



MAKE WORK BETTER  
BE BRAVE

# LAWYERS' SUSTAINABILITY REPORT 2023

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## INTRODUCTION

Mindful Business Singapore (MBS) is a ground-up initiative by a group of lawyers in Singapore, inspired by the Mindful Business Charter (<https://www.mindfulbusinesscharter.com>) which was established by lawyers in the UK with the intention of removing unnecessary sources of stress and promoting better mental health and wellbeing in the workplace. As lawyers, we have become inadvertent “experts” when it comes to unhealthy stress – some of us have suffered from burnout, anxiety or depression, some of us have friends or loved ones in the legal community who have so suffered, and all of us have our personal experiences of unhealthy stress. It does not have to be this way – we can choose to work more healthily, effectively and with more enjoyment, for ourselves, our colleagues and those we serve.

MBS' aim is to make work better for the legal community.

Our mission is to promote business and social responsibility amongst the Singapore legal community to prioritise the removal of unnecessary sources of stress and the promotion of mental health and wellbeing in the workplace. To this end, we have identified the following initiatives:

- To establish a business case for the adoption of the Mindful Business Charter or similar initiatives by the entire legal community in Singapore.
- To advocate for change in the way we work at the organisational, profession and legislative levels.
- To facilitate access to mindful business training and support programmes to enable business leaders and other stakeholders to bring best practice to their firms / organisations.
- To coordinate awareness and educational efforts with organisations in the legal community including the

Law Society of Singapore, the Singapore Academy of Law, the Singapore Corporate Counsel Association, the Association of Corporate Counsel, the Singapore Institute of Legal Education and the three Singapore law schools.

- To work with mental health professionals to facilitate access to mental health specialists for members of the legal profession in Singapore.

We are deeply grateful to the many individuals who have offered us their encouragement and moral support towards this cause, to those who have volunteered their time and energy and given us practical support, and to the organisations and their leaders who have generously given MBS a platform to bring our initiatives to the legal community in Singapore, including:

- The Association of Corporate Counsel, Singapore chapter
- The Law Society of Singapore's Practice Well programme
- The Mindful Business Charter, a registered charity in England
- The Singapore Academy of Law, in particular for inviting MBS to lead its 4-session training programme on Personal Sustainability for Lawyers as part of SAL's series on The Art and Science of Wellbeing for Legal Professionals
- The Singapore Corporate Counsel Association's Wellbeing chapter
- The Singapore Institute of Arbitrators, and
- The Singapore International Chamber of Commerce's Legal Services Interest Group.

This Report consists of:

**1. MBS Mental Health Survey.** This section presents the results of MBS' Mental Health Survey conducted from October to November 2021 on the prevalence of depression and anxiety amongst the Singapore legal profession.

**2. The Mindful Business Charter – Remove Unnecessary Stress.** This section outlines the Mindful Business Charter as a framework to have discussions and take action to remove unnecessary stress. In [Appendix B](#), we summarise participants' inputs on sources of unnecessary work stress in the Singapore context ("Red lines") and

on mindful work practices to reduce or remove such stressors ("Green lines"), gleaned from focus groups and panel discussions on the Mindful Business Charter.

**3. Personal Wellbeing for Lawyers.** This section outlines a framework for becoming more aware of our wellbeing needs in our different human dimensions, and strategies which individuals can use for themselves to maintain or improve their wellbeing.

**4. Closing Comments.** This section sets out our closing comments on the Report.

## MBS MENTAL HEALTH SURVEY 2021

Mental health is described by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as "a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community."

With a view to getting an objective sense of the state of mental health in our Singapore legal community, MBS undertook an online survey from October to November 2021 to gain a better understanding of the prevalence,

if any, of anxiety and depression in the Singapore legal profession and create a baseline for comparison with future surveys, to understand if there are issues that need to be addressed in the legal community and if so, if any initiatives that are implemented are effective. The survey was curated and results analysed with the assistance of a clinical psychiatrist, using the well-established and validated Generalised Anxiety Disorder-7 (GAD-7) and Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ-9) questionnaires. The survey was disseminated to members of the legal

### WHAT IS "ANXIETY"?

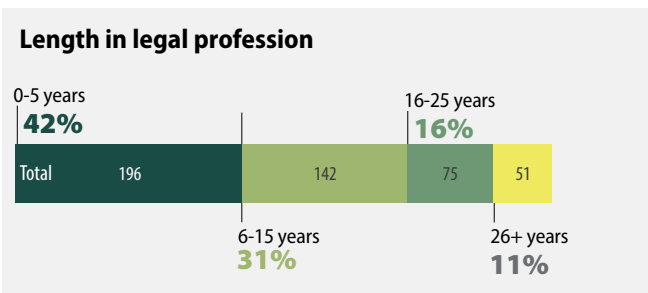
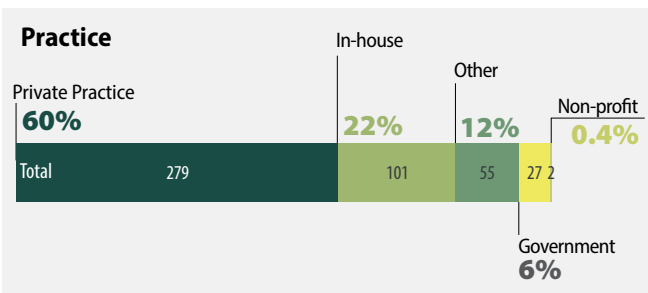
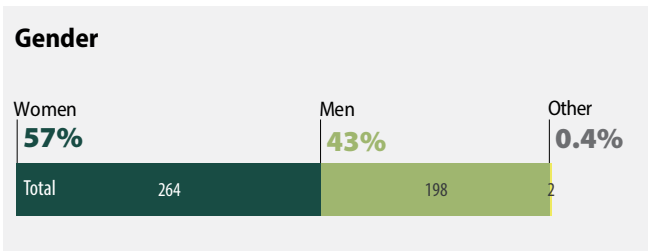
Anxiety disorders are a common group of mental health disorders that are generally characterised by excessive fear and worry with associated behavioural disturbances. The symptoms are severe enough to result in significant distress or significant impairment in functioning. There are several different kinds of anxiety disorders, the more common types are generalised anxiety disorder (characterised by excessive worry) and panic disorder (characterised by panic attacks)

