

“FITNESS” TO PRACTICE APPELLATE LAW

**IMPROVING PHYSICAL, MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL
HEALTH, AND ENHANCING YOUR LAW PRACTICE BY
INTEGRATING SPIRITUAL AWARENESS AND BALANCE
INTO YOUR LIFE AND LAW PRACTICE**

**Kevin Dubose
ALEXANDER DUBOSE JONES & TOWNSEND, LLP
1844 Harvard
Houston, Texas 77008
713-861-5407
kdubose@adjtlaw.com**

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I. Introduction

The Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct repeatedly refer to the concept of “fitness,” with reference to the ability to discharge a lawyer’s responsibilities to a client, grounds for termination of the attorney-client relationship, and grounds for professional misconduct of an attorney or a judge. Fitness is defined by the rules as “those qualities of physical, mental and psychological health that enables a person to discharge a lawyer’s responsibilities to clients. . . .” TEX. DISCIPLINARY R. PROF’L CONDUCT terminology.

I doubt that most appellate lawyers give much thought to their “fitness to practice [appellate] law.” We all graduated from fine law schools, many of you with flying colors. Many of you either clerked for an appellate court or logged time in the appellate section of a law firm, or, if you haven’t done any of those things, you at least learned the hard way by grinding away until you had enough actual appeals under your belt to feel justified in calling yourself an appellate specialist. If you have done any of those things, you probably don’t have any doubts about your fitness to practice appellate law.

My point is not to suggest that any of you are not fit to practice appellate law, but that if fitness *really* means not only legal ability, but also physical, mental, and emotional health, then those are areas that we could probably all improve. And while there is a temptation in the culture of the law to think that those measures of health (fitness) are at least irrelevant to the practice of law, if not inconvenient impediments to a successful practice, that kind of thinking is wrong-headed and misguided. It also is an attitude that is responsible for feelings of disenchantment, disconnectedness, and disillusionment that run rampant in our profession. To the contrary, all evidence suggests that if we devote part of the boundless energy that we presently devote to the law to the intentional pursuit of physical, mental, and emotional health (fitness), we will become healthier, happier, and more satisfied. And, not incidentally, we may also find that our law practices become more successful, more rewarding, and more fulfilling. It is quite possible to even make the practice of law a source of joy and satisfaction in our lives, rather than an unpleasant burden that we reluctantly tolerate because we can’t think of another way to make as much money.

II. Acknowledgment

Before going any further, I give acknowledgement and attribution to a wonderful book

entitled *Transforming Practices: Finding Joy and Satisfaction in the Legal Life*, by Steven Keeva. So much of what follows is either inspired by that book, or taken directly from it, that this paper might fairly be characterized as an executive summary of Keeva’s book rather than an original piece of scholarship. Many of the things I wanted to talk about were expressed so eloquently by Keeva that I decided to share his words with you rather than try to paraphrase them in my inferior prose. Since my goal is to share these thoughts with you in a way that will illuminate you, motivate you, and inspire you, and not to impress you with my scholarship or writing ability, quoting liberally from the source seemed like the preferable course. These ideas are worth sharing, and are no less worthy because the ideas or words are not original. But if this paper whets your appetite at all, I encourage you to purchase and read this wonderful book.

I also acknowledge Denice Smith and Robert Dubose for their encouragement and contributions to this paper. Denice is an old friend with whom I reconnected when I stumbled upon her on the same path. Robert is a law partner who I love like a brother.

III. Embracing a Broad View of Spirituality

Much of this paper will address the lack of spirituality in our legal culture, and our need as individuals to cultivate the spiritual side of our lives. I realize that spirituality is an emotionally charged word, most often associated with religious beliefs, which we have been trained to keep separate from everything in our lives except, well, our religion. Nevertheless, I don’t use spirituality as a synonym for religion, although that is one aspect of spirituality. I use it in the broader sense of anything that acknowledges or appeals to that part of ourselves that looks beyond the superficial level of existence in search of some deeper meaning or richer fulfillment. It may take the form of any attempt to get in touch with your inner self, to explore depths not necessarily encountered in meeting the obligations of your daily life. It may include prayer, meditation, or communing with nature. But it also includes any practices, activities, or thoughts that arouse and inspire compassion, love, and an awareness and appreciation of the awe, wonder, and interconnectedness of existence.

Steven Keeva defines spirituality as “that inner part of us where we are sensitive to the deepest most nuanced levels of meaning in our lives. It is also the part that is capable of apprehending the sacred in the everyday.” *Transforming Practices* at xix. He also quotes *The Music of Silence* by David Steindl-Rast:

“Someone will say, ‘I come alive when I listen to music,’ or ‘I come alive when I garden,’ or ‘I come alive when I play golf.’ Wherever we come alive, that is the area in which we are spiritual. . . . To be vital, awake, aware, in all areas of our lives, is the task that is never accomplished, but it remains the goal.” (Quoted in *Transforming Practices* at xx.)

As Memphis lawyer John McQuiston II puts it, “We all have our own perception of and relationship to, some God. We may not use the name ‘God.’ We may think in terms of Reality, Nature, The First Cause, The Behavior of the World, The Other, The All, The Ground of Being, The Force of Evolution, The Life Spirit, or Things As They Really Are. Each of us creates an image of the supreme mystery in which we find ourselves, and we are always in a relationship with it.” (Quoted in *Transforming Practices* at 41.)

Keeva also refers to Victor Frankl’s book, *Man’s Search for Meaning*. Frankl, a survivor of three years in a Nazi concentration camp, noticed that “some prisoners g[a]ve in to despair and sometimes suicide while others not only survived but even found moments of joy amid the suffering.” *Transforming Practices* at 6. Frankl observed that those who could find meaning in their agony were the ones who survived or even thrived in spite of the inhumanity of their surroundings. “For Frankl, the search for meaning in life is *the* primary human motivation.” *Id.*

After acknowledging the importance of finding meaning in our lives, Keeva examines the sources of meaning: “No matter how times change, the list of enduring sources remains essentially the same:

- relationships
- giving back to society
- creating something that endures
- possessing a sense of divinity, holiness, or awe
- being in love
- working productively
- suffering.

What these sources of meaning have in common is that they all, to varying degrees, suggest a coming together of the outer world and the inner life, each being enriched to the extent that a deep inner engagement is brought to the experience.” *Id.* at 6-7.

Any of these avenues of searching for meaning in our lives can be, and, for purpose of this paper, will be, considered an act of spirituality.

