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IN SIGHT *for Oregon Lawyers and Judges*

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF YOUR PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL LIFE

DEVELOPING HEALTHY HABITS: STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

I wish I exercised more regularly. I wish I did not snack between meals. I wish I spent less time surfing the Web. I wish I could stop procrastinating. I wish I could stop smoking. I wish. I wish. I wish. The list can seem endless. At times, the human condition seems to be a constant struggle between what we would like to do, what we need to do, and what, in fact, we do. It can often feel as if we are in a perpetual state of New Year's resolutions.

Social psychologists, neuroscientists, and other researchers are arriving at new understandings about how people successfully manage to change their behaviors. They have identified a variety of physiological and psychological factors that affect our ability to harness our willpower to break bad habits and develop new and healthy ones. Two of the leading authorities in this area are Kelly McGonigal, Ph.D., and Roy Baumeister, Ph.D. Both are authors of best-selling books and articles on the science of willpower, self-control, and the formation of healthy habits. Below are some of their observations, research findings, and recommendations.

● **Willpower is like a muscle.** We have a finite supply of willpower on any given day. It is a limited resource; the more we use our willpower, the less of it remains as the day goes on. According to Baumeister, current research indicates that most of us spend three or more hours every day resisting desires. This is a normal part of living. Additionally, we routinely use our self-control resources for many other activities, such as managing our thoughts, focusing our thinking, and regulating our emotions. In short, we are constantly exercising willpower throughout our day.

● **Stress diminishes willpower.** According to McGonigal, our bodies naturally prioritize our use of the energy resources we have. We use our willpower resources every time we make decisions, control our thoughts and emotions, and exercise personal restraint in our behavior. When stressed, however, our bodies automatically divert energy from those areas of the brain responsible for these healthy activities; we instead focus on immediate, short-term, and sometimes unwise thoughts and activities.

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Divorce Support Group for Lawyers

Beginning in February 2018, the OAAP will offer a support group in Portland for lawyers experiencing the challenges and issues of divorce. This eight-session group will meet at the OAAP, 520 SW Yamhill Street, Suite 1050, Portland, Oregon 97204, on Mondays from noon to 1:15 p.m. The workshop will be facilitated by OAAP Attorney Counselor Bryan Welch, JD, CADC I. There is no fee, but advance registration is required. Attendance by phone might be possible. To participate in this group, set up a meeting with Bryan at 503-226-1057 or 1-800-321-6227, ext. 19, or email him at bryanw@oaap.org.

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For example, it is more likely that we will make poor decisions, utter a sarcastic remark, or procrastinate on a work project when we are stressed and our self-control resources are depleted. Managing our stress is thus essential to preserving our willpower. Going for a short walk, connecting with a friend, or playing with a pet are examples of stress-reducers that help us replenish our willpower reserves.

- **Sleep affects willpower.** Research demonstrates that when we are well rested, we are more likely to resist unhealthy temptations and make healthy decisions. Many of us know all too well that, when we are sleep-deprived, our decision-making suffers and we are more likely to engage in the unhealthy habits we are trying to avoid.

- **Nutrition affects willpower.** Baumeister and McGonigal both emphasize the importance of a healthy diet and sufficient blood glucose levels in maintaining willpower energy reserves. Baumeister's research confirms that self-control tends to be noticeably impaired when glucose levels are low; for example, difficulty regulating emotions, resisting impulsivity, and engaging in aggressive behavior is more common when these levels are low. According to McGonigal, "Eating a more plant-based, less-processed diet makes energy more available to the brain and can improve every aspect of willpower from overcoming procrastination to sticking with a New Year's resolution."

- **Carefully choose a goal.** When seeking to develop new habits, McGonigal advises us to choose a goal that we really want, not a goal that someone else desires for us, and also to give thought to the steps needed to accomplish our goal. However, she adds, "Leave room to revise these steps if they turn out to be unsustainable or don't lead to the benefits you expected." Better to revise the plan than to give up the goal.