<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-disorders>

community in Singapore via social media, Singapore Law Watch, to members of the Association of Corporate Counsel, Singapore Chapter, and Singapore Corporate Counsel Association, and across the networks of MBS volunteers. The survey was open for approximately 5 weeks and data was de-identified and collected anonymously. A total of 464 unique responses were received, representing about 5% of the approximately 9,830 lawyers in legal practice and in-house.

## SURVEY RESPONDENTS

The 464 survey respondents comprised the following demographics:



### WHAT IS “DEPRESSION”?

WHO describes depression as a persistent sadness and a lack of interest or pleasure in previously rewarding or enjoyable activities, that is different from normal mood fluctuations and short emotional responses to stressors in daily life. It can also disturb sleep and appetite. Tiredness and poor concentration are common.

<https://www.who.int/health-topics/depression>

### WHAT IS “STRESS”?

Stress is defined by WHO as any type of change that causes physical, emotional or psychological strain. Stress is the body's natural response to anything that requires attention or action. A little bit of stress is good for people to perform and protect themselves but too much stress can overwhelm them leading to fight, flight or freeze response.

<https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/stress>

### HOW DOES STRESS RELATE TO ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION?

Stress has a bidirectional\* relationship with anxiety and depression. The role of stress in the cause of depression and anxiety is likely due to multiple factors, including the chronic effect of environmental stressors and the long-lasting effects of stressful experiences during childhood, all of which may induce persistent hyperactivity of the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis. This results in changes in the brain and the body which contribute towards the development of depression and anxiety.

\* One can cause the other and vice versa, and both can make each other worse.

<https://neuro.psychiatryonline.org/doi/10.1176/appi.neuropsych.15030053>

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2352289519300438>



## WHAT IS THE GAD-7 ANXIETY SURVEY?

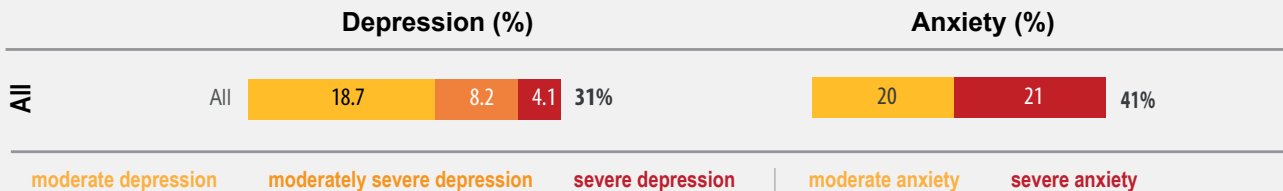
This is a self-reported questionnaire consisting of 7 questions relating to the prior 2-week period for screening and severity measuring of generalised anxiety disorder (GAD). It is often used in outpatient and primary health care settings as one of the means of screening (alongside clinical assessment and additional evaluation) for whether an individual has an anxiety disorder. The GAD-7 gives an indication of whether someone has minimal, mild, moderate or severe anxiety. Further evaluation is typically recommended when the GAD-7 score is 10 or more which indicates that anxiety is moderate or severe, hence we have used this score as our baseline for analysing the survey results.

<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamainternalmedicine/fullarticle/410326#>

GAD-7 Anxiety Survey: [https://adaa.org/sites/default/files/GAD-7\\_Anxiety-updated\\_0.pdf](https://adaa.org/sites/default/files/GAD-7_Anxiety-updated_0.pdf)

## SURVEY RESULTS<sup>1</sup> AND ANALYSIS

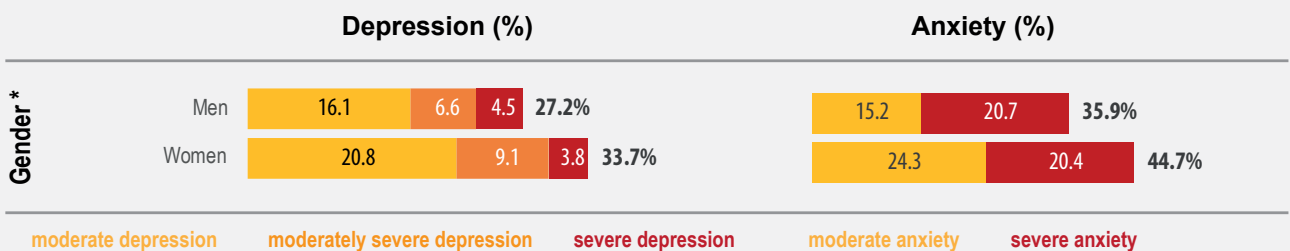
### OVERALL RESULTS



3 in 10 of the respondents (31%) screened positive for depression on PHQ-9. This consisted of 18.7% with moderate depression, 8.2% with moderately severe depression and 4.1% with severe depression.

