

The background features a collection of three-dimensional geometric shapes, primarily tetrahedrons and pyramids, constructed from paper. The colors range from light teal to a vibrant green. These shapes are scattered across the frame, with some appearing in sharp focus and others blurred in the background, creating a sense of depth and movement. The overall aesthetic is clean, modern, and minimalist.

CULTURE SHIFT

Tools for Sustainability in Legal Practice



WVJLAP


West Virginia Judicial & Lawyer Assistance Program

WVJLAP


- West Virginia Judicial and Lawyer Assistance Program
- (304) 553-7232
- www.wvjlap.org
- Formalized by WV Supreme Court of Appeals Rules
- WVJLAP operates independently of the Court, the State Bar, and the ODC.

Mission of WVJLAP

To **Confidentially Assist** members of the legal profession to identify quality of life issues, access continuing care resources and engage in an ongoing personal program of recovery;



To **Protect** the interest of clients, litigants, and the general public from harm caused by impaired lawyers or judges;



To **Educate** the bench, the bar, and the public to the types, causes and remedies for impairments affecting members of the legal profession.

WVJLAP Can Help With:

- Stress/Anxiety
- Retirement
- Burnout
- Closing Law Practice
- Depression
- Work-Life Imbalance
- Substance Use including Alcoholism
- Co-Dependency
- Sex Addiction
- Gambling
- Grief, Loss
- Trauma
- Compulsive Behaviors
- Conflicts with Colleagues or Family

Who
WVJLAP
Serves:
All
Members

- WVJLAP serves all members of the legal profession.
- "Member" or "Member of the Legal Profession" means persons who are West Virginia:
 - Judges
 - Lawyers
 - Law Students
 - Applicants for Admission to the West Virginia State Bar.



CULTURE: WHY
WOULD
LAWYERS NEED
HELP?

2016 Atty Substance Use-Mental Health Study

- Landmark study by Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation and the American Bar Association Commission on Lawyer Assistance Programs.
- Nearly 13,000 attorneys surveyed.
- Study will be replicated and studied longitudinally in future.