IV. The Role of Spirituality in Legal Culture

Despite the importance of spirituality and a deeper sense of meaning to our happiness and sense of fulfillment, the culture that has developed around the law is almost entirely devoid of spirituality, caring, compassion, and a sense of meaning. In the law we rigorously pursue cold rationality, unfettered by emotional baggage. (This is particularly true in appellate law, where we regularly remind ourselves not to give “jury arguments.”) We are trained to suppress emotions and exalt mental toughness. The adversarial system and our perceived need to zealously represent clients drives us to pursue winning at all costs. We become preoccupied with making money, and the attendant pressures to market, obtain and keep clients, increase revenue, and whatever is required to accomplish those goals. Keeva refers to the law as “a profession that exalts above all else the twin ‘virtues’ of laserlike intelligence and winning — regardless of what they may mean on a human level.” *Transforming Practices* at 8. As a result, “such gifts as emotional intelligence, compassion, and warmth have little standing in the current legal culture.” *Id.*

Consider these other bleak portraits of our profession:

Everyone is a potential adversary. Trust is a mirage on the horizon. . . . Brutal competition, disloyalty, staggeringly long work hours. . . . What really matters is *winning*. . . . never admit ignorance; never let your weakness show (don’t even acknowledge it to yourself); develop a mask that suggests certainty, aggressiveness, strength. . . . *Id.* at 10.

Caring, compassion, a sense of something greater than the case at hand, a transcendent purpose that gives meaning to your work — those are the legal culture’s glaring omissions. . . . Without them, only one criterion remains by which to measure success, one that has nothing at all to do with your need to do meaningful work or to belong to a profession that stands for something worthwhile: money. Where there is no meaning, at least there is money; where there is no joy, at least there is money. *Id.* at 11.

The legal profession has placed an increasingly heavy emphasis on efficiency, on working ‘smarter’ and faster. It makes demands not only on your outer life — in constant deadlines, billable hour quotas, pressure to keep up with a rapidly growing body of law — but on your inner life as well. The problem is that most lawyers have never developed the resources to cope with those demands, let alone find in them the kind of meaning that can make their work more rewarding. *Id.* at 27.

Legal work . . . is sterile and inhospitable to the life of the spirit . . . [and] . . . cut off from the larger society. . . . [L]awyers’ isolation and sense of alienation puts them at risk for all sorts of physical and emotional problems. *Id.* at 16.

Lawyers . . . yearn for meaning, even though the traditional legal culture has neither acknowledged the importance of the inner life to its members, nor invited the possibility that it is in the spiritual domain — above and beyond the ethical guidelines that govern professional behavior — that a deeper flowering of lawyers’ humanity and an attendant leap in satisfaction might be realized. Neglecting the connection has contributed significantly to the malaise that now grips a significant and expanding segment of the profession. *Id.* at xxi.

The profession devalues or forbids very important parts of the human experience. In most high-end firms, there is no place for the life of the spirit, only for the life of the mind. Barbara Reinhold, Director of Career Development, Smith College. (Quoted in *Transforming Practices* at 12.)

I think one of the basic problems of our profession is a loss of individual spirituality. . . . We have lost touch. And I don’t care what kind of spiritual values you have — whatever you are is unimportant — but the fact that we are living in an increasingly technological

and material world which has no time or room for these thoughts is, I think, one of the deepest problems that we as lawyers face. William Hoveler, U.S. Dist. Judge, Miami (Quoted in *Transforming Practices* at 13)

Struggling to meet the ever-expanding expectations of the work place, we end up starving our souls. And when our soul is starved, we can no longer nourish our work, our bodies, or the people who rely on us. We have nothing left to give. Beth Sawi, *Coming Up For Air: How to Build a Balanced Life in a Workaholic World.*

Ironically, the culture that has evolved around the law is anathetical to the origins of laws and lawyers in the first place. As Keeva notes, “In the law today, you run the risk . . . of overlooking the central fact of human life that makes law necessary in the first place — *that we are formed by and exist in a web of relationships.* Yet we sometimes make the law *about* relationships more important than the relationships themselves, allowing doctrine to eclipse humanity.” *Transforming Practices* at 8. Our legal culture runs the risk of devaluing humanity in the wake of organizing and regulating human relationships. We value those who can keep human relationships out of the sphere of law about relationships, and scoff at those who suggest a more spiritually integrated approach:

[Lawyers often come to] the natural conclusion that a ‘spiritual’ mind set . . . is something for other people, fuzzy-headed folks with time to contemplate their navels in incense-filled rooms. Lawyers, on the other hand, need to be tough-minded and nimble. They have neither the time nor the any obvious reason to develop an inner life or to ponder the invisible. The implication is that the two modes of thought — or perhaps more accurately, the two types of intelligence — are antithetical and that, where lawyers are concerned, the twain should never meet. *Transforming Practices* at 26.

Yet the twain should meet, and should become inextricably intertwined.

V. Integration vs. Compartmentalization

Lawyers are great at compartmentalizing (or segregating or fragmenting) their professional life. We work on separate files, for separate clients. We divide our days into billable hours, creating itemized bills that stand as monuments to our compartmentalization skills. In appellate briefs, we present separate arguments, and are careful to limit our discussion to the issues at hand. Yet, as appellate lawyers, we also know that the best briefs are not a collection of sharply segmented arguments with no relationship to each other, but an integrated discussion of arguments where common themes are articulated and coordinated throughout the brief. Yet we seem unable to acknowledge the importance of that same kind of integration in our intellectual, emotional, and spiritual lives.

If told they needed to work on their physical, mental, and emotional health, as well as improve their law practice, most lawyers would embark on four completely separate courses of action. If we could afford it, we might hire a personal trainer at the gym, start seeing a therapist, retain the services of a life coach, and try to talk your partners into hiring a practice consultant. If we even considered including spiritual health into the mix, we might seek counseling with a priest or rabbi, or some other religious leader. Or we might do some reading, or buy some self-help tapes. But it is likely that we would approach these as completely separate areas to work on, rather than as closely related areas that require integrated solutions.

Yet research increasingly reveals that these areas of our lives are undeniably related. Chronic physical illness can affect your mental health and emotional well-being. Stress and emotional upheaval can have profound effects on physical health, and a positive mental outlook and strong spiritual faith can have salutary effects on physical well-being. For example, “Abundant evidence shows that love and intimacy are the most powerful determinants of health and illness — more than diet, the amount of exercise you get, or whether or not you smoke. Your connectedness with other people, the pioneering cardiologist Dean Ornish has pointed out, affects not only your sense of well-being, but also your chances of living a long and healthy life. The flip side, Ornish says, is that isolation (that is, ‘separation’) kills.” *Transforming Practices* at 16.