With regard to anxiety, 4 in 10 (41%) screened positive for anxiety on GAD-7, with half screening for moderate anxiety and half for severe anxiety. Of these results, 112 individuals (24% of respondents) screened positive for both anxiety and depression.

### GENDER



\* We have not included "other" in these results, given we only received 2 responses from people in this category of gender, and it is statistically considered too small a sample group to be representative

More women screened positive for depression and for anxiety than men, with 33.7% of women respondents screening positive for depression (cf men 27.2%), and 45.9% screening positive for anxiety (cf men 35.9%)<sup>2</sup>. In terms of severe depression, men had a slightly higher percentage of 4.5% (cf women 3.8%). The numbers for severe anxiety were comparable across the genders (circa 20.5%).

1 These results represent the percentage of lawyers who took the survey who scored 10 or more on the PHQ-9 or GAD-7, as applicable.

2 The survey results for women and junior lawyers are consistent with the findings of the [IBA Report on Mental Wellbeing in the Legal Profession: A Global Study](#) which, although it used a different means of measuring mental wellbeing, reported that the age group 23 – 29 and women fell below the average global score of wellbeing for lawyers, with the age group 23 – 29 having the lowest level of wellbeing.

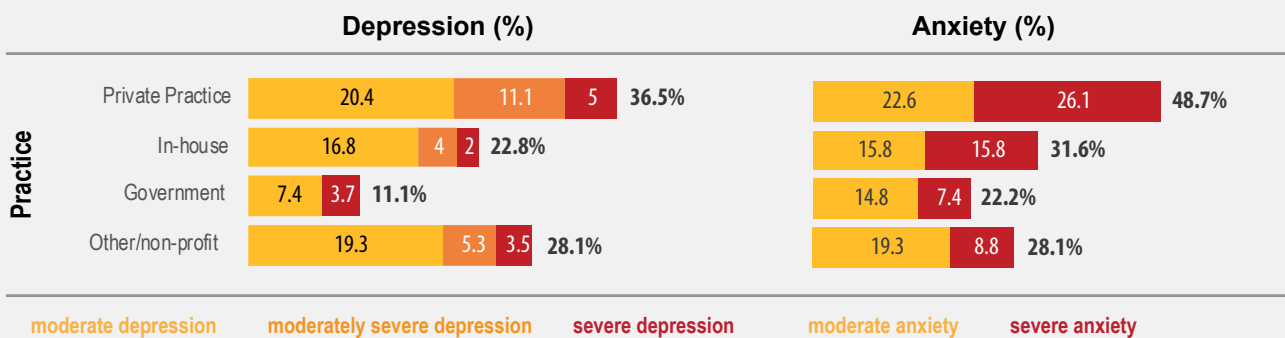
### WHAT IS THE PHQ-9?

This is a self-reported questionnaire consisting of 9 questions relating to the prior 2-week period which is often used in a primary health care setting to screen for the presence and severity of depression. The total of all 9 responses aims to predict the presence and severity of depression. The PHQ-9 breaks down the total responses into 6 categories of no, minimal, mild, moderate, moderately severe or severe, depression. Further evaluation is typically recommended when the PHQ-9 score is 10 or more which indicates that depression is of moderate severity or above, hence we have used this score as our baseline for analysing the survey results

<https://www.bmj.com/content/365/bmj.l1476>

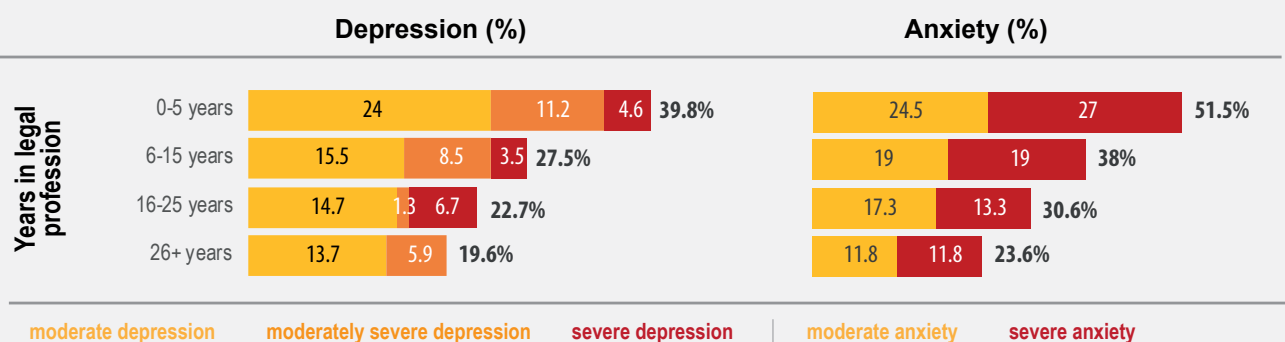
PHQ-9 questions: <https://www.apa.org/depression-guideline/patient-health-questionnaire.pdf>

### PRACTICE



The results indicate the highest levels of positive screening for depression (36.5%) and anxiety (48.7%) for those working in private practice, compared to in-house (depression 22.8%; anxiety 31.6%). Lawyers working in government reported the lowest levels of depression (11.1%) and anxiety (22.2%). The comparative levels of severe depression (1 in 20) and severe anxiety (1 in 4) were also significantly higher in private practice.