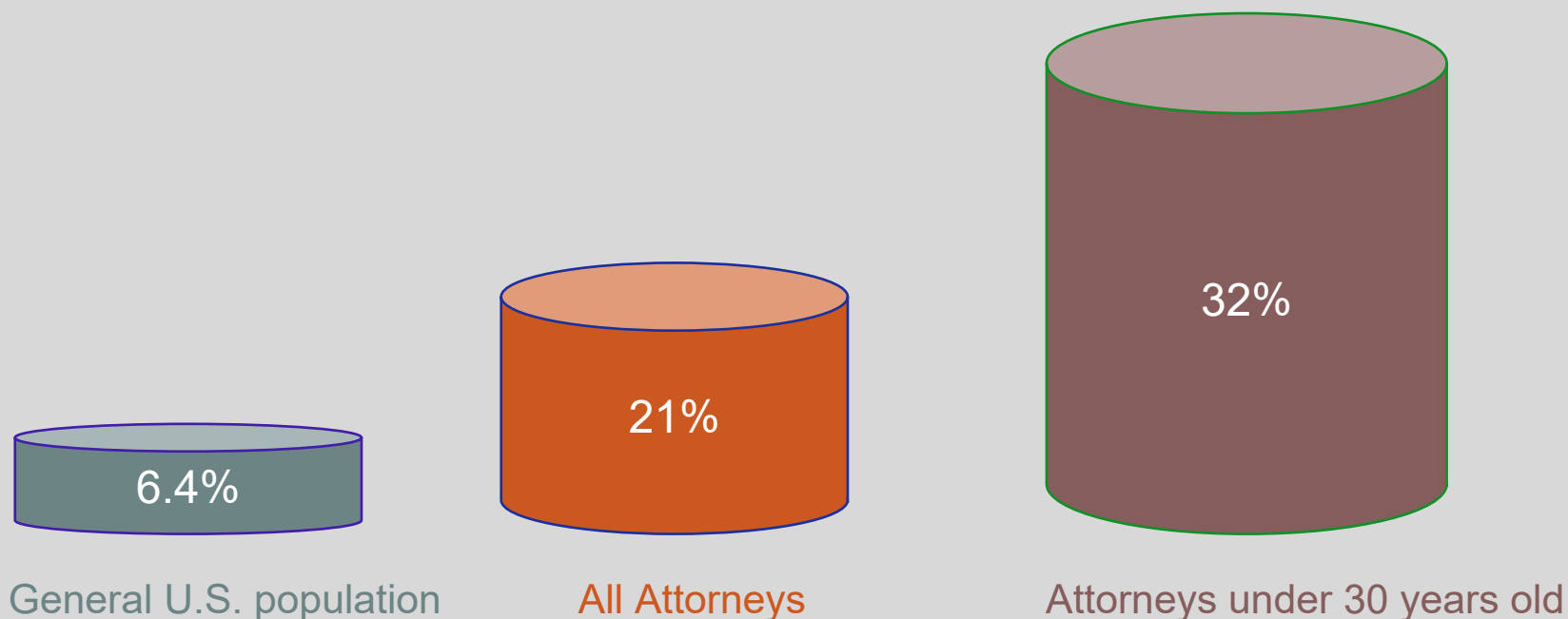
2016 Hazelden-ABA Study Findings

- 21% licensed, employed attorneys are problem drinkers.
- 28% struggle with some level of depression.
- 19% struggle with symptoms of anxiety.
- Younger attorneys (first 10 years of practice) have higher:
 - Problem drinking;
 - Depression;
 - Anxiety.

