



WELL-BEING WEEK IN LAW PARTICIPATION GUIDE FOR ORGANIZATIONS

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

MON


STAY STRONG
Physical Well-Being

WHAT IS WELL-BEING WEEK IN LAW?

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

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

TUES


ALIGN
Spiritual Well-Being

WHAT ARE WWIL'S DAILY THEMES?

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

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

For each day and theme of WWIL, this Guide recommends well-being nudges for legal professionals to try out. The WWIL team will distribute the daily nudges via social media and other channels. Organizations should feel free to distribute them and build organizational activities around them.

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ENGAGE & GROW
Career & Intellectual
Well-Being

THURS


CONNECT
Social Well-Being

FRI


FEEL WELL
Emotional Well-Being

WHAT IS THIS YEAR'S OVERALL THEME?

This year's overall theme is Tending Joy.



Joy Helps Us Thrive, Not Just Survive

Tending joy doesn't mean minimizing real challenges — it means equipping ourselves to face them. Research shows that positive emotions like joy are functional psychological mechanisms that fuel resilience and well-being.

Joy Strengthens Every Season — Especially the Difficult Ones

We sometimes associate positive emotions with good times only. But resilient people experience genuine positive emotions during difficult periods, alongside their stress and grief. This isn't denial; it's a core mechanism of how humans navigate hardship. Positive emotions broaden our thinking, allowing us to more creatively and flexibly address problems; encourage connection with others; undo physiologically effects of stress; and give us moments of relief from adversity, which helps us cope.

Tending Joy Is a Practice, Not a Personality Trait

Joy can be cultivated through intentional action. The most effective approaches combine multiple pathways rather than relying on any single habit.

WAYS FOR ORGANIZATIONS TO PARTICIPATE

Below are a few ideas for how organizations can participate in WWIL.

Raise Awareness & Anticipation: Use email, intranet, social media, or other communication channels to build anticipation for upcoming WWIL activities. Logos, infographics, and other marketing materials are freely available for download on the WWIL website.

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

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

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

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

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



WELL-BEING NUDGES TO SPARK JOY

Below are science-based well-being nudges for sparking joy to recommend to your members and/or to organize WWIL activities around.



This well-being dimension encourages us to strive for regular activity, good diet and nutrition, and enough sleep; limit addictive substances; and seek help for physical health when needed.

*How can we connect Physical Well-Being to this year's Tending Joy theme? We recommend that you **Take an Awe Walk and Try a Fun, New Physical Activity.***

SPARKS OF JOY NUDGE #1

Take An Awe Walk

Negative thoughts and feelings abound for many of us right now—due to events in the world and challenges of everyday life. Although negative emotions can be functional and are crucial for self-preservation, they can make us more focused on our own survival and less attuned to those around us. The experience of awe counteracts these self-focused tendencies and motivates empathy and compassion. When we experience awe, our focus shifts outward. Awe expands our awareness, fosters curiosity, and strengthens our sense of connection to others—which can boost joy and fuels resilience.

Try getting outside today with a plan to cultivate awe. You can follow the instructions in the [Awe Walk Activity Guide](#). Read more about the benefits of awe in the *Psychology Today* article [How Awe Helps Us Heal in Times of Crisis](#). A similar alternative to try is a [Photo Walk](#), which can cultivate [mindfulness](#) and [meaningfulness](#).

SPARKS OF JOY NUDGE #2

Try A Fun, New Physical Activity

Try a fun, new physical activity today that floods your body with feel-good neurotransmitters. All kinds of physical activity boost mood and vitality. When we do it regularly, it can prevent and improve symptoms of depression and anxiety and can boost memory, attention, learning, and cognitive processing. To sprinkle more joy into your activities, pick something you enjoy, that's challenging and helps you grow, and builds connection with others.



This well-being dimension encourages us to cultivate a sense of meaning and purpose inside and outside work and to align our work and nonwork lives with our values, goals, and interests.

*How can we connect Spiritual Well-Being to this year's Tending Joy theme? We recommend that you **Live Today In Gratitude and Service** to recognize and share the presence of the Divine and **Spread Joy Through Acts of Kindness**.*

SPARKS OF JOY NUDGE #1

Live Today In Gratitude and Service

Right now, it's not surprising for many people to be thinking, "how can we create more joy-filled lives despite everything going on around us?" In such times, feeling or showing joy might seem inappropriate or make us feel guilty.

Spirituality can offer guidance. [Most Americans \(70%\)](#) say that they're religious and/or spiritual, and many look for daily opportunities to fulfill spiritual needs and enact spiritual values.