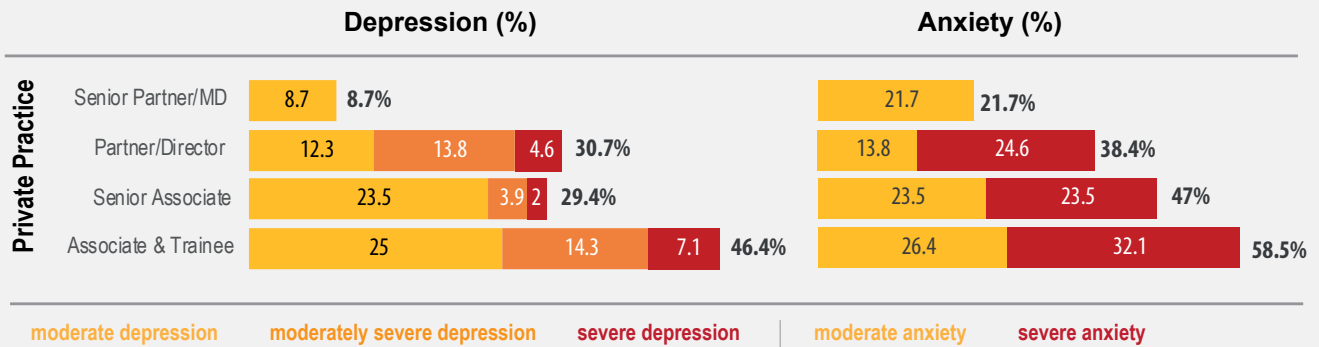
### YEARS IN LEGAL PROFESSION



The rates of positive screening for depression and anxiety are highest in the most junior category of 0 to 5 years (4 in 10 people for depression and 5 in 10 for anxiety), this being the group with the highest rates of all demographics. These rates decline with years of experience, although the longest serving lawyers (26+ years) still showed 20% for depression and 24% for anxiety. This is also reflected in the private practice results, which shows associates and trainees having the highest rates of depression and anxiety. There is a slight increase in the severe depression numbers for lawyers with 16 to 25 years in practice.

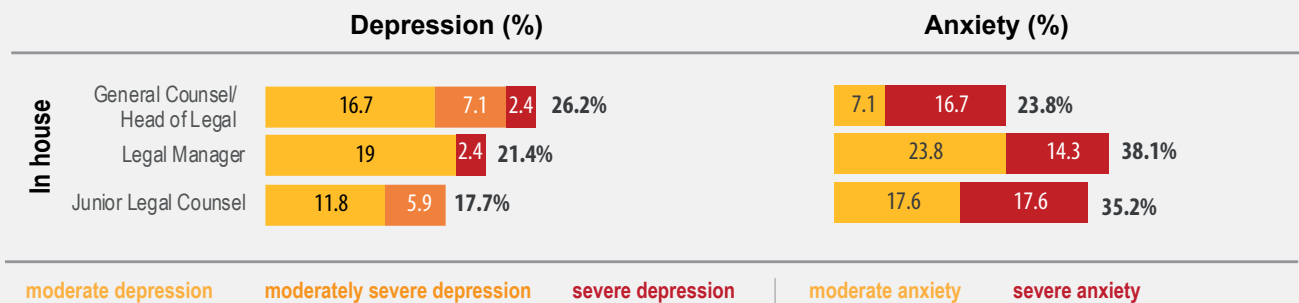


## PRIVATE PRACTICE POSITIONS



The most junior category of associates and trainees has the highest level of positive screening for depression and anxiety overall (46% and 59% respectively), with severe depression and severe anxiety at 7.1% and 32.1% respectively. These rates moderate somewhat as people become more senior. There is, however, a slight increase in levels of depression at the Partner/Director level (30.7%) compared to the Senior Associate level (29.4%).

## IN-HOUSE POSITIONS



As mentioned at “Practice” above, the levels of depression and anxiety for in-house are somewhat lower than those in private practice. However where these levels decrease with seniority in private practice, the most senior in-house level, namely General Counsel, is more likely to screen positive for depression and mid-level Legal Managers are more likely to screen positive for anxiety.

## CONTEXTS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE SURVEY

The contexts and limitations of the survey include the following:

- (a) the survey was undertaken during October and November 2021 whilst Covid-19 restrictions were in place (social gatherings were limited to groups of 2 people) and when the majority of people were working from home
- (b) the survey questions related only to the preceding 2-week period
- (c) the responses received were from approximately 5% of the Singapore legal community<sup>3</sup> so they may or may not be representative of the Singapore legal community as a whole
- (d) there may be a voluntary response bias, so that it may over-represent lawyers who have an interest in, or more awareness of, mental health issues
- (e) the survey questionnaire did not address the sources of the lawyers' depression or anxiety.