- **Pay attention.** According to McGonigal, "One study found that the average person thinks they make 14 food choices a day; they actually make over 200. When you aren't aware that you're making a choice, you'll almost always default to habit/temptation." It's important to be alert to those times when we have opportunities to make choices consistent with our goals.

- **Start small.** When embarking on a new habit or behavior, it helps, says McGonigal, to start with small feats of willpower before trying to tackle more difficult ones. Ideally, we should seek to identify the smallest

change that is consistent with our larger goal and start there. For example, walking or jogging for 10 minutes may be a better way to begin an aerobic program than starting off at 60 minutes.

- **Willpower is contagious.** Find a willpower role model – someone who has accomplished what you want to do. Also, we should try to surround ourselves with family members and friends who can support us in our efforts. We are much more likely to achieve the behavior change we seek if we have role models and a support system.

- **Mornings are best.** We generally have more willpower earlier in the day; thereafter, our willpower steadily declines throughout the day as we fatigue. We should try to accomplish what we need – for example, exercise – earlier in the day. Watch out for the evenings, when we have less willpower to resist the habits we are trying to break.

- **Give yourself healthy rewards.** It's okay to give ourselves small, healthy rewards along the way. Research shows this is effective when undertaking new habits. The reward, of course, should generally not be an excessive indulgence in the very habit we are trying to break.

- **Seize today.** We need to avoid thinking that "things will be different tomorrow." McGonigal notes that we have a tendency to think that we will have more willpower, energy, time, and motivation in the future. We tend to tell ourselves that tomorrow, next week, or next month will be a better time to start our diet, exercise program, and so on. The problem is that "if we think we have the opportunity to make a different choice tomorrow, we almost always 'give in' to temptation or habit today."

- **Monitor and keep records.** It's difficult to manage what we don't monitor. Baumeister's research clearly confirms that the more frequently and consistently we monitor and record our efforts, the more successful we will be in changing or developing new habits. The person who weighs daily and records his or her weight, for example, is statistically more likely to lose weight than the person who does so weekly, monthly, or only sporadically. In addition, having a supportive friend as an accountability partner also increases the likelihood of success. Whatever the behavior, consistent monitoring is invaluable, and innumerable smart phone apps are available to assist us in these efforts.

- **Guilt and shame don't work.** Science today clearly indicates that self-compassion, not self-criticism, is a

more effective way to stay on track when seeking to form new, healthy habits; self-compassion tends to encourage one to better achieve his or her goals. Although it seems counterintuitive, studies show that people who experience shame or guilt are much more likely to break their resolutions than those who cut themselves some slack.

Developing new, healthy habits or eliminating unhealthy ones sometimes requires more than simply the exercise of willpower alone. Professional assistance is sometimes necessary. For example, the most effective way to change unhealthy substance use or other problematic behaviors is to obtain the advice of a trained professional. Making the decision to seek assistance and following through is, in itself, the healthy exercise of willpower. The confidential Oregon Attorney Assistance Program can be a valuable resource when seeking to develop healthy habits.

**DOUGLAS S. QUERIN, JD, LPC, CADC I
OAAP ATTORNEY COUNSELOR**

Resources:

Baumeister, R. F., & Tierney, J. (2012). *Willpower: Rediscovering the Greatest Human Strength*. New York: Penguin Books.

McGonigal, K. (2012). *The Willpower Instinct: How Self-control Works, Why It Matters, and What You Can Do to Get More of It*. New York: Avery.

Creating Healthy Habits

Are you interested in a workshop to learn how to break unhealthy habits and create new healthy habits?

For more information, contact Doug Querin, JD, LPC, CADC I, at 503-226-1057 or 1-800-321-6227, ext. 12, or at douglasq@oaap.org.

