

# SBCBA Well-Being in Law Week Event Fostering Growth, Grit, and Great Livelihood

BY ROBIN OAKS

I have organized another SBCBA Well-being in Law Week Event for legal professionals that will take place each day from November 3 through November 7, 2025, by Zoom. For a week at noon (12:00 – 1:15 pm) there will be half a dozen nationally recognized professionals sharing a range of relevant topics about fostering well-being for legal professionals.

MCLE credits will be provided for each talk. Additionally, at the end of each presentation there will be a drawing for prizes donated by community companies, including restaurants, wellness and sports services, and products specifically supporting well-being. Note: You must be present on the Zoom call for a chance to win a drawing gift and only one prize per person for the week. You can attend one or more days. A discount is given for signing up for the week-long package. *All* professionals are welcome—including, judges, attorneys, law staff, and law students.

Last year, during the well-being in law event, one law firm had associates meet in a conference room to watch the presentations together. I thought that this was a great example of taking action to cultivate a culture of growth, learning, and engagement to support competence, connection, and excellence. As the SBCBA Well-Being Director and Chair of the Well-Being section, I've provided presentations to educate our local legal community about the many ways that fostering well-being helps legal professionals do their job well. The key words I've chosen for this year's well-being in law event are "Growth, Grit, and Great Livelihood."

Growth reflects our human needs to be challenged at work, feel motivated and engaged, and learn new skills supporting our intellectual, emotional, mental, and physical health. Grit is more than persevering (and definitely does not mean gritting one's teeth to power through until exhaustion!). It involves passion, strength of character and meaning, and tools for building resilience and mindsets of mastery. The nationally recognized professionals presenting each day during Well-being in Law Week will

share compelling stories, cutting-edge research, and evidence-based suggestions for supporting you to feel great and do your job well.

All licensed attorneys are now required to have two hours of MCLE *Competence* education credits. One hour *must* include education about "Prevention and Detection Competence," relating to "prevention and detection of substances use disorders, mental illness, and other mental and physical issues that impair an attorney's ability to perform legal services with competence." One hour of the two hour Competence requirement *may* include what the Cal Bar calls "Wellness Competence" education, covering topics supporting legal professionals' "physical and mental *wellness and well-being* or stress management." This year's Well-being in Law Event will provide 1 hour MCLE credit for each talk and cover specialty credits: Wellness Competence, Prevention and Detection Competence, and Recognition and Elimination of Bias.

The following outlines the Well-being in Law Week speakers who have agreed to share their time, energy, and expertise about fostering well-being and wellness to support you and our legal community.

## DAY ONE

**Speaker:** Haley Moss, Attorney, Author, Advocate

**Topic:** Neurodiversity: Great Minds Think Differently

**Date/Time:** Monday November 3, 2025 (12:00 – 1:15 pm) by Zoom

**MCLE credits:** 1 hour Recognition and Elimination of Bias

Haley Moss was diagnosed with autism as a child, became an attorney in her twenties, and has written many articles and books, one published by the ABA about neurodiversity for lawyers and other professionals: *Great Minds Think Differently*. She is committed to making life better for individuals with disabilities through her advocacy, writing, and consulting nationwide. She is a passionate advocate for disability inclusion and neurodiversity. As a consultant she helps make organizations more inclusive and accessible places for people with disabilities. This presentation will raise awareness about what falls under the "neurodiversity"



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umbrella, how “ableism” affects people (including clients), why lawyers should know and care about neurodiversity, and what contributes to cultivating a neurodiverse legal profession and culture. This presentation will be both informative and transformative. Learn about Haley Moss at [www.HaleyMoss.com](http://www.HaleyMoss.com)

## DAY TWO

**Speaker:** Victor Reyes, (Ret.) District Court Judge, Trainer, Coach, Consultant

**Topic:** Tools for a Balanced Life: Preventing Secondary Trauma

**Date/Time:** Tuesday, November 4, 2025 (12:00 – 1:15 pm) by Zoom

**MCLE credits:** 1 hour Wellness Competence

Judge Victor Reyes has been a legal professional for four decades, serving over fifteen years as the District Judge for the 10th Judicial District located in Pueblo, Colorado. Since 2002, Judge Reyes has facilitated international and nationwide trainings on mindfulness, well-being and wellness in law, judicial well-being, every aspect of addressing domestic violence, the effects of vicarious trauma on judicial officers, and compassionate judicial leadership. Active internationally in organizations focused on judicial well-being, Judge Reyes also leads yoga and mindfulness classes in his local Colorado community, including at the Federal Bureau of Prisons-Camp and STAGES Program at United States Penitentiary in Florence.

Judge Reyes will share some engaging stories drawing from his life as a judge (and attorney) that will raise awareness about “how secondary trauma affects legal professionals on a gross and subtle level.” You’ll come away from this talk with vital tools for preventing burnout and vicarious/secondary trauma, and handling legal stressors with patience, presence, and skillful means for re-balancing mentally and physically. Learn about Judge Reyes at [www.healingjudges.com](http://www.healingjudges.com)

## DAY THREE

**Speaker:** Patrick R. Krill, Attorney, Counselor, Author, Researcher

**Topic:** Research: Perfectionism Paradox and Optimizing Work Engagement

**Date/Time:** Wednesday, November 5, 2025 (12:00 – 1:15 pm) by Zoom

**MCLE credits:** 1 hour Wellness Competence

As a leading authority on behavioral health and well-being in the legal profession, Patrick R. Krill has extensively

researched lawyers and the legal profession. His nationally recognized research relating to the substance use, mental health and well-being of lawyers has shaped how the legal field addresses mental health, fostering systemic change and improving the quality of life for legal professionals. He co-authored the seminal report: *National Task Force on Lawyer Well-being Report, The Path to Lawyer Well-being: Practical Recommendations for Positive Change* (2017). This report launched a movement to make fostering well-being a part of our understanding about what lawyering well means holistically. Prior to launching Krill Strategies, Patrick was the director of the *Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation's Legal Professionals Program*, and as a board certified addiction counselor (and lawyer) he has helped hundreds of legal professionals to overcome the unique challenges they faced on their road to recovery.