Notwithstanding the contexts and limitations referred to above, MBS proposes that these survey results may be referred to for a baseline for the state of mental health in the Singapore legal community at the unique time it was undertaken (namely during October and November 2021 during the Covid-19 pandemic), with further surveys to be undertaken in the future so that the state of the mental health of the legal community can be monitored over time.

## WHAT CAN WE DO FROM HERE?

The survey results offer objective baseline data that lawyers in Singapore do struggle with levels of anxiety and depression. The prevalence of anxiety and depression is a concern not only for the individual sufferers, it is a concern for the entire legal community from many perspectives, including the human, business, reputational, legal and values-based ones.

MBS recognises that an individual's mental health and wellbeing is interconnected with the system or environment in which the individual operates. To the extent that the system includes the environment in which the individuals work, MBS invites the key stakeholders in the Singapore legal community to engage together to understand and holistically address any potential sources of these mental health issues in the legal industry as a whole, so that we generate a professional community which stimulates and values wellbeing and health.

MBS also encourages organisations and legal teams to create working environments in which lawyers can thrive, and empower lawyers to take positive steps towards their own wellbeing.



<sup>3</sup> The Law Society have reported that in 2022 there were 6,273 legal practitioners in Singapore, which represents the private practice sector - <https://www.lawsociety.org.sg/news-media/statistics/>. The estimated size of the in-house legal community in Singapore is 3,500. On the basis of these numbers, the overall participation rate was around 5% of the total legal community in Singapore.

# THE MINDFUL BUSINESS CHARTER

## – REMOVING UNNECESSARY STRESS

One readily-available framework for best practices to address mental health and wellbeing – specifically unnecessary stress – is the Mindful Business Charter. While it is certainly not the only framework available, the Mindful Business Charter was designed by lawyers to re-humanise the workplace by addressing unnecessary stress at the level of the larger legal community, within legal teams, and perhaps most uniquely, between clients and their outside counsel.

### WHAT IS THE MINDFUL BUSINESS CHARTER?<sup>4</sup>

At its heart, the Mindful Business Charter provides a framework that gives us permission to have discussions and take action in a commercial and responsible way to remove unnecessary stress that we might (usually inadvertently) be causing to each other in the way we work.

### THE CHARTER'S GENESIS

The idea of the Charter began in 2017/2018 in discussions between the legal in-house team in Barclays Bank in 2018 in the UK and two of their panel law firms, Pinsent Masons and Addleshaw Goddard. All three had done a lot of work in raising awareness about mental health and putting in place resources for those who were struggling. They recognised, though, that the workplace, and in particular stress in the workplace, was often a cause of the distress people experienced. As a result, they wanted to see what they could do to eliminate unnecessary stress in the way we work, recognising that some stress is probably inevitable.

Persistent stress causes mental and physical illness and also impairs our cognitive capacity - meaning we think and work less effectively.

Stress comes from many sources but some comes from



<sup>4</sup> This outline of the Mindful Business Charter is based on descriptions given by Richard Martin <https://uk.linkedin.com/in/richard-martin-1a90507> representing Mindful Business Charter, UK, who generously gave his time to be keynote speak at a number of these events.



the way we work with each other, within our organisations and also, importantly, between our organisations. It is the avoidable stress in the way we work with each other that the Mindful Business Charter addresses itself to, so that we can work more healthily and effectively.

The Mindful Business Charter recognises that the bilateral relationship between clients and suppliers, for example their external lawyers, is critical. There is much we can do on our own within our teams and firms. However, if the client is also on board with working in a more mindful, thoughtful way, we can all have more courage to talk about the way we work, and its impact upon us, and to explore how we can reduce that unnecessary stress without fearing negative reaction from the client.

The Mindful Business Charter was launched in the UK in October 2018 with 3 banks and 9 law firms as signatories. It now has 120+ signatory organisations from around the world (with 3 Singapore-based signatories)<sup>5</sup>, many from the legal and finance sectors and also from an increasingly broader sector base. The list of signatories continues to grow.

## THE 4 PILLARS OF THE CHARTER

The Mindful Business Charter has 4 pillars, which are not intended to be an exhaustive list. These pillars act as an introduction to ways of thinking and working which people can take and develop to fit their own circumstances, recognising that no one size fits all. The full text of the 4 pillars is at [Appendix A](#). Briefly, the 4 pillars are:

- **Openness and Respect.** This pillar is about how we can make it a norm to discuss mindful, considerate business practices within our teams and with other people we work with, based on respect.
- **Smart meetings and communications.** This pillar is about being thoughtful and deliberate about how we use our time and other people's time.
- **Respecting rest periods.** This pillar is about recognising and respecting the need to switch off, for oneself and for others.
- **Mindful Delegation.** This pillar is about collaborating, instructing, and delegating work with awareness and care.

## RED LINES AND GREEN LINES

In 2021, MBS engaged with the legal community in Singapore through focus groups and panel discussions, with three main objectives:

- To introduce the Mindful Business Charter
- To talk about "pain points" or behaviours which participants perceive as creating unnecessary stress in the way we work in the Singapore context (we call these "Red lines"), and
- To talk about behaviours which participants are already doing, have seen others do, or suggest, to remove unnecessary stress in the way we work (we call these "Green lines").