Yet this “separation” that Ornish and Keeva speak of tends to be the guiding principle of most lawyers’ existence. We separate our inner life or our

spiritual side from our professional life. Then we get overwhelmed and obsessed with the professional life that we have created as a separate entity, and we exclude, consciously and unconsciously, the part of our lives that feeds our soul and gives us meaning and satisfaction. “Any number of factors have contributed to make lawyers feel painfully unintegrated — not the least of which is an almost complete turning away from inner experience. Instead of integration — which you might also think of as balance — separation (imbalance) is very often the hallmark of their experience in the world.” *Transforming Practices* at 14. As we spiral further into separation and dis-integration we get more separated from the very things that we need to be connected to. We should heed the words of Johann von Goethe, who cautioned, “Things which matter most must never be at the mercy of things which matter least.”

Yet we don’t heed those words, and we do find ourselves giving more attention to things that do not matter, and precious little to the things that do. That leaves us feeling dissatisfied and disconnected. “Disintegration takes various forms, some of them more pernicious than others. Those that plague lawyers fall into seven categories:

- Separation from oneself;
- Separation from clients;
- Separation from the law firm;
- Separation from friends and family;
- Separation from life as people live it;
- Separation from the law as an expression of self in the world;
- Separation from the larger profession.”

Transforming Practices at 14-16.

As author, speaker, and job trainer Denise Bissonnette puts it, “We can only live disconnected to soul for so long before something happens to awaken us to the spiritual side of our desires and yearnings. It has been professed by sages and prophets throughout the ages that connecting to a sense of the sacred is the deepest need and longing of the human heart. Something in us knows that we are not just here to toil at our work. We are awakened by a mysterious pull or call to remember from whence we came and to what and where we are going.”

The answer is not limited to carving more time out of our professional lives in order to separately nourish our inner lives and cultivate spirituality, but in finding ways to integrate those pursuits into our professional life. As David Steindl-Rast said in his book *The Music of Silence*, “Sometimes people get the

mistaken notion that spirituality is a separate department of life, the penthouse of our existence. But rightly understood, it is a vital awareness that pervades all realms of our being.” (Quoted in *Transforming Practices* at xx.) This is particularly true of lawyers, whose professional lives are often so demanding that they do not have the “spare time” to devote to other types of personal development. “When a profession demands as much as the law does on most days, . . . the answer must be *at work* as well as at home, with colleagues, with clients, and in your own relationships with your community. If not, with so much of your time being spent at work and recovering from work, dispiritedness is almost inevitable.” *Transforming Practices* at 19.

Thus, it is necessary to find ways to incorporate techniques for developing your inner life and cultivating spirituality into your daily professional life as a lawyer. The next section explores some of those ways that you can “have a vibrant inner life, one that nourishes your professional life so that what you *do* becomes an expression of who you *are*.” *Transforming Practices* at 20. “The great challenge . . . is to return to a concept of work as it has been understood in spiritual traditions for millenia — that is, as an activity in which the inner and outer lives come together in a meaningful engagement with the world.” *Id.* at 27. It is possible to accomplish these goals, not as a separate pursuit from your law practice, but as an integrated part of it. As Keeva has learned through his interaction with many lawyers in his work as an editor of the *ABA Journal*, “Some [lawyers] are consciously pursuing a working model of law practice that, as one Florida litigator has said, is based on the understanding that lawyer, client, opponent, and legal system are all part of a single whole, the great web of life. And they are actively seeking meaning, even as they rack up their billables and put out clients’ fires.” *Id.* at 18. Thus, the remainder of this paper suggests spiritual practices, not to be engaged in separately from the rest of your life, but as practices that can be woven into the fabric of your life.

VI. Spiritual Practices to Integrate Into Your Law Practice

Keeva suggests seven different “spiritual practices” than can be integrated into your daily life as a lawyer. The word “practice” is often used in spiritual disciplines to refer to concrete habits that can put you in touch with very abstract experiences and concepts (such as “yoga practice” or a “meditation practice”). In the professional world, “practice” refers to engaging in a profession (such as a “law practice” or the “practice of

medicine”). But it also connotes a regular, if not daily routine. If you engage in these practices when you feel like it, or when you get around to it, or when your work circumstances change and you stumble onto a block of discretionary time, it is unlikely that it will ever happen. If you consciously pursue these practices in a disciplined way, the routine course of action will eventually have an effect on your state of mind and spirit. Put another way, consciously modifying what you do will eventually have an effect on who you are.

This list is far from exclusive, and there is undoubtedly considerable overlap in these practices. You can choose to attempt one practice, or more than one. These are suggested alternatives, not a recipe. As Keeva says, “Though their emphases are somewhat different, they all have certain things in common, including an accent on:

- cultivating awareness and using it to see more deeply;
- awakening to the inner life that will eventually find expression in all that you do;
- acting intentionally in the world rather than simply reacting to circumstances;
- finding the beautiful, the sacred, the meaningful in life’s everyday events and experiences.

Id. at 32.

A. The Balance Practice

Lawyers tend to be people driven to work hard, accustomed to accomplishing a great deal, and eager to please teachers, clients, and colleagues. Without those qualities we never would have made the grades to get into law school, graduated from law school, or passed the bar exam. And there is nothing wrong with those qualities — they are, in fact, admirable qualities, and responsible for much of our success. But the problem comes with not knowing when to stop, or not knowing when to recognize the law of diminishing returns. Just like the alcoholic who thinks that if one drink makes him feel good, then ten drinks will make him feel ten times as good, those rewarded for hard work often think that working harder and longer will feel even better. As Memphis lawyer John McQuiston puts it, “Practicing law, for those who enjoy it, can be addictive.” (Quoted in *Transforming Practices* at 42.)

The problem with that kind of thinking is that it can cause one’s life to become seriously out of balance. When our physical, mental, and spiritual health become

things that we only attend to when we are not working, and we place increasing demands on our work life, the rest of our life becomes neglected, dissipated and diminished.

There are certain “obvious signs of an imbalanced life:

- working too much;
- spending most, if not all, waking hours on intellectual pursuits;
- neglecting the body and ignoring the importance of physical well-being;
- having rapid mood swings;
- making play into work — taking leisure activities too seriously or becoming over competitive;
- neglecting friends and family;
- failing to take time for quiet reflection.