A well-known Bible verse (Ecclesiastes 3:1-10) suggests that joy can fit even in circumstances like the present. It promises that there's a season for every activity under the heavens. There's a time to plant and uproot, to mourn and dance, to keep and throw away, to scatter and gather, to weep—and for laughter and joy.

The experience of joy has been described as a "sign of the presence of God." Today, we recommend that you cultivate the joyful presence of the Divine/Spirit/Creator/God in everyday experiences. Look for ways to be grateful and of service to others and to recognize joy in ordinary moments:

- Give wherever you go—including your time, attention, appreciation, advice, talents, and patience.
- Before every meeting, say to yourself: May my words and actions be for the benefit of those who are here.
- Silently wish everyone you encounter happiness, joy, and laughter.
- Say 100 "thank yous" today. Thank others for their contributions and mindfully note all for which you're grateful (e.g., my family, partner, health, home, job, food).
- Jot down simple, everyday things that strike you as beautiful, funny, or intriguing. Joy and gratitude often can be found in ordinary moments if we don't let them just pass us by.

SPARKS OF JOY NUDGE #2

Spread Joy Through Acts of Kindness

Spread joy by doing five new things that positively impact or improve the welfare of work colleagues, clients, family, or friends. Choose things outside your normal routine. Also do them in a burst of benevolence all in one day—which research says is the best way to boost your own joy and sense of meaningfulness. Writing down your helpful activities and reflecting on them can help too.

For some ideas, check out the [Acts of Kindness Activity Guide](#).

This activity is based on Prof. Blake Allan's research, [Helping others increases meaningful work](#).



This well-being dimension encourages us to seek personal satisfaction, continuous learning and growth in our professional and personal lives, and financial stability. It reminds us to engage in creative or intellectually challenging activities that foster ongoing development and to monitor our cognitive wellness.

How can we connect Career & Intellectual Well-Being to this year's Tending Joy theme?

*We recommend that you **Rediscover Joy At Work and Turn Off The TV & Turn Up Personal Growth.***

SPARKS OF JOY NUDGE #1

Rediscover Joy At Work

Take a few minutes to read the short articles [Rediscover Joy at Work](#) and [How the Busiest People Find Joy](#), then create a plan.

- How can you build strengths into your day? (You can use the [Strengths Alignment Worksheet](#) for guidance.)
- What steps can you take to focus on your professional growth?
- How might you strengthen bonds with your colleagues? What memorable shared experiences can you create?
- What nonwork activities light you up that you can put on your calendar to make sure they happen?
- What new work and nonwork activities can you try to continue to experience life as fresh and exciting?

SPARKS OF JOY NUDGE #2

Turn Off The TV & Turn Up Your Personal Growth

For just today, curb or eliminate TV-watching—the leisure activity that occupies the most time for the average American (about 3 hours per day). In that time slot, do something you enjoy (alone or with others) that helps you grow intellectually, interpersonally, or creatively. Such mini experiments might give us the insight and inspiration needed to begin to make new, healthier choices about how to invest our nonwork time in ways that bring us more joy.

Ideas: Read a (nonwork) book or magazine. Read to your kids. Paint, draw, sculpt, cook, or bake. Film a fun family video. Go for a photography awe walk. Plant something. Play a musical instrument. Go to a local lecture. Research a new culture. Plan a road trip or vacation. Make a list of 100 (nonwork) things that make you happy. Write a handwritten card or letter to someone.



This well-being dimension encourages us to build connection, belonging, and a reliable support network and to contribute to our groups and communities.

*How can we connect Social Well-Being to this year's Tending Joy theme? We recommend that you **Design a Joyful Gathering** with colleagues, clients, friends, or family and **Strengthen Your Connection to Meaningful Groups**.*

SPARKS OF JOY NUDGE #1

Design a Joyful Gathering

Fun, meaningful social gatherings generate joy and a sense of belonging when designed well. Planning a gathering can be challenging for busy professionals. But the payoff is worth it. Joyful social gatherings help develop high-quality connections, which [combat loneliness](#), fuel psychological well-being, strengthen workplace culture, and enhance overall performance.

For planning ideas for your gathering, check out these two short guides: [6 Ideas For Meaningful Work Gatherings](#) and [10 Tips For Meaningful Work Gatherings](#).

SPARKS OF JOY NUDGE #2

Strengthen Your Connection to Meaningful Groups

A strong source of joy for most people is group belonging. So-called "[Social Cure](#)" research has found that belonging to groups that matter to us are a source of joy and enhance many dimensions of well-being.