MY LIFE BEFORE RECOVERY: THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE UGLY

I think of my life two years ago as a layer cake composed of the good, the bad, and the ugly. The “good” was a very thick layer at the bottom that formed the foundation of the cake: a wonderful, loving, supportive family; a challenging and interesting profession in the law working with people who had known me for years and who generally appreciated and valued my contributions; lots of friends from many walks of life; a lovely home in a great neighborhood; and many other gifts, including good health, economic security, and the intelligence to do my job well. The “bad” was a much smaller layer on top of the “good” – a workaholic tendency, negative self-talk and self-criticism, some overeating, a challenging relationship with my father, an imperfect husband, and so on – not uncommon in the life of a successful, mid-50-year-old, first-world professional.

The thin layer of “ugly” on the top of the cake was alcohol. After eight to nine years of alcoholic drinking, that thin layer of ugly was seeping down into the other layers of my life and poisoning them. The more I drank, the more contaminated my life became. In my last four to five years of drinking, I could no longer enjoy any leisure activity without pouring alcohol on it. Gardening, cooking, sewing, camping, hiking, socializing, traveling – you name it – it was all being mixed with booze. My disease insisted on being fed when I wasn’t working. Undoubtedly, it was just a matter of time before it would also insist on being fed at work.

The poisonous, saturating layer of alcohol wasn’t helping my “bad” layer either. All my fears, self-doubt, insecurities, workaholic tendencies, shaky relationships, appetites, and so on were worse when I drank. The self-

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30th Annual Dinner for Lawyers and Judges in Recovery

**April 13, 2018 ○ 6:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.
Hotel Monaco, Portland, Oregon**

Watch for more information in the next issue of *In Sight*. If you would like an email reminder about the dinner, email jeanneu@oaap.org.



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loathing that I began to feel about my drinking became a perpetual addition to the “bad” layer; it took every negative quality in that layer and made it worse.

My alcoholism snuck up on me in my mid-40s. In general, I had been a “take-it-or-leave-it” drinker most of my adult life. In fact, having witnessed the havoc that alcoholism can create in a family, I was doubly determined not to fall into that trap. My father had been an alcoholic, and I was not going to be like him. However, the disease was like a fish in the ocean that kept getting bigger and bigger. I didn’t notice it growing. In the meantime, I was losing my strength as age, daily stresses, and a few major life changes had me turning to alcohol for comfort and joy. The day came when I couldn’t reel the fish in. I had crossed a line and I couldn’t turn back. I had to drink. It was no longer a choice. Once I started, I couldn’t stop. I had to get to the buzz level I wanted and then hold that level of buzz for the rest of the day. The fish was stronger than me, and I knew it.

I did not want anyone to know that I had slipped into alcoholism. I may not have had the gift of denial, but I was a control-freak perfectionist and I knew how to be sneaky and cover my tracks. Thus began about a decade of devious, obsessive behavior focused on keeping up appearances and not letting anyone see my growing dependence on alcohol.

What kinds of things did I do to hide my drinking and alcohol consumption?

- Drank before and after events, so the amount I consumed in public looked normal.
- Purchased hard alcohol in little “airplane-sized” bottles to hide in my purse or briefcase – but only alcohol that came in plastic bottles so the bottles didn’t clink together.

- Bought hard alcohol in liquor stores all over town, so no one store or clerk got to “know” me.

- Bought wine in disposable paper 1-liter cartons – again so I could hide it in my briefcase or tote without the weight or noise of glass.

- Bought three-ounce plastic travel containers and poured alcohol into those to keep with me during the day – especially on weekends or evenings.

- Switched to vodka – at first “regular” and then 100 proof – because it took less to maintain my buzz. Also, didn’t I read somewhere that you can’t smell vodka on someone’s breath?

- Hid “my” stash of alcohol in secret places in the house so bottles of wine weren’t mysteriously disappearing from the wine rack and levels of hard alcohol weren’t going down.

- Developed elaborate systems for disposing of empty bottles.

- Snuck alcohol onto airplanes so I could drink on flights – without my husband or (if he wasn’t with me) other passengers observing the amount I was drinking.