But there are also less obvious signs, which still indicate a problem with imbalance:

- spending too much time thinking about the past or the future and too little time being aware of the present moment;
- eating unconsciously, without concern for whether you are really hungry or how your food tastes;
- sleeping too little or too much
- frequently feeling restless or irritable;
- rarely or never being aware of the sacred in the everyday;
- frequently going to bed at night feeling that somehow your day was incomplete.”

Transforming Practices at 43.

Balance is often not something that we achieve naturally. We may need to consciously think about striking a balance between our inner life and our superficial external existence; between our intellectual pursuits and our physical exercise; between work and play; between a constant stream of activity and allowing ourselves time to do nothing; between the joy of acquisition and the satisfaction of learning to enjoy what you already have. Keeva suggests some specific techniques for “mov[ing] toward balance in your life:

- Spend time thinking about what parts of yourself you’re neglecting. Your body? Your spiritual side? Your need for friendship, love, or intimacy? Your need for connection with your past and your life story?
- Take ten minutes each morning to think about

the big picture. readings from books about spirituality can be helpful.

- Take some time to become aware of your concept of the divine and its place in your life.
- Map out a balanced day, with time allotted for your financial, physical, emotional, and spiritual needs.
- Allow yourself to do nothing for five minutes at least once a day.
- Ask yourself a simple question: How could I spend my days in a way that would make me feel excited about waking up in the morning. The answer may help lead you toward more balance in your life.
- For the next seven days, keep a diary of your personal and professional time. Notice how much time you devote to each aspect of your life. Then ask yourself if you’d find any adjustments to your time allocation advisable. Are you investing your time in those people, places, and things that you treasure most deeply?
- Don’t wait for a huge chunk of time to materialize before you try these suggestions; find the time where you are now, in the present.”

Transforming Practices at 48.

These techniques might help you to recognize imbalance in your life and help you get started on the road to a more balanced life. But it is important to be aware that, “Practicing balance, like practicing law, is an ongoing affair. You don’t just get it, close the file, and move on to other things. You keep practicing. You get better, wiser, more sensitive to nuance.” *Transforming Practices* at 37.

Achieving balance also may involve not being driven by the constant need for more income. As John McQuiston observes, “You have to get comfortable with the idea of making less money. You don’t necessarily *make* less money — last year I had my best year ever — but you have to be comfortable with the possibility. If it happens that you do well, it happens; but that’s not the objective. For me the only monetary objective is to make enough money to run the family. Beyond that, it’s lagniappe. It’s gravy. . . . One of my favorite lines is from the Tao Te Ching. It says that the only person who is really wealthy is the one who thinks he has enough.” (Quoted in *Transforming Practices* at 44.)

Many lawyers are apparently realizing that they do not have enough, despite generous incomes. In his book, *Authentic Happiness*, Martin Seligman observes,”

“[L]aw is now the highest paid profession in America, yet for many, money alone is no longer enough to entice individuals to enter and continue the practice of law. In fact, the major New York law firms now spend more on keeping their staff than on recruitment, as many attorneys are abandoning the practice of law for other kinds of work that may not pay as much but which will make them happier.”

Lawyers are realizing that the acquisition of material goods is not enough, that there are more important things on the road to a balanced and satisfying life. “Achieving balance is ultimately about realizing you don’t need that much stuff. It’s a realization that, if allowed to sink in, is tremendously healing. It makes so many things possible again — lazy walks with loved ones, reading, contemplation, giving something back to the community — and it provides a chance to make peace with the clock and to see the true value of time. It puts life in perspective.” *Transforming Practices* at 46-47. Or, as Robert Louis Stevenson succinctly put it, a successful person is one who “has lived well, laughed often, and loved much.”

B. The Contemplative Practice

The contemplative practice involves finding time in your day to be still and quiet and contemplate both the big picture, and maybe even some of the little pictures in your life. “Getting off the human treadmill on a regular basis is essential. It’s a basic human need that keeps you sane and contributes to your overall health and sense of well-being. But it is *how* you quiet your mind, and with what quality of awareness you do it that really determines its benefits.” *Transforming Practices* at 50. Any form of contemplative practice can be enriching and fulfilling, whether prayer, meditation, yoga, spiritual reading, or spending time contemplating nature. Keeva’s book provides anecdotal evidence of how a contemplative practice can not only coexist with, but provide practical benefits to, a busy and successful law practice.

One example is Steven Schwartz, a lawyer with a public interest law firm in Massachusetts. He spends an hour every morning and evening in silence, stillness, and meditation. He describes four ways that his meditation practice benefits his law practice:

First, he frequently thinks about legal problems, either outlining and planning briefs or oral arguments, preparing for negotiations, or planning structural changes in his law firm. He finds that his mind operates in a non-linear way and entertains more

possibilities. Because he has nothing to do, his mind is not engaged in a dialogue with the outside world, so thoughts come to him with enhanced clarity and depth. *Transforming Practices* at 51-52.

Second, he is able to connect with compassion. His work is primarily devoted to representing mentally disabled persons, and his meditation practice allows him to connect with the compassion and feeling that inspires his work, and provides sustenance and strength that keeps him going, not by offering an escape, but by allowing him to forge a deeper relationship with the people he serves. *Transforming Practices* at 53.

Third, his meditation practice boosts his energy levels. By reconnecting to the energy that sustains his work, he gets up from meditation sessions with an amazing amount of energy, and then is able to work much longer than many of his colleagues. The practice of law tends to be adversarial and devious, and dealing with those tensions can be exhausting. Meditation helps him recognize the common ground we share with others, and go beyond divisions to release the energy required to sustain them. *Transforming Practices* at 53-54.

Fourth, it allows him to move into clarity about his work. *Transforming Practices* at 54. As Schwartz explains: “It’s about discerning what is really true in the most fundamental way. It’s a question of right understanding. I can see the way in which opposing counsel is trying to take advantage or rattle me, for example, and I can relate pretty quickly to the motive or intention behind their actions. . . . This level always allows me the greatest possibility of seeing those things and therefore allows me the most opportunity to communicate and work with it.” (Quoted in *Transforming Practices* at 54)

As Keeva says about Schwartz: “It takes great commitment and a certain amount of faith to hew to the rigors of a contemplative practice. Any one — or none — of these experiences may arise in a given meditation session. But the rewards — clarity, strength, compassion, and an enriching sense of context — have brought extraordinary depth to his life and his law practice, as has an almost unshakable sense of balance.” *Transforming Practices* at 55.