We are grateful to the following organisations which hosted the focus groups and panel discussions:

- The Association of Corporate Counsel, Singapore Chapter
- The Law Society of Singapore's Practice Well group
- The Singapore Corporate Counsel Association's Wellbeing Chapter
- The Singapore Institute of Arbitrators, and
- The Singapore International Chamber of Commerce's Legal Services Interest Group.

These focus groups and panel discussions drew participants from the junior, middle and senior categories of lawyers in private practice as well as in-house corporate counsel. In line with the values of the Mindful Business Charter, our intentions at these sessions were to invite observations, value respect and encourage effective communication, with non-judgment and non-attribution of comments from participants..

<sup>5</sup> There are to date 3 Singapore-based organisations which are signatories to the Mindful Business Charter – regional law firm ZICO Law, Singapore law firm Farallon Law Corporation, and corporate training business Human Unlimited Pte Ltd.

We have summarised in [Appendix B](#) what participants and panellists in Singapore, both practising lawyers and in-house counsel, have identified as unnecessary stressors (**Red lines**) in the Singapore context under each of the Charter's 4 Pillars, and their actions, recommendations and ideas to remove those unnecessary stressors (**Green lines**).

At least three key themes emerged through the focus groups and panels, which are reflected in the Red lines/Green lines:

- The dominant role of leaders in creating work environments which have more Red lines or Green lines. Participants spoke of the “power imbalance” between leaders and others, and how the attitudes and behaviours which leaders model (even more than what they or written policies say) set the tone and affect the levels of stress in the working environment.
- The fundamental importance of communication, and having the psychological safety to participate in communication, which helps to minimise assumptions, uncertainty, and a sense of powerlessness around work and stress.
- Assumptions that stress and long hours are unavoidable for lawyers are not necessarily true and can be re-examined, in light of the Green lines which participants shared.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO TO REMOVE UNNECESSARY STRESS FOR YOUR TEAM OR ORGANISATION?

For useful guides on how to use the Mindful Business Charter, see the [Mindful Business Charter Toolkit<sup>6</sup>](#) and [Osborne Clarke's “Mindful Business Charter – Implementation toolkit for managers”](#).

Borrowing from the Osborne Clarke toolkit, here is a suggested process for how you could make use of the **Red lines/Green lines**:

1. Share the Red lines/Green lines (and this Report) with your team or within your organisation.
2. Consult with each other as to which item from the Red lines affects you or your team the most. Consider offering a feedback option which allows people to provide their views anonymously.

3. What can you individually and collectively agree to do from the Green lines to improve on that item. What else can you agree to do regarding that item?
4. Make these agreements a standing item for your formal or informal team meetings, and as regular check-ins with each other.
5. Acknowledge your wins; review and rework when there are setbacks.
6. Review your agreements together on a regular basis and make adjustments as necessary.
7. When you are ready, consult with each other and agree on another item from the Red lines/Green lines which you would like to address to make work better.

We encourage clients and their law firms to also have similar conversations with each other and come to an understanding about how they can work together in a more sustainable manner for all.

*“We recognise that there will be times and transactions when long hours and stress cannot be avoided, but this isn't always the case, and we want it to be the exception rather than the rule. In this way, the Charter is brave and commercial. It recognises that we cannot remove all source of stress, nor will change happen overnight – but as a business community we have a responsibility to try to do things differently.*

*Be Brave”*

*Mindful Business Charter*

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.mindfulbusinesscharter.com/the-toolkit>

## PERSONAL WELLBEING FOR LAWYERS

Whilst the legal industry as a whole has a crucial role to play in re-humanising the way we work, as referred to in the earlier sections of this Report, there are a number of ways that we, as individuals, can also become more aware of, and take charge of improving, our own wellbeing to help us feel and work better, and feel more in control of our lives.

### WHAT IS WELLBEING?

The New Economics Foundation, a British think tank which has done extensive work on wellbeing, states that: "Wellbeing can be understood as how people feel and how they function, both on a personal and a social level, and how they evaluate their lives as a whole."<sup>7</sup> While there are various factors that affect a person's individual sense of wellbeing (since everyone is unique), the following dimensions depicted in the model below are generally regarded as important when it comes to human wellbeing:

purpose<sup>8</sup>, physical, emotional, intellectual, occupational, social, financial and environmental<sup>9</sup>. Each of these dimensions is dynamic, interrelated and impact upon each other, for example when we are financially stressed, we experience emotional stress, which may lead to physical problems such as lack of sleep or illness, which may result in being less effective at work (occupational).

In an ideal world, your wheel would be round, however there will be times when one or more dimensions of your wellbeing wheel aren't at optimum level, which may result in a bumpy ride. Having awareness of which dimension of your life needs some extra work can help you identify what you need to do to make your wellbeing ride smoother. Taking each of these dimensions in turn:



<sup>7</sup> New Economics Foundation (2012) *Measuring Wellbeing: A guide for practitioners*, London: New Economics Foundation.

<sup>8</sup> Some wellbeing models refer to spiritual instead of purpose, however they largely cover similar aspects.. For some people, this can be found through religion.