My disease progressed over time, and in my last year of active drinking I reached the point where work was the only area of my life that I hadn’t poisoned. The barriers to not drinking at work were starting to crumble. Working over the weekend? Staying late at the office? Doing a task that feels somewhat routine or tedious? Let’s make it more fun by adding alcohol. Not too much, mind you – just enough to bring on the buzz and take the edge off. Of course, I would keep coffee and mints at the ready, just in case my breath could give away my secret.

No one has told me that they knew I had a drinking problem. I never got caught. I was never confronted. I



OAAP/OWLS 11th Annual Women’s Wellness Retreat April 27 & 28, 2018

Oregon Women Lawyers and the OAAP will hold the 11th annual Women’s Wellness Retreat for lawyers and judges on April 27 and 28, 2018, at the Surfsand Resort, Cannon Beach, Oregon. Watch for more information in the next *In Sight*, or contact OAAP Attorney Counselor Shari R. Gregory, LCSW, JD, at 503-226-1057 or 1-800-321-6227, ext. 14, or at sharig@oaap.org.

Save the Date!

never had a friend or relative take me aside and ask, “Is everything OK?” I went into counseling in the winter of 2015 and tearfully shared my story with my counselor. I finally “came out” to my husband in June of that year. He had no idea that I had become an alcoholic. Neither of my children (in their 20s) knew that my drinking had gotten out of control. Starting in fall 2015, I told a few friends that I had gone to an outpatient treatment program and was now regularly attending 12-step meetings. They were also shocked.

You could say that I got away with it. Except I didn’t – because I never fooled myself. I knew what I was doing and how bad things had gotten. As an adult and a professional, I had worked hard to earn the respect of others, not in a false, insecure way, but by acting in a way that earned respect – being honest, reliable, hard-working, thoughtful, and sometimes maybe even a little wise. At the same time, there was an inner voice that constantly told me that I actually didn’t deserve respect. When I was in my active addiction, I was leading a double life, a secretive life, a dishonest life. In my soul, I knew I needed to get into recovery and get sober.

As of this writing, I have just over two years of sobriety and recovery under my belt. What is my life like now? There is no comparison. My “good” has gotten even better, the “bad” is manageable, and the “ugly” has all but disappeared. My brain and life are no longer hijacked by booze. The mental energy I used to expend scheming about the purchase of alcohol and tracking the disposal of the evidence is a thing of the past. The fish is but a minnow in the lake, albeit one I watch closely and take very seriously. I now look ahead to retirement, grandparenting (fingers crossed!), and vacationing with anticipation rather than dread. I have two years of alcohol-free living under my belt, including leisure activities (book groups, parties, barbecues, and work events), home tasks (cooking, sewing, gardening, and entertaining) and travel (conferences, vacations, long weekends). I enjoy all these things without constantly obsessing about where the next drink is coming from and how I can hide it from others.

I still think about alcohol. I miss being a “take-it-or-leave-it” drinker. It would be nice to enjoy a glass or two of wine to take the edge off. But I am not going there; I’m not feeding that fish; I’m not kidding myself into thinking I can ever “drink like a gentleman” again. Through the support and wisdom of three 12-step groups that I have grown close to (including one at the OAAP),

I now have other tools to help me handle life’s ups and downs. I appreciate the support of the OAAP and its confidential recovery meetings for lawyers. Instead of a thin layer of “ugly” seeping into my life, I am slowly working on creating a nice layer of peace and serenity. Having that layer of calm and tranquility soak down into the rest of my life would be a fine thing indeed.

CHOOSING THE “GOOD”

Men’s Work-Life Balance Workshop

If you find it challenging to achieve a healthy balance between work and the rest of your life, the OAAP is here to help. Our confidential men’s workshop provides practical techniques for lawyers to use while exploring topics such as unhealthy stress; self-care; and balancing the demands of work, family, and friends.

This six-week workshop will begin in February 2018 and will meet at the OAAP from noon to 1:15 p.m. on Tuesdays. The workshop facilitator will be OAAP Attorney Counselor Douglas S. Querin, JD, LPC, CADC I. There is no fee, but advance registration is required as space is limited.