The second example of a prominent lawyer with a regular contemplative practice is Justin Morreale, a lawyer with the Boston firm of Bingham Dana. Morreale heads the 100-lawyer corporate law section of his firm, sits on the firm’s management committee, and

co-chairs the firm's business development group. He also has practiced yoga for 28 years, and teaches a weekly yoga class to Bingham Dana lawyers in the firm's offices. He describes yoga as "so powerful for lawyers who have been hanging out in the left side of their brain for so long." (Quoted in *Transforming Practices* at 57.) He is amazed at how consistently yoga helps people to overcome stress, and says that it "works for almost everyone." *Id.* at 59.

One of Morreale's lawyer/yoga students, Leslie Shapiro, a business lawyer, says, "I respect a lot of the basic wisdom inherent in it — the idea of listening to the body, keeping the right perspective, not getting too caught up in the moment and losing sight of the larger world, and so on. And I think that anything that reduces the stress people are under and helps them behave more constructively, sanely, and creatively is a good thing. Yoga is definitely good for lawyers." (Quoted in *Transforming Practices* at 59.)

Morreale says about yoga, "It enhances everything in life, relationships, work, and any wisdom tradition that is already there for you. You start to see more clearly, you become more open, and you understand and appreciate more. . . . [E]verything comes through the same door. If you're not open, you don't get the pain, but you also don't get the love, the beauty, the joy. A real key to lawyering is making sure that other lawyers and clients have an easy time relating to you. It's what rainmaking is all about, too. If people feel you're open and you can hear them — if they sense you have some inner depth — they tend to be drawn to you and trust you more." (Quoted in *Transforming Practices* at 60.)

Both of these stories provide examples of busy, successful attorneys who consciously devote a part of each day to the disciplined, rigorous pursuit of a contemplative practice. They, and those around them, say that these pursuits not only do not detract from their law practice, but actually enhance it significantly by allowing them to become more energized, entertain fresh insights, and find deeper fulfillment and satisfaction in their work. "Lawyers who regularly meditate, pray, practice yoga, or spend quiet time in nature or in some similar practice find that it helps them see the world afresh. The events of the day touch them at a level that makes meaning clearer (this may include legal meaning, but is not limited to that). New kinds of solutions emerge for familiar problems, and the interpersonal aspect of lawyering becomes both more compelling and much more rewarding." *Transforming Practices* at 63.

Contemplative practices, like any kind of discipline, require some adjustment, and involve a learning curve. As Keeva cautions, "Start slow. Whatever practice you decide to try, take a little bit at a time. Don't expect too much of yourself; or, if you do, don't get too down on yourself for that. Allow it, and let it pass. Being good at it is emphatically not the point. Let your [contemplative] practice be a vacation from having to succeed, please others, or do things 'right.' Instead, make it a time to just be; to be yourself, as you are in the moment, in your body, awake." *Transforming Practices*, at 66.

C. The Mindful Practice

The practice of being mindful is about trying to be consciously aware — in an accepting, non-judgmental way — of your surroundings and situation. It is easy for people as busy as most lawyers to get caught up in reacting to stimuli, responding to immediate demands and deadlines, and putting out fires, until we are frantically chasing our tails, without any awareness or appreciation of the wonder and beauty of the world we inhabit. "Mindfulness [is] paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally. It's a kind of meditation, done standing up or sitting down, at home, at work, in the car — anywhere and everywhere. . . . It is a practice for developing the inner life that can be done *while you practice law.*" *Transforming Practices* at 69. It is an attempt to keep in the forefront of your consciousness that, "The only way to live is to accept each minute as an unrepeated miracle, which is exactly what it is — a miracle and unrepeatable." Margaret Storm Jameson.

As a specific example of a mindfulness practice incorporated into a legal practice, "Florida Plaintiff's attorney Warren Anderson tries to be mindful of the following things when he's working on a case:

- the essential beauty of life, and the fact that handling this particular case is why he went to law school;
- that accepting representation of another human being is a serious commitment, and should always be treated as such;
- that it is important to always try to see the situation from the other side's point of view;
- that both the case and his clients 'interconnect with the larger web of life';
- that the situation calls for humbleness, restraint, and compassion even while he is zealously representing his client within the law.

Transforming Practices at 67-68. Anderson’s mindfulness practice involves an attempt “to be wholly present to whatever he is doing, thinking, and feeling.” *Id.* at 68.

Keeva talks about one of the most respected teachers of the mindfulness practice in this country, Tarthang Tulku. Tulku is a Buddhist teacher who came to the United States in 1969, and founded the Nyingma Institute in Berkeley in 1972, of which he is still the director. When he came to the United States he observed two illuminating things about our culture.

The first thing Tulku noticed is the “amount of tension caused by the speed with which we live our lives. Unfortunately . . . the intellectual training we get — although invaluable — tends to cut us off from the body and the senses. . . . The mind and body aren’t talking to each other.” *Transforming Practices* at 79. Among other things, he developed a stress reduction course for lawyers, and enabled them to “hit a spot where their minds and bodies had started communicating again. When that happens, things take on a certain vividness. Colors deepen, and sounds seem more melodious.” *Id.*

The second thing Tulku noticed was “how common it is for people to be dissatisfied with their work, devoting long hours to it without experiencing any pleasure, meaning, or sense of intrinsic value. He noticed that people often believe work is to be done in order to get something else — a comfortable retirement, perhaps, or a vacation or a boat — resulting in a perceived division between work and life. . . . What is necessary . . . is that we see the work value of getting a good result as simultaneously being a way to improve as human beings. Work should be not only about achievement, in the sense of getting the job done and doing it well, but also an opportunity to develop integrity, honesty, loyalty, responsibility, and cooperation. . . . [W]ork . . . can come to be seen as an integral part of — rather than separate from — the rest of life, a place where all the same thoughts, sensations, and feelings pertain.” *Transforming Practices* at 80. As Eric Klein simply puts it, “The spiritual dimension can never be amputated from work.”

The benefits of the simple act of mindfulness can be numerous and profound. As Keeva observes, “its effects can be powerful and transformative.” *Transforming Practices* at 69.

[I]t has tremendous practical benefits. When you are mindful of the moment in a

nonjudgmental and open way, you can suddenly see things you never noticed before; new choices become possible. You can see stressful situations with greater clarity and calm; this gives you a chance not to lose your balance, and to face situations creatively and with confidence. *Transforming Practices* at 69.