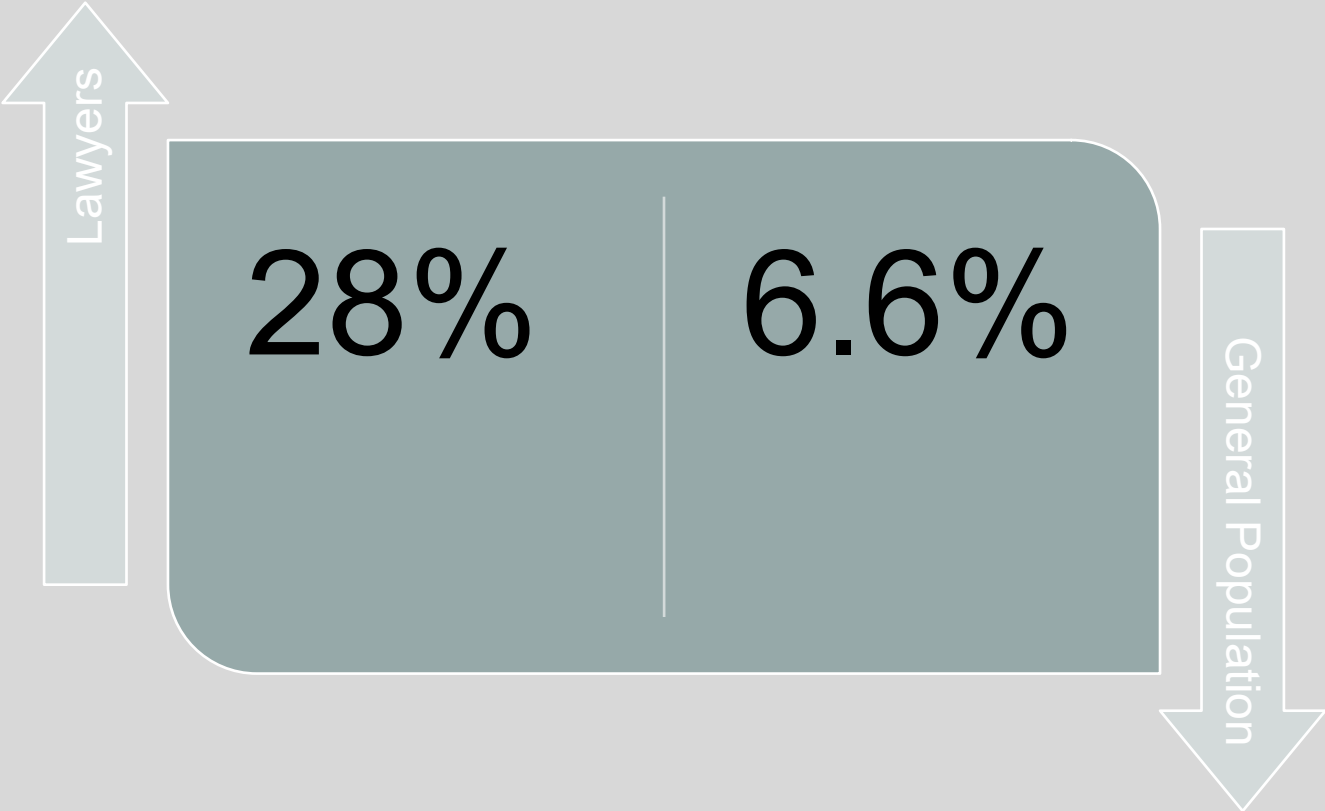
2016 Findings: Problem Drinking

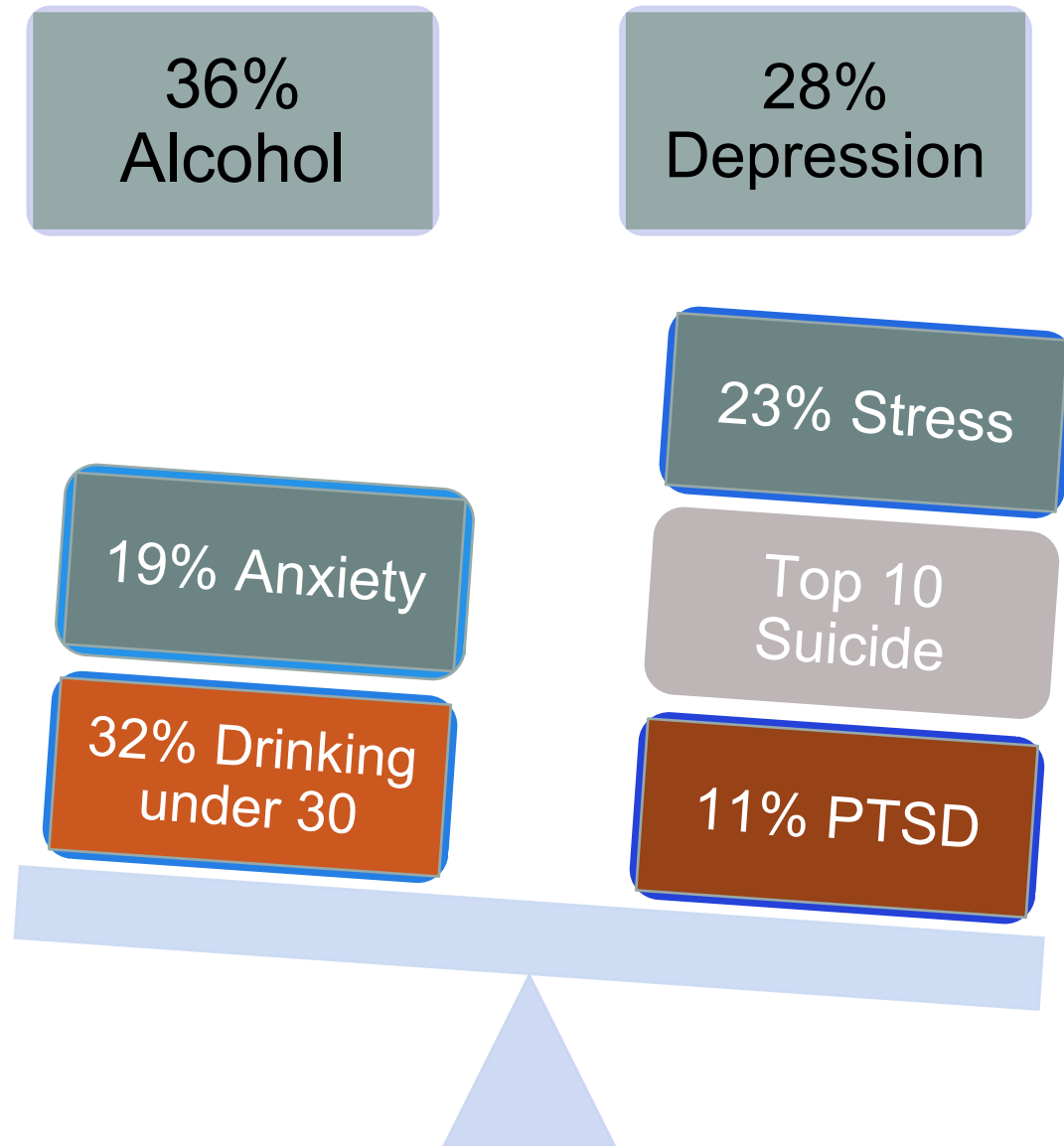
- When only looking at volume (amount) and frequency of alcohol consumed, more than 1 in 3 practicing attorneys are problem drinkers.