All kinds of groups can be the source of Social Cure benefits. But the quality of our group ties makes a big difference. Benefits come only from groups with which we experience a sense of belonging and a meaningful shared identity.

Take steps today to explore how to strengthen your connection to meaningful groups—inside or outside the workplace. To help you get started, we've created a free activity guide, [5 Steps to Connect with Groups to Boost Well-Being](#). Consider recruiting a group of colleagues or friends to do the activity together and share information about possible groups to join.

This well-being dimension encourages us to value emotions; develop an ability to identify and manage emotions for health, to achieve goals, and to inform decisions; and to seek help for mental health when needed.

*How can we connect Emotional Well-Being to this year's Tending Joy theme? We recommend that you **Spark Joy By Balancing Novelty & Predictability and Practicing Joy & Other Positive Emotions.***

SPARKS OF JOY NUDGE #1

Spark Joy Through Novelty

Feeling stretched and surprised by new things is energizing. Research suggests that novelty is as important to our vitality and mental health as more well-known psychological needs like belonging, competence, and autonomy.

To foster **joy in novelty**, [Dr. Todd Kashdan](#) recommends that we "[g]enerate a plan for breaking free from the same activities, conversation topics, information sources, and perspectives. Spend more time exploring uncertain terrain and doing something unpredictable. What are you going to do differently today? How are you going to respond to people differently today?"

SPARKS OF JOY NUDGE #2

Spark Joy Through Predictability & Structure

While novelty and surprise have their benefits, uncertainty and chronic disorder are toxic to mental health. Positive psychology co-founder Prof. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi was especially concerned with the negative effects of what he called entropy of the mind. When we're left alone with no demands on our attention to order our consciousness, our thinking veers toward the negative (Csikszentmihalyi, Flow, p. 119). The result, he said, "is neither useful nor enjoyable" and may degenerate into depression. On the other hand, reliable patterns and regularity foster our sense of coherence and impact whether we experience our lives as meaningful (Heintzelman & King, 2014).

To **foster joy in predictability and structure**, consider designing a new social ritual—which is simply an activity that you do repetitively with others that has symbolic meaning to you all (Garcia-Rada et al., 2019). Social rituals amplify enjoyment, bolster positive emotions, increase a sense of

control, create a sense of belonging, and enhance relationship satisfaction (Berinato, 2020; Gino & Norton, 2013; Sezer et al., 2016). The predictability and structure of rituals are important ingredients for enhancing positive emotions and meaningfulness.

To design an effective social ritual, try to incorporate the following factors:

- Make the activity fun, interesting, and likely to generate positive emotions,
- Incorporate aspects that encourage a sense of identity to the group and of belonging (e.g., guidelines about dress, specific music or a song, nicknames, mascots, etc.),
- Create a shared understanding of what the ritual is and its meaning to you all,
- Establish a pattern that you repeat on a predictable schedule (allowing for some flexibility when needed), and
- Keep everyone motivated primarily by love and fun rather than duty, pressure, or guilt.

SPARKS OF JOY NUDGE #3

Practice Joy & 9 Other Positive Emotions

To get really good at anything, we need practice. Joy is no exception. Research shows that intentionally practicing Joy and other positive emotions—like Amusement, Awe, Gratitude, Hope, Inspiration, Interest, Love, Serenity, and Pride—increases meaningfulness, pleasure, engagement, and life satisfaction and curbs depressive symptoms. To get started practicing Joy and other positive emotions, think about situations, people, and things that trigger that emotion for you. Then, make a plan about how you'll cultivate it. The [Pick & Practice Positive Emotions Worksheet](#) can guide you through the activity.

READ MORE ABOUT TENDING JOY

Darwin A. Guevarra, November 14, 2023, Can Little Steps Lead To Big Joy?
[Greater Good Magazine](#)

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I tried them for seven days, [The Guardian](#)

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More of It? [Greater Good Magazine](#)

Mara Altman, April 29, 2025, Finding Joy in Dark Times Is Essential, [The Persistent](#)

F. Diane Barth, November 13, 2025, The Importance of Joy in the Darkest of Times: Is it
OK to be happy when things are bad? [Psychology Today](#)

Adding Joy to Your Life, January 19, 2026, [Mental Wellness Center](#)

Meghan Rabbit, May 31, 2025, 9 Science-Backed Tips to Find Happiness and
Feel More Joy, [Prevention.com](#)

By Shannen Zitz, April 28, 2022, Find a More Joyful You With Our 14-Day Happiness
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[Greater Good Magazine](#)

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the Value of Employee Joy, [Harvard Business Review](#)