, judges, and law students who are experiencing problems, such as addiction, mental health symptoms, or stress, which interfere with their personal or professional lives.” (Per website information)

This program includes the availability of 2 staff professionals who will speak confidentially by phone, provide face-to-face assessments, offer short-terms counselling and referrals to appropriate programs.

If you would like to know more about the program or if you have questions, please contact Denise Perme, manager, Lawyer Assistance Program, at 202-347-3131 or dperme@dcbbar.org.

To speak to an LAP counselor, please call the confidential line at 202-347-3131 or e-mail lap@dcbbar.org.

District of Columbia Bar
Lawyer Assistance Program
1101 K Street NW, Suite 200
Washington, DC 20005

3. Virginia

Virginia Lawyers Helping Lawyers

<http://www.valhl.org/>

“Lawyers Helping Lawyers provides many services tailored to meet the needs of each situation. The good news is that lawyers, judges, and others in the legal community who get help have an excellent chance of recovery.” (Per website)

**Help is Confidential, Non-Disciplinary, and Free
24-Hour Help Line
1-877-545-4682**

The website also offers a confidential email contact. Also on-line is a self-test which addresses such issues as depression, alcohol usage, gambling and a whole range of topics which may be of assistance.

4. This is a link to *A Terrible Melancholy: Depression in the Legal Profession*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B17-G8aoEa8>.