Mindfulness practice not only leads to a greater sense of self-mastery, well-being, and relaxation . . . but it also deepens the ability to concentrate and, over time . . . leads to an experience of interconnectedness as the fundamental ground of being. *Id.* at 73.

When you pay attention to your thoughts, feelings, and physical sensations — again, moment to moment and without judgment — you can actually *see* how fragmented you may be in a given moment, how your mind, with its reflexively analytical/dualistic bent, can unwittingly shield you from truths and possibilities that don’t fit neatly into any of the prefabricated boxes you carry around. You also become aware of the constant chatter that fills your head — a characteristic not just of lawyers, but to some degree of all human beings — and how merely noticing it makes it easier to get past it to what really matters at the moment. *Id.* at 73.

[I]n being mindful, you can reclaim your life. You can be there more, in a deeper way, for your family, for yourself, for your colleagues, and for your clients. It improves concentration, and allows you to . . . foster creativity and innovation. . . . [Y]ou open the door to your inner life and nourish parts of yourself that want nothing more than to simply be in the moment. *Id.* at 84.

Keeva provides testimonials from practicing attorneys who also practice mindfulness. Susan, a litigator in San Francisco says, “I’m a person who always worked as hard as possible, and the idea of relaxing into my work was a real breakthrough for me — not to mention the fact that a by-product of the enjoyment was increased efficiency. I came to understand what it meant to bring full attention and full awareness and full energy to your work.” (Quoted in *Transforming Practices* at 81.) Or, as Warren Anderson, a Florida Plaintiff’s lawyer puts it, “We all know people who are fully alive, smiling and grateful

almost every time we see them — people who don't dwell on gossip, on the negative, but on the beauty, the wonder, the awe of life. I think to live and move through life like that is the highest of arts. And I think that bringing mindfulness to your life brings you closer to that." (Quoted in *Transforming Practices* at 74.

Consider several techniques for incorporating mindfulness into your law practice and your life:

- Make a point of noticing how much mental time you spend in the future — in meetings before you get there, in the office when you're playing with your kids, in another city when you haven't left home yet.
- Spend five minutes a day cultivating inner stillness.
- Be mindful of the quality of your presence and how it affects other people. Are you keyed up? Distracted? Busting with energy? Bored?
- When you arrive at the office, really be there as you greet each person. Make eye contact and smile.
- Try to see your work as a way to enrich your inner life.
- Keep in mind that efficiency and enjoyment are not mutually exclusive — in fact, together they make a potent combination.
- Make a determined effort to be present, even for the things you have come to do mechanically.

Transforming Practices at 84-85.

D. The Time-Out Practice

Many of us associate the phrase "time-out" with a strategic break in the action at a sporting event, or punishment for a misbehaving child. We might do better to think of it as a well-deserved respite from a hectic schedule, and an opportunity to reflect on the often unexamined headlong rush into a life of constant doing. "When you're a lawyer, doing things — that is, getting things done — consumes most of your time. You set goals and you achieve them; problems solved, hours billed. That's well and good, but it is time to direct more of your attention to accomplishing a new goal: finding a rhythm based on both action and reflection that works for you, so that you don't miss out on much of what is good and nourishing in your practice and your life." *Transforming Practices* at 90. "The most natural rhythm of life — the most satisfying rhythm — is one built on some variant of the action-reflection-action pattern, tailored to fit each individual's

unique circumstances. . . . [T]hese day, such rhythms tend to get subverted by the sheer momentum of events and by the often unexamined assumption that doing things is the sole measure of our lives." *Id.*

The tendency towards constant action, without the balancing influence of reflection, has not always existed, and it is getting worse. "Lawyers commonly complain that they don't get much opportunity to simply sit and think — even about their work. They used to, in the days before fax machines and e-mails and overnight delivery gave them no place to hide from the perceived urgency of each and every matter. If they can't find the time to think about work-related matters, it isn't likely that they are finding time for personal reflection. But they should . . . because time given to such reflection is deepening, and you can't help but bring that depth back to work — in the form of compassion for others and the path they are on, and in a broader context in which to view your work." *Transforming Practices* at 93.

For example, Sandra, a lawyer in Chicago, takes a walk in the park near her office every afternoon. "[S]he focuses on the details of the world around her," her goal being to "tune into the minutiae in her surroundings." "The walks slow her down and bring her attention into her body allowing her to get involved — intimately involved in the world around her by sensitizing her to nuance. They open and relax her mind so that she can take more in when she returns to work. Taking a time-out in the middle of her day gives Sandra the energy and clarity to carry on, renewed and revived. . . . Her daily walks prevent her from becoming resentful about being cooped up with people who make demands on her. Having done something for herself, she is once again ready to help other people." *Transforming Practices* at 88.

There are other benefits from taking regular breaks from our obsession with work. "Breaks from the rhythm of work, of whatever length, can be useful times to ponder your own criteria for success. The more time you make for stillness and reflection, the more those criteria are likely to evolve." *Id.* at 95. "[I]f you find you have lost contact with your personal touchstones, then even small breaks in your day can help you reconnect. The mere act of punctuating your hours with mini-reprieves is a way of staking out your own ground and reestablishing a sense of your own integrity." *Transforming Practices* at 96.

E. The Healing Practice

Historically, the people who eventually came to be known as lawyers were the wise community leaders who were called upon to resolve disputes, minimize antagonism and conflict, and provide organizing rules and principles for a civilized society. We have drifted far from that original function. As Paul Pearsall wrote in *The Pleasure Prescription*, “Instead of becoming harmonious healers of the world, we have become individual worried warriors, fighting to stay alive as long as possible in an increasingly uncivilized society.” (Quoted in *Transforming Practices* at 97.) Or as David Link, Dean of Notre Dame Law School, has said, “[W]e’ve gone from being the people who used to break up the street fights to being the people who are now surrogate street fighters. We used to be the people who tried to bring about peace for our client. And now we’re the bright people who extend the war.” (Quoted in *Transforming Practices* at 106.)

The increasingly adversarial nature of the lawyer’s role in society has limited the manner in which a lawyer can practice her craft. “It used to be that one of the great things about being a lawyer was the number of roles you could play in your clients’ lives. You could be a counselor, a trusted advisor, a problem solver, or even a peacemaker. In theory, you still can. The reality, however, is somewhat different: the lawyer as zealous advocate has eclipsed all other possible roles. . . . Clearly, there are times when advocating on behalf of a client in an adversarial forum is a great and noble role for a lawyer to play, but it is crucial that it not become the only role.” *Transforming Practices* at 101. This largely adversarial attitude is something that not all attorneys find satisfying or fulfilling. “A growing number of lawyers are chafing under the adversarial harness, feeling that it offers an impoverished view both of the legal system and of human nature. Being ill at ease with making it the default approach to solving disputes, they are looking for ways to bring other dimensions of reality — and other methodologies — into the process. Their goal is to work for a greater good, not for the narrow and often Pyrrhic victories that an unfettered adversarial impulse so frequently brings about.” *Id.* at 102.