1 in 3



2016 Findings: Major Depressive Episode



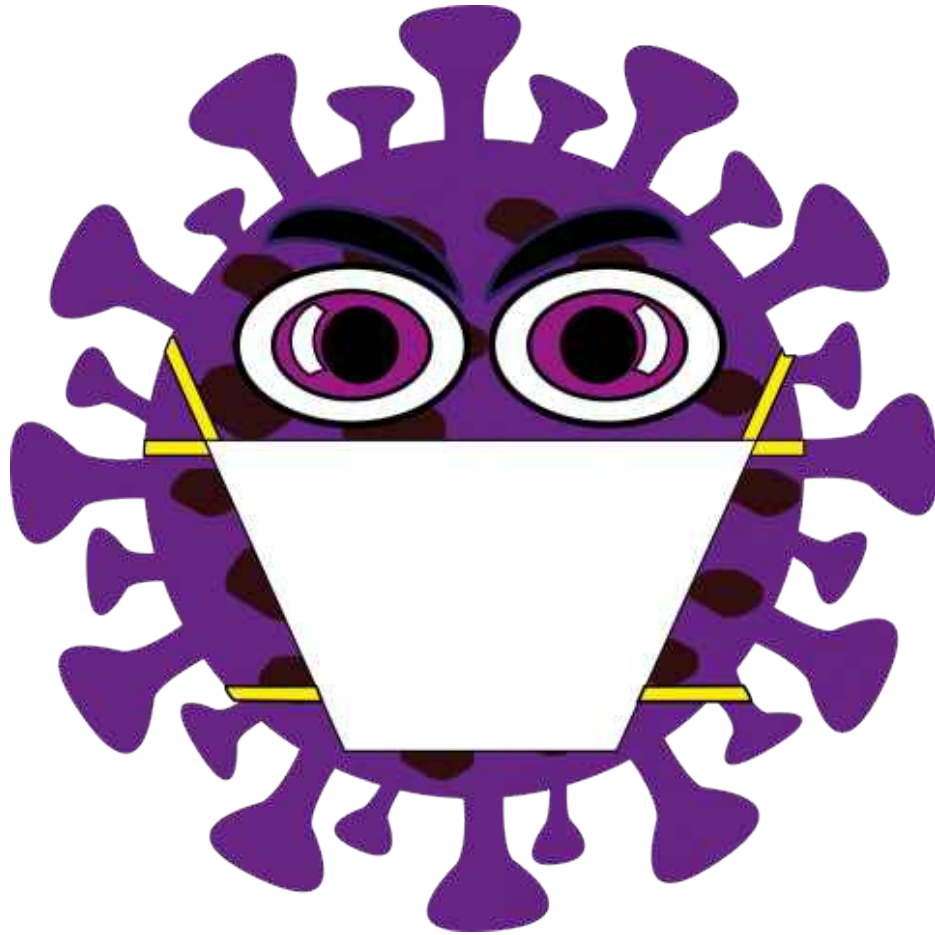


Findings Specific to Attorneys



West Virginia Survey 2018

- 1,346 attorneys completed online survey in December 2018.
- WV State Bar: better understand attitudes, opinion, and perceptions of attorneys on variety of issues.
- Overall, most WV attorneys were satisfied and optimistic about their professional lives (1/3 very satisfied).



West Virginia F-Up Survey 2022

- May 2022 online follow-up survey through WV State Bar - 479 WV attorneys responded.
- Happened to coincide with COVID-19 pandemic.
- Most respondents in private practice, more than 25 years of practice.
- Similar findings, opportunities for improvement.



2022 Survey Key Findings

- **Most (83% v. 84%) “satisfied”** with professional life.
- Most (60% v. 61%) **would become a lawyer again;**
 - 1/3 would probably not become a lawyer again.
- **Excellent/good well-being** (physical and MH) – down 6% in 2022 from 2018.
- **More than 9/10** say the well-being of *other* lawyers is only good/fair.
- 61% said they **would likely contact WVJLAP** if they/family member needed help vs. 52% in 2018.