During his presentation, Patrick will highlight his research, with a special emphasis on raising awareness about the paradox of perfectionism in law and the impact legal employers' values have on employee engagement and retention. He currently is finalizing a nationwide study that will provide new insights concerning lawyers' well-being, work-life experiences, and mental health. Learn about Patrick Krill at [www.prkrill.com](http://www.prkrill.com).

### DAY FOUR

**Speaker:** Mary Beth O'Connor, (Ret.) Judge, Author, Presenter

**Topic:** Lessons on the Journey from Junkie to Judge

**Date/Time:** Thursday November 6, 2025 (12:00 – 1:15 pm)

**MCLE credits:** 1 hour Prevention and Detection Competence

Mary Beth O'Connor's award-winning memoir, *From Junkie to Judge: One Woman's Triumph Over Trauma and Addiction*, describes her harrowing experiences of childhood trauma, sexual abuse, mental health challenges, and eventual substance use disorder—and her later inspiring journey to recovery. After becoming sober, she attended law school at Berkeley Law, became an attorney, worked in a large law firm in Silicon Valley, and then later was appointed a federal administrative judge. She is a board member for LifeRing Secular Recovery and She Recovers Foundation.

Attend this talk for Prevention and Detection Competence MCLE credit. You'll hear about Mary Beth's path to recovery from "junkie to judge," and learn important information about addressing substance use, the effects of childhood trauma, and mental health issues in the legal profession. This talk will inspire and provide a much-needed roadmap for recognizing what it means to be trauma-informed and

empowered to know how to help both ourselves and others when needed. Learn more about Mary Beth O'Connor at [www.junkietojudge.com](http://www.junkietojudge.com)

### DAY FIVE

#### **Panel Discussion:**

Tammie Chang, Doctor, Coach, Trainer, Author  
Olivia Ash, Attorney, Author, Presenter, Researcher  
Robin Oaks, Attorney, Law Professor, Coach, Well-being Consultant, Presenter

**Topic:** Bridging the Gaps and Building Connections for Professional Thriving

**Date/Time:** Friday November 7, 2025 (12:00 – 1:15 pm)  
"Love Your Lawyer Day"

**MCLE credits:** 1 hour Wellness Competence

For the final day of the Well-being in Law Week Event (that falls on "Love Your Lawyer Day") three panelists who are each in their own way examples of genuine "growth and grit" in action will share well-being wisdom for professionals. I'll join with two accomplished individuals (a physician and attorney), recognized nationally for their books, research and work in the well-being professional field. Each of us has experienced life threatening and life-changing challenges that launched us on paths of learning, training, coaching, well-being advocacy and teaching. In this lively discussion, we'll cover strategies for preventing burnout, loneliness, illness, and dis-ease through cultivating self-care and self-compassion practices, building healthy boundaries and leadership skills, and creating healthy "inner and outer" connections. We'll each share our unique personal and professional perspectives about building powerhouse practices to successfully navigate change and optimize health, harmony, and happiness while working in high stress/high stakes professions.

Dr. Tammie Chang is a practicing board certified pediatric hematologist/oncologist, co-founder of Pink Coat MD, and author of two books: *Boundaries for Women Physicians* and *How to Thrive as a Woman Physician*. She has studied extensively leadership strategies and is the Medical Director of her health system's Provider Wellness Program and Founder and Director of her hospital's Pediatric Cancer Survivorship Program. She coaches individuals and organizes retreats for and trains professionals, advocating for healthy work environments and fostering mental, emotional, spiritual, physical, and intellectual well-being. Learn more about her work at [www.pinkcoatmd.com](http://www.pinkcoatmd.com).

Olivia Ash is an attorney, an artist, speaker, a nationally

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## Well-Being

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recognized researcher about lawyer loneliness, and author of an engaging memoir: *Painting the Landscape of Loneliness, The Drive to Connect and the Strategies to Identify Your Needs*. She holds licenses in the fields of law and well-being education. Her holistic approach to lawyering well includes cultivating creativity as an artist. She has spoken and written extensively related to such topics as: Ask & Act: Strategies to Manage Loneliness; Enhancing Connection through Creativity; Beat Burnout: Well-being Solutions for Balance. Learn more about Olivia Ash at [www.livbalanced.net](http://www.livbalanced.net).

Register now for one or all of the Well-being in Law Week Event presentations! Come to these talks by Zoom with curiosity to learn new skills and foster *growth and grit* (and

receive some MCLE credits and possibly even a drawing gift). Leave with some new ideas, practices, insights, and strategies that will support your life and *great livelihood* as a legal professional. ■

*Robin Oaks has been an attorney for nearly four decades, and for twenty-five years has provided legal services focused on independent workplace investigations and mediations. For over two decades she has studied and become certified in a wide range of emotional intelligence, cognitive fitness, and mind-body healing practices especially useful for legal professionals and the stressors they face. She offers MCLE presentations, PROS training programs, witness well-being support, and individualized coaching sessions empowering legal professionals to thrive in livelihood and life. Contact: Robin@RobinOaks.com or 805-685-6773.*