We have allowed the concept of “zealously representing the client” to completely eclipse the role of healing that lawyers originally embraced. “[David] Link [Dean of Notre Dame Law School] contrasts the lawyer as healer — an orientation he believes a great many lawyers would find deeply satisfying — with an adversarial mind-set that says, ‘I’m just a hired gun.

You tell me you want to hurt the other guy in court, I’ll hurt him in court.’ . . . It’s a version of ‘The client is always right.’ But it is also a version of the client as customer. ‘I think we should be seeing the client as more like a patient,’ Link explains.” *Id.* at 106.

We seem to have lost sight of the fact that many of our clients are hurting and sick and grieving, and instead of seeing ourselves as people who can facilitate the healing process, we limit ourselves to the role of warriors obsessed only with winning in court. “Moving toward healing in your law practice requires developing an integrative approach to lawyering, understanding the kinds of concepts that only recently were seen as soft and touchy-feely in the field of medicine, but no longer are. Research from many sources — medicine, public health, physics — shows that whatever connects is healing; what separates can be lethal.” *Transforming Practices* at 106.

It is important to remember that “being a healer is an attitude, not a specific technique. Anything that helps you cultivate awareness, compassion, inner strength, balance, and self-knowledge will be an ally on the path of healing and the law.” *Id.* at 109. Nevertheless, the following suggestions may “enhance the potential for healing:

- Enlist the client’s help in determining what would constitute a healing result;
- Refuse to take an adversarial role as your center;
- Seek to understand the client in his or her familial, occupational, and social contexts. It’s hard to really understand anyone’s needs if you don’t understand the ways in which they are connected to the wider world;
- Open yourself to the possibility that what the client needs may be either wider or simply different than what you presume. Then allow the client to express what he or she really wants.
- Realize that clients really do want more than just a legal fix, and that they come to you because they want to feel more whole and at peace.”

Transforming Practices at 108-09.

F. The Listening Practice

Lawyers are famous for talking. Whether in court or out of court, whether serving our clients’ interests or our own egos, we like to hear the sound of

our own voice, and we like to be the center of attention. Lawyers are seldom known for excelling at being astute, fully engaged listeners. It not only is contrary to our natural tendencies, it often is not part of our training. “As a lawyer, your problem is probably compounded by the fact that — unless you are a rare case — you were never taught to listen. You were taught to advocate, but your teachers almost certainly neglected to mention that the roots of successful advocacy are in listening.” *Transforming Practices* at 114.

The ability to really listen is so rare among lawyers, and yet so important, both in the practice of law and in our personal development, that it elevates something as simple as listening to this list of “spiritual practices.” “It may seem odd at first to call something as ordinary as listening a spiritual practice. But that’s probably because listening really well is anything but ordinary. . . . In fact, spirituality without listening is hard to imagine. If you’re looking for answers, for meaning, for a direction in life, you can’t possibly find what you’re after without listening, both to the myriad ‘voices’ in the world around you and to the inner language of your instincts and yearnings.” *Transforming Practices* at 112.

Sometimes clients need someone to really listen to them and to deeply hear their stories more than they need a lawyer to file something or obtain a ruling from a court. Lawyers have an unfortunate tendency to gather a few pieces of information, make quick judgments, try to place the client in an identifiable group they have dealt with before, and then dismiss the client so they can take action, get a result, and generate a fee. Then we wonder why we feel strangely dissatisfied at the end of the day. In this kind of world, the lawyer and client often end up being ships passing in the night. “A variety of studies have made clear that (1) clients crave supportive, productive human relationships with good lawyers; and (2) lawyers feel isolated from supportive, productive human relationships. Clearly lawyers and clients have a lot in common. Perhaps they should get to know each other better.” *Transforming Practices* at 112 (citing Marilyn Astin Tarlton, “On Being Human,” *Law Practice Management*).

By really listening to clients, lawyers can not only explore the possibility of connecting with another human being and forming a satisfying relationship, they can also enlist the assistance of the client in the process of healing and resolving disputes. The client usually knows more than we do about the matter at hand, and despite their relative ignorance about substantive and

procedural law, we may be ignoring an invaluable resource if we exclude them from the process. “Welcome the client into the process of problem solving. View your relationship as a joint effort. You can do this only if you are willing to listen. That can be difficult in a profession that is all about words — wielding them, packaging them, analyzing them. Too often they are used as walls or weapons, a means of separating the lawyer from others and keeping the relationship merely clinical. If you seek to dazzle clients with your cleverness and brilliance, you end up alienating them and, in the process, losing the opportunity to experience the satisfaction that comes from connecting on a meaningful level.” *Transforming Practices* at 113.

Listening to clients, adversaries, judges, and colleagues can have significant benefits on multiple levels. “Listening, and feeling heard, are more important than most people seem to realize. For both the speaker and the listener, there are practical, emotional, spiritual, and even physical benefits. Studies conducted by Maryland psychologist and author James J. Lynch, Ph.D., have shown that when we listen to people it actually lowers their blood pressure. . . . Not only does research demonstrate that the speaker benefits when listening is occurring, but it also shows that the *listener’s* blood pressure drops. So even though listening is hard work, it is also relaxing. Maybe that’s the body’s way of saying that it is good to help others — that the need to do so is a basic part of who we are.” *Transforming Practices* at 113, 123.

Really listening means much more than simply pausing in your monologue and allowing the other person to briefly have the floor while you think of your next topic of pontification. Keeva outlines several attributes of good lawyer listening.

- Listening with what Zen Buddhists call a “beginner’s mind,” that is, listening as if you are listening for the very first time, nothing is taken for granted.
- Listening through the client’s role playing, and understanding their concept of how a client is supposed to behave acts as a filter, allowing some facts to be expressed, and others withheld.
- Listening in order to learn from the client, who may know ways to resolve the problem outside your experience.
- Listen to help the client hear himself by engaging in “active listening,” feeding back to the client the meaning you think you heard.

- Listening for, and tactfully dealing with, the client's own listening problems.
- Listening to your own intuition, respecting and exploring hunches, inklings, and gut reactions.

