



Colorado Lawyer Assistance Program

Where is your energy going?

“It’s so important to realize that every time you get upset, it drains your emotional energy. Losing your cool makes you tired. Getting angry a lot messes with your health.” ~Joyce Meyer

Being a law student is both time and energy consuming. It is, therefore, particularly important for you to develop healthy habits that save or increase mental, emotional, and physical energy rather than depleting it. Below are habits that you should avoid in order to stay healthy and at your academic best:

1. **Not drinking enough water:** drinking coffee or soft drinks throughout the day dehydrates you if you do not supplement with water.
2. **Never taking a break:** we all need time for stillness, solitude, and even a little silliness at some point during the day. Be sure to schedule gaps in your schedule for even just a few moments to achieve this.
3. **Being a “clutter bug”:** when your office, home, study space, and computer/e-mail have too much clutter, you will spend even more energy and time to find the things you need or do the tasks on your plate. Clean it up: one little corner at a time so you don’t get discouraged.
4. **Taking on too many tasks:** you might have many things going on in your personal and academic lives, but if you take on too many tasks or responsibilities for long periods of time, you won’t be at your best and your emotional, cognitive, and physical health can suffer. Examine your personal and professional responsibilities. What can you take a break from or put on the back burner for a bit? Practice saying something like: “I’m sorry, but my plate is currently full” or “Thank you for thinking of me, but I can’t this time. Ask me again in the future.”
5. **Having toxic relationships:** are the people you surround yourself with in your personal life uplifting and positive influences, or are they negative? Every relationship goes through ups and downs, and not everything is going to be positive all the time. When you are stressed and overwhelmed, however, being around negative people drains your energy. Find your positive people!
6. **Not getting enough sleep:** think about what is preventing you from getting the sleep you need to regenerate and reenergize each night. No one functions well when sleep deprived, it is a form of torture for a reason. So stop torturing yourself! If you aren’t setting aside enough time for enough sleep, rearrange your schedule. If negative thoughts are keeping you awake at night, remember that you can tackle them in the morning after a good, restful sleep.
7. **Perpetually being irritable, angry, nervous, fearful, or anxious:** emotional states that drain the nervous system (in fight, flight, freeze, or faint responses) drain a tremendous amount of emotional and physical energy. What emotions do you experience most regularly? Are they helping or hurting you? Strive to experience more helpful, positive emotions and decrease the hurtful negative emotions by changing your perspective when you unnecessarily get upset. Meditation has proven to be wonderfully helpful, even a little bit!

Take time to examine your habits. Are they increasing or decreasing your energy? Start changing a few of them with your wellbeing in mind. Rather than making drastic changes, just take one step at a time. You will be amazed at how much more you enjoy both your personal and professional life. Get started now!

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