<sup>9</sup> Adapted from [Wellness in Eight Dimensions](#) developed by Dr Peggy Swarbrick, Professor and Associate Director at Rutgers University, New Jersey, USA.



## PURPOSE DIMENSION

This dimension involves having meaning and purpose in life and a sense of fulfilment and peace in living purposefully. Purpose can be described as “an abiding intention to achieve a long-term goal that is both personally meaningful and makes a positive mark on the world”<sup>10</sup> or, in simpler terms, our Why<sup>11</sup>, a vision of our contribution to something personally meaningful that is larger than ourselves. It is a journey, rather than a destination, and plays into all the other dimensions of the wellbeing model. For example, researchers have found that a sense of purpose in life is linked to a number of positive outcomes, including contributing to the health of our central nervous system, better cognitive function, greater longevity and lower

stress levels.<sup>12</sup> Your life purpose is inherent in you, and when it aligns meaningfully with your work as a lawyer and with other aspects of your life, it becomes a personal source of fulfilment, energy and wellbeing<sup>13</sup>. However purpose does not necessarily need to come from your work in order for you to feel fulfilled – it can also be derived from other areas of your life such as your family or volunteering.

### DISCOVERING YOUR PURPOSE: SOME APPROACHES

- **Reflect on the following questions:**

- What things do you really love doing?
- What things come very naturally or easy for you?
- What personal qualities do you have that you love to show the world the most?<sup>a</sup>

Once you have reflected on these questions, consider how you can build your life around those answers in an actionable way to help you live a meaningful and fulfilled life.

- **Alternatively, go through the exercise above reflecting on the following questions instead:**

- What makes you come alive?
- What are your innate strengths?
- Where do you add the greatest value?
- How will you measure your life?<sup>b</sup>

- **Follow the guide on “Why Discovery for Individuals” in the book “Find your Why”<sup>c</sup>, which will help you identify the contribution you make to the lives of others and the impact of that contribution over time**

- **Invest in a life coach who can help you unpack your life purpose.**

a <https://medium.com/@trevor.blattner/the-neuroscience-of-your-purpose-and-personal-mission-f903b2e4f6c1>

b <https://www.forbes.com/sites/margiewarrell/2013/10/30/know-your-why-4-questions-to-tap-the-power-of-purpose/?sh=1a2d308973ad>

c 'Find your Why: A Practical Guide For Discovering Purpose For You and Your Team' by Simon Sinek, David Mead and Peter Docker

10 [The Greater Good Science Center at the University of California](#)

11 'Start with Why: how great leaders inspire everyone to take action' by Simon Sinek

12 <https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/topic/purpose/definition#why-find-purpose>

13 <https://lawgazette.com.sg/practice/practice-support/know-thyself-practice-with-purpose-to-thrive/>

## PHYSICAL DIMENSION

Physical wellbeing encompasses various different aspects, such as adequate physical activity, a nutritious and well-balanced diet, sufficient and good quality sleep, ensuring sufficient time for relaxation and recovery, and minimising the use of alcohol or other addictive substances. Physical wellbeing is an integral part of the wellbeing model, as it can affect your ability to reach your full potential in the other dimensions of wellbeing.

The benefits of physical wellbeing include better physical health, reduced stress, better mood and outlook, boost in brain function and memory, increased productivity, and the prevention of cognitive decline, all of which can help you function better as a lawyer. By being more mindful of this area of your life, and seeing how you can build some of these elements into your day (without necessarily adding extra things into an already busy life), it can boost your physical health and help you face challenges in other areas of your life as they come up.

*The benefits of physical wellbeing include better physical health, reduced stress, better mood and outlook, boost in brain function and memory, increased productivity, and the prevention of cognitive decline.*

### SOME PHYSICAL WELLBEING TIPS

- Look at ways to incorporate more activity into your day, such as:
  - walking meetings
  - getting off the MRT/bus one stop earlier on your commute
  - taking the stairs not the lift
  - using a timer to remind you to stand up and move every hour
- Aim to eat as many whole foods as possible by incorporating more fruit, vegetables and good quality protein into your diet, and avoid ultra-processed foods
- Take healthy snacks to work, such as fruit, chopped vegetables, nuts
- Find healthy eating options near your home and office
- Set a regular bedtime to stick to (where possible), and put your electronic devices to bed at least 1 hour beforehand outside your bedroom to minimise sleep disturbance
- Diarise some relaxation time each week, knowing that by taking care of yourself you will be able to give more to others

## EMOTIONAL DIMENSION

Emotional wellbeing includes the ability to feel positive and enthusiastic about your life, understanding and managing your emotions, feelings and thoughts to support your mental health, and the ability to manage stress. A key aspect of emotional wellbeing is resilience, which is “the ability to withstand adversity and bounce back from difficult life events.”<sup>14</sup>

Many lawyers often have busy days going to meetings, court, having video calls and drafting documents, as well as dealing with their lives outside of work, without ever stopping to check in on themselves and what is going on around them. By pausing and paying more attention to the present moment, you can improve your mental wellbeing, identify your emotions, and counter stress and anxiety. Many studies have shown that by doing this, you can train your mind and change your brain to increase your sense of peace and wellbeing. The key is consistency, rather than how long you practice for.