If you are interested in participating, please contact OAAP Program Assistant Jeanne Ulrich at jeanneu@oaap.org, 503-226-1057, or 1-800-321-6227.

Depression/Anxiety Support Group

The OAAP is offering a confidential support group in Portland for lawyers who have depression and/or anxiety. The group will focus on effective coping strategies and building resiliencies. This ongoing group meets twice per month in the evenings and is facilitated by Attorney Counselor Bryan Welch, JD, CADC I. The group is free but space is limited. To participate in this group, please set up a meeting with Bryan at 503-226-1057 or 1-800-321-6227, ext. 19, or email him at bryanw@oaap.org.

HOW I NETWORKED MY WAY TO MY DREAM JOB OUT OF LAW SCHOOL

In this interview, an Oregon lawyer shares her story about her networking experiences and how they led her to her career path.

What was your first job after law school?

When I graduated from law school, I knew that I wanted a job in policy work, but I didn't know which area. I was particularly interested in criminal justice reform, healthcare, or education. I knew that one way to give myself more time to make this decision was with a clerkship where I would get a wide range of experience and meet a range of people in different practice areas.

I was able to get a judicial clerkship out of law school, and shortly after starting, I began networking. I first met with a judge who gave me two names of people to meet with, and I followed up with them. I then met with someone at a healthcare agency, which started me thinking that the healthcare policy world was where I wanted to be.

How many people did you network with?

Lots! Each person I talked to would give me about two to three more names of people to contact. They weren't all doing healthcare policy work, but they were all lawyers. Oregon is too small a community to say no to someone who is willing to talk to you. I gained useful information from each person and found that everyone knows someone who knows someone.

Did you have specific goals in your networking?

In networking I had two goals: the first was to be memorable and to make a personal connection with this person, and the second was to get another name. Lawyers you meet with already know that you are job searching. My goal was to help them remember my name if a job opening came across their desk.

When we met, we mostly talked about what they did, not what I was looking for. Like everyone, lawyers like to talk about their career paths and their motivations. I would ask them a lot of questions. I got this advice from someone early on. You don't have to say what you want to do; just ask them what they do. You will usually find something to relate to, and that personal connection is what makes the person you are talking with willing to recommend your name to the next person. I had many meaningful conversations about things other than work

– hiking, pets, law school, social justice issues to name a few which helped make that personal connection.

How long did the whole process take?

I began my clerkship in August 2013 and started having coffee dates a few months later. I spent about six months networking until I found the specific opportunity I wanted to pursue.

What were the most challenging aspects of your job search?

For me, the hardest part of looking for a job is always the first step, whether it's networking or submitting a job application.

The other challenge for me was answering the "What do you want to do?" question. This was a challenge because I felt that part of the reason I was networking was to discover what policy jobs were available. I had to become comfortable with answering the question pretty broadly. I knew this was the beginning of a journey to my career path of choice, which is to influence policy at the state or even federal level. I did not want a traditional lawyer career path, and I would constantly feel the pressures of joining private practice, especially when I did not offer a specific answer to the "What do you want to do" question. I found that if I was confident and direct with my answer – that I wanted to do policy work and influence legislative changes to serve Oregonians – people respected that and wanted to help.

My advice is to look inward first – you know yourself better than anyone – and then determine the necessary steps to get to the future you want. As you gather information and learn more about career paths, you may find a better path. For me, it was all about the journey, not finding the "perfect job."

How did you overcome any setbacks or obstacles along the way?

Another big challenge was to be patient during my job search and not get too stressed. I was really lucky to have my clerkship to rely on. It gave me stability, and I was able to be patient while I looked for a job.

Once I figured out what I wanted to do, sometimes I would have to say no to opportunities that I knew were not the career path I wanted. It would have been tempting to say yes just because it was convenient. I had to

continue to listen to myself and know that I decided on this path and I need to be comfortable with my decision. I am beyond grateful that along this path I found people who did support me, and those folks are extremely valuable.

What did you learn through the process?