2022 Survey Pandemic Impact

- 33% say the pandemic has **worsened their mental health.**
- 36% say the pandemic has **worsened their physical health.**
- 2/5 say pandemic has **not changed their alcohol consumption.**
 - Most (67%) say they disagree that alcohol has caused personal problems.





LEGAL CULTURE

CULTURE OF HIGH
PERFORMANCE



CULTURE OF
HAPPY HOUR





CULTURE OF TRAUMA

**CULTURE
SHIFT:**

**TOOLS FOR
SUSTAINABILITY**





**RECOGNIZE
SIGNS AND
SYMPTOMS
(BEHAVIORS)**

MENTOR AND FIND YOUR CHAMPION





Cultivate Mutual Support

“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.”

~Helen Keller

Cultivate Deliberate Resilience



Why did you get into this profession?



What do you get from this work that fulfills you?



What is the hardest part of the work, yet what keeps you coming back?



What is the greater good you are accomplishing by simply showing up?



Seek Individual Support

- Notice how you feel.
- Listen to feedback and observations from others.
- See something, say something.
- Be kind and compassionate.
- Help is health: if you don't take care of your wellness then you will spend time dealing with your illness.

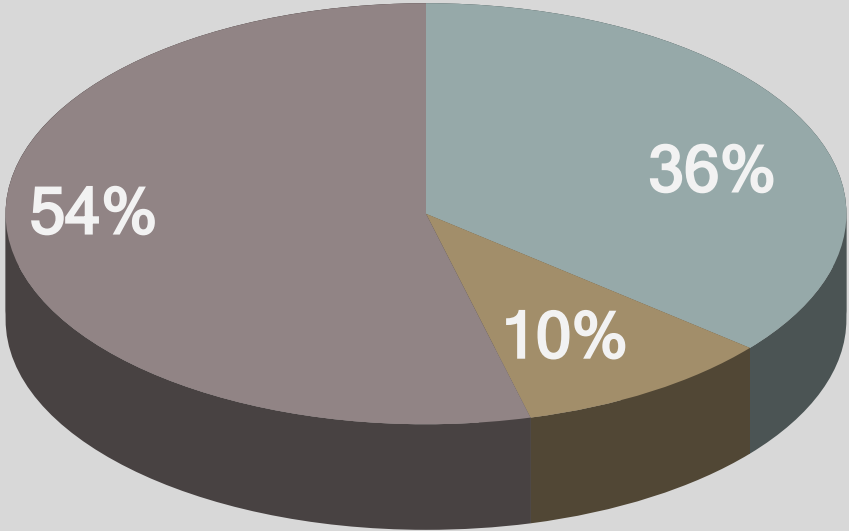
Seek and Promote Workplace Support

WVJLAP can offer workplace support:

- Mental Health/Stress Reduction Support Group;
- Interventions for problem behavior impacting work;
- Lawyers in Recovery Meeting for attorneys in recovery, working personal program of recovery;
- Strategies to promote wellness and sustainability culture in the office, at the firm;
- Interventions for stress, anxiety, burnout, work-life imbalance;
- Conflicts with colleagues, family, including substance abuse, gambling, sex addiction, compulsive behaviors.

Make the Call for Support, Sustainability

Referrals By



■ Self ■ Discipline ■ Third-Party

Confidential Assistance

Rules of West Virginia Judicial and Lawyer Assistance Program, Rule 7. Confidentiality

- Except as required by law, or to prevent the commission of a crime, or to prevent a person from committing serious harm to self or others, all information provided to or gathered by WVJLAP, and actions taken by WVJLAP, shall be privileged and held in strictest confidence and shall not be disclosed, subject to discovery, subpoena or required to be disclosed to any person or entity outside of WVJLAP, unless such disclosure is authorized by both WVJLAP and the Member to whom it relates, or as provided in Rule 6 [*Referrals*].
- The executive director, board members, employees, and agents, including volunteers recruited and covered under Rule 4 [*Volunteers*], shall be deemed to be agents of WVJLAP for purposes of the privilege and confidentiality provisions of this Rule.

DO
WHAT
YOU
LOVE

LOVE
WHAT
YOU
DO

Questions, contact:
Stephanne Thornton,
MSW, LICSW, MAC,
CCTP, CSOTP
Clinical Director, WVJLAP
Thorntons@wvjlap.org

Call JLAP for help, to find and
create balance in your own work
life, or support and promote
balance in others.

(304) 553-7232 (Confidential)

