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HELP IS OUT THERE

“We don’t have to do all of it alone. We were never meant to.”

~ Brené Brown

BY SARAH MYERS ESQ., LMFT, LAC

Do you know when you need help or assistance? Do you know where to turn to ask for help? In Colorado, our legal community has access to free and confidential assistance through your Colorado Lawyer Assistance Program (COLAP). Our mission is to promote well-being, resiliency, and competency in the legal profession by providing a variety of resources to help individuals mitigate professional stressors and address personal concerns. These issues include, but are not limited to, coping with everyday stress, struggles at home with family or friends, increased use of alcohol or other drugs, difficulties with co-workers, burn out, compassion fatigue, anger management, career path challenges, financial issues, planned or unplanned retirement, etc, etc.

COLAP staff can help you make sense of personal or professional concerns, and provide various options and choices for your circumstances. Sometimes members of the legal community just need to talk about what is going on in their life, and a confidential listener is all they need to find a solution. Sometimes the legal professional doesn’t know where to begin and needs practical tips to navigate their situation. A judge, lawyer, or law student may call out of concern for a colleague. A friend or family member may be concerned about a judge, lawyer or law student in their life. Regardless of the reason, we can assist that person in



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finding the “next step” in getting back on track or connected to helpful resources.

That “next step” may include life coaching; referrals to clinical professionals, therapists, or career counselors; referral to resources available for the legal community; organizing a free ethics CLE on wellbeing topics for your workplace or legal organization; pairing with a COLAP volunteer; referral to a Colorado Lawyers Helping Lawyers’ confidential support group meeting; or referral to a mentor through the Colorado Attorney Mentoring Program.

Personal self-care is just as important as your duty to your profession and your clients. Without your own wellness intact, your relationship with clients and your work product could suffer, not to mention your interpersonal relationships with family, friends, and most importantly, yourself. When the members of our legal profession are mentally, emotionally and physically healthy, the legal system and the public in general benefit.

COLAP is a broad-brush program with many resources to assist our legal community. Judges, lawyers, law students and legal professionals feel safe contacting COLAP because of our strict and heightened confidentiality, and because of the specialized and tailored assistance available. Our staff are lawyers, legal professionals, and licensed behavioral health specialists who understand the unique stressors facing those involved in the practice of law and the judicial system. Whether you have questions about our services, already know what issues you need help with, or would like an individual or workplace consultation, contact COLAP today to get started on the path of increased personal and professional well-being! ●

Sarah Myers, Esq., LMFT, LAC, is the Executive Director of the Colorado Lawyer Assistance Program (COLAP). COLAP is the free, confidential and independent well-being program for the legal community of Colorado. For more information, go to www.coloradolap.org. For a confidential consultation, discussion about your stressors, or to obtain helpful resources, contact COLAP at 303-986-3345 or info@coloradolap.org.