Transforming Practices at 115-17.

Like many of these practices, the listening practice sounds simple, but can be extremely challenging to implement, especially for lawyers who have been practicing a different way for years, and in their mind, getting along fine. It is not something that comes naturally to most lawyers, but requires a conscious and diligent effort until it becomes a habit. "Listening well takes work. It requires a willingness to invest time and energy without any guarantee of results. But you get a lot back. . . . Becoming a good — ideally a masterful — listener leads to better relationships with your clients; often better, more satisfying results in your cases; and more enjoyment in your work." *Transforming Practices* at 123.

G. The Service Practice

When lawyers think of using our law degrees to serve others, we tend to limit our thinking to legal aid, to public interest law firms, or to handling the occasional pro bono case. Yet we should not define the concept of service so narrowly. "You do not have to work for the poor in order to serve; suffering is everywhere — from skid row to the gleaming high-rises of corporate America — and where there is suffering and need, there is an opportunity to come alive in service." *Transforming Practices* at 126. "The legal profession . . . seems often to have lost any notion of what, if anything, it is trying to serve. If the ultimate goal is to serve something larger than any single client's financial interests (though that, too, must be a consideration), if it is to serve humanity by using the legal tools and remedies available to mend relationships and ease social stress, then there is no reason that the lawyer who represents the nursing home or the corporation should not be seen — or should not see himself — as walking the path of service." *Transforming Practices* at 131.

A Houston criminal defense lawyer, Sam Guiberson, explains how seeing the law as an opportunity for service adds meaning to his practice and his life. "The opportunity to turn the dross of routine law practice into something that reinforces your humanity is what you wait for. And this profession gives you that opportunity if you're strong enough within to recognize it when it's upon you and then take

it. In that commitment of self, you find the true reward for what we do." Yet not all lawyer's share Guiberson's view. "Today's lawyers, being overwhelmingly inclined to minimize the importance of their inner experience, are more apt to see personal enrichment as their only purpose, at least in their professional lives. They miss out on the opportunity 'to turn the dross of routine legal practice into something that reinforces their humanity.' Why? because they overwhelmingly lack the inner strength to 'recognize the opportunity when it's upon them.' This is the great challenge facing much of the legal profession — to once again find the path of service as it leads through every area of the law, and to cultivate an awareness of the opportunities it presents for serving humanity at the individual, communal, and global levels." *Transforming Practices* at 134.

Seeing the law as an opportunity for service fulfills deep needs that we have as human beings. "Service is a natural expression of who we are. In fact, some psychologists have posited that we have an innate tendency toward altruistic love, and that what we repress, more than sexual impulses or aggression, is affection and openness. If that is true, then the unhappiness among lawyers makes even more sense. What becomes important is finding a way to serve in spite of a culture that has little time for either affection or openness." *Transforming Practices* at 129. "People who serve others tend to be passionate people. In the needs of others, they see an opportunity for involvement in the very stuff that makes life worthwhile. Such people are open to moments of awe and transcendence in their work because the work is part of a larger calling to be a human being, with all the richness that implies — not a walled off zone from which spirit and passion have been banished." *Transforming Practices* at 129.

Seeing the law as a means of serving others helps a law practice become more than a series of tasks performed, with or without compensation. It becomes part of who you are, and enhances the likelihood of fulfillment. "[S]ervice is a mind-set, an orientation that sees the world and one's place in it in a particular way. Until you see it that way — that is, as an expression of a deep need to help — the world of work will offer you few chances to express a yearning that is all too easy to ignore, and fulfillment may prove to be elusive." *Transforming Practices* at 135.

VII. The Benefits of Integrating Spiritual Practice Into Your Law Practice

In connection with each of the seven spiritual practices described above, I have attempted to include quotations and observations about how that particular practice can not only help you grow as a person, but also enhance the quality of your law practice. As Steven Keeva puts it when referring to these practices, collectively, “The cultivation of a deeper and more vibrant inner life:

- can bring meaning and excitement to your practice;
- can help you relate better with clients;
- allow you to handle the pressures and vicissitudes of law practice with equanimity;
- can make you a better, clearer, more focused and balanced lawyer;
- enhance your value to the legal profession;
- can help you deepen or reclaim a sense of purpose in your work and make clearer how the path you’re on — the legal path — can enhance and deepen your experience of life.

Transforming Practices at xxi.

Keeva also explains how a richer spiritual life can put you in a place where, even in your legal work, you are open to magical moments of transcendence. “[W]hen a sense of the ineffable is present, then awe and even joy begin to creep into the workday — better gifts to take home than the usual frustration and exhaustion. Athletes, artists, writers — like everyone else, they seek moments of transcendence, times when things just click, when they are ‘in the zone’ and suddenly the seamlessness of reality is revealed. It can happen in law practice, too, if you are sufficiently open to the experience to allow such gloriously altered states of consciousness to seize you and send you soaring.” *Id.* at 25.

These spiritual practices can enhance and enrich your personal life to the extent that it changes the person you bring to the office, and that person experiences the work in a different way, and can have a transformative effect on the work, the worker, and other workers. “The purpose of this secondary practice is to bring out the best in you and help you get to know parts of yourself that have been overlooked or pushed aside in response to the demands of a frantic personal life. It will move you toward wholeness, toward accepting yourself for all that you are, so that you can bring your heart and soul to work, find the joy in it, and have more left to give others.” *Id.* at 28-29.

Finally, it is important to remember that these spiritual practices are part of a spiritual path, and not a new series of challenges to excel at and obsess over. The beneficial effects evolve gradually from the integration of the practice into all aspects of your life, not from the attainment of measurable goals. “All of [these] practices work, at least on one level, by restoring some semblance of balance and order in the relationship between the inner life and the outer life. The trick with any of them is to be patient and to realize . . . that . . . it is the path, rather than the destination, that matters most. In the path is the meaning, the joy, and the mystery.” *Transforming Practices* at 31.

I hope these words will at least lead you to assess whether you are on a path at all, to consider new paths to explore and experience, and to choose a path that at least holds out hope for finding balance, fulfilment, peace, meaning, mindfulness, and a richness of spirit in your life and your law practice.

I leave you with these words adapted from an old Irish prayer:

Take time to work
It is the price of success.
Take time to meditate.
It is the source of power.
Take time to play.
It is the secret
of perpetual youth.
Take time to read.
It is the way
to knowledge.
Take time
To be friendly.
It is the road
to happiness.
Take time to laugh.
It is the music
of the soul.
And take time
to love
and be loved.