I learned that it's very important to be really well-organized about whom you are networking with, because when the networking tree grows, it can become a large number of people quickly. People don't always get back to you right away, so I had to have a method to track contacts, follow-ups, thank-you notes, and details about where and when we met and what we discussed.

What advice do you have for recent graduates and new lawyers?

I found that people were really willing to help, so my advice would be to jump in and start networking. I found everyone to be unbelievably supportive and kind. People want to help.

Also, I found it was quite valuable to follow up with the people I networked with and to update them on my search. I sent an initial thank you and also emailed the original person to let him or her know I met with the contact and what we discussed. I was surprised to find people appreciated my checking in with them.

How did you find time to make all those contacts and do all that networking?

In terms of reaching out to people, I used the same base information and varied it. The first email I wrote took me a long time to write, but once I had one or two versions, I started with the same email for everyone and changed the details. I did the same for every follow-up thank-you note as well, which cut down on some of the time.

In terms of actual networking, I tried to have two coffees a month. Or I would invite particular people to join me at a bar event. Or it might be a quick phone call over lunch. So the initial part of networking was time-consuming, but after that, once I got going, I got into a rhythm.

Is there anything else you found helpful?

I also found that meeting with so many people helped with my job interview skills. Networking is great practice for interviews. I became well-versed in what to say. Applying for 50 jobs sounds exhausting, but having one-on-one conversations with people is doable. That familiarity gave me a leg up and saved time in the end. For example, if I found out a job opportunity would be available in the

near future, I would try to meet with as many of the people involved with that job as possible beforehand. Although these coffees and phone calls are not job interviews, they allowed me to get to know people in a more relaxed setting and they got to know me. It also gave me an opportunity to show that I could follow through and take initiative.

GRATEFUL FOR ALL THE SUPPORT

The OAAP is available to assist with career transition. Please call 503-226-1057 to brainstorm ideas, hone your job search skills, and do some self-assessment.



You can help Oregon lawyers by choosing Oregon Lawyer Assistance Foundation (OLAF) as your charity on AmazonSmile.

When you shop Amazon, go to <https://smile.amazon.com> instead of amazon.com, and for each purchase Amazon will donate .5% to Oregon Lawyer Assistance Foundation.

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2. Select a "Charitable Organization" in "Your Account."
3. Type in Oregon Lawyer Assistance Foundation.

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The Oregon Lawyer Assistance Foundation (OLAF) provides grants and loans to Oregon lawyers who need financial help in order to obtain the addiction or mental health treatment they need.

Oregon Lawyer Assistance Foundation

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OAAP Notice of Privacy Practices

To access a copy of the current OAAP Notice of Privacy Practices, go to www.oaap.org and click on the link to Privacy Notice at the bottom of the home page, or contact OAAP Assistant Director/Privacy Officer Shari R. Gregory at 503-226-1057, ext. 14, or 1-800-321-6227 or at sharig@oaap.org.

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Career Self-Assessment Workshops

The OAAP offers career self-assessment workshops several times each year to assist lawyers, judges, and law students in identifying satisfying job and career opportunities. These workshops typically meet one evening per week from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m. for five consecutive weeks. If you would like additional information about the OAAP career self-assessment workshops, contact Shari Gregory, LCSW, JD, at 503-226-1057, ext. 14, or 1-800-321-6227, or at sharig@oaap.org.

Lawyers in Transition Presentation Calendar

A “Lawyers in Transition” guest speaker is featured on the first Thursday of each month at noon at the OAAP, 520 SW Yamhill, Suite 1050, Portland, Oregon 97204. These presentations are open for anyone to attend. See the calendar below for scheduled speakers.

Jan. 11, 2018*	Alex Berger	Large firm associate to boutique firm associate
Feb. 1, 2018	Travis Flynn	Regulatory/compliance analyst to law clerk at the Oregon Court of Appeals

* **Second Thursday of the month**

For current information on upcoming Lawyers in Transition speakers and topics, please visit the OAAP website at www.oaap.org and click on CLEs/Workshops.