*A key aspect of emotional wellbeing is resilience, which is “the ability to withstand adversity and bounce back from difficult life events.”*

### SOME EMOTIONAL WELLBEING TIPS

- Focus on what you can control (as opposed to what you can't)
- Check in with yourself and acknowledge how you are feeling
- Reframe a negative situation by focusing on the positive things you can do to help
- Seek to adopt a growth mindset (as opposed to a fixed mindset) when receiving feedback<sup>15</sup>
- Identify three things you are grateful for or that are going well in your life
- Incorporate a daily gratitude practice into family meal times where you share what you are grateful for with each other
- Incorporate a meditation or breathing exercise into your commute, or just sit there, and be present to what is going on around you
- Seek support when needed, whether from a friend or a mental health specialist (see [Appendix C](#) for some suggested mental health resources in Singapore)

14 <https://www.everydayhealth.com/wellness/resilience/>

15 <https://neuroleadership.com/your-brain-at-work/receive-feedback-with-growth-mindset/>



## INTELLECTUAL DIMENSION

Intellectual wellbeing includes continued learning, the pursuit of intellectually challenging or creative activities, being open to new ideas and thinking critically. These have been shown to boost self-confidence and self-esteem, help build a sense of purpose and help connect with others.

For many lawyers, they may feel that this dimension is well met due to the nature of the practice of law, as different cases, transactions and other legal work often have their own unique challenges and will require them to be creative and think critically, hence providing learning opportunities and intellectual stimulation. Others may benefit from seeking out different opportunities to enable continuous learning and have intellectual stimulation.

*Intellectual wellbeing includes continued learning, the pursuit of intellectually challenging or creative activities, being open to new ideas and thinking critically.*

### SOME INTELLECTUAL WELLBEING TIPS

- Look for opportunities to develop a new skill inside or outside work, e.g. try drafting a new type of document or help a different practice group, take up a new hobby
- Take on a new role that opens up new learning opportunities, such as mentoring a junior colleague or contributing on a committee
- Attend internal and external training events
- Incorporate some learning into your commute, e.g. read the news or a book, do a brain game, such as a crossword or Sudoku, use an app to learn a foreign language
- Deepen your current skills inside or outside work, e.g. learn to cook a new recipe, play a musical instrument, reignite a hobby you used to enjoy

## OCCUPATIONAL DIMENSION

Occupational wellbeing relates to your personal satisfaction through work, having a career where you feel you are contributing meaningfully and where you continue to expand your skills. People tend to have occupational wellness where they are working in a career and at an organisation that is aligned with their personal values, interests and beliefs, doing work they find motivating and interesting, communicating and collaborating with others, feeling inspired and challenged, feeling good at the end of the day about the work they accomplished and finding the balance/flexibility between work and personal activities that works for them. In summary, it is about workplace satisfaction.

As people often spend a considerable number of hours at their workplace, finding optimal occupational wellbeing can help bring you more workplace satisfaction.

*Occupational wellbeing relates to your personal satisfaction through work, having a career where you feel you are contributing meaningfully and where you continue to expand your skills.*

### SOME OCCUPATIONAL WELLBEING TIPS

- Reflect on your personal values and how these are aligned with your workplace
- Find the benefits and positives in your current job
- Think about your goals at work, create a plan to achieve them, and then put the plan into action
- Review your current skillset, and consider what additional skills and knowledge will help you advance your occupational wellbeing
- Consider what work life balance/flexibility means, and works, for you
- Work on building connections with your colleagues (see below)

## SOCIAL DIMENSION

Social wellbeing relates to developing and maintaining positive interactions with other people and with local and global communities. As Aristotle said “man is a social animal”, and there is strong evidence that shows we thrive when we feel a sense of connection and belonging and suffer when we feel isolated and alone. Ironically, despite the fact we live in a world of electronic hyperconnectivity, people are becoming more socially isolated than ever and this has been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic, with people more routinely working from home and missing out on regular connection with friends and colleagues at work.

The importance of positive social interactions at work was also highlighted in the recently published IBA Report on Mental Wellbeing in the Legal Profession<sup>16</sup>, which referred to the importance of having a culture of mutual respect, professional support such as mentoring programmes, manager support and social activities, which all contribute towards social wellbeing.

*Social wellbeing relates to developing and maintaining positive interactions with other people and with local and global communities.*

### SOME SOCIAL WELLBEING TIPS

- Talk to your colleagues instead of sending an email
- Organise regular lunches with colleagues or friends working nearby
- Offer to be a buddy for new joiners or volunteer as a mentor for junior colleagues
- Set up a staff interest group, e.g. a book group, exercise class
- Make the time to say thank you in person to a colleague who has helped you out
- Give a shout out to colleagues for their work as a recognition of their contribution
- Take notice of how your colleagues are feeling or acting, and offer to help if they are struggling

16 <https://www.ibanet.org/document?id=IBA-report-Mental-Wellbeing-in-the-Legal-Profession-A-Global-Study>



## FINANCIAL DIMENSION

Financial wellbeing is a state of being where a person can meet their current and ongoing financial obligations, feels secure in their financial future, and feels able to make choices that allow them to live their life to the fullest.

Whilst law is typically regarded as being a well-paid profession, people join the career from different financial starting points and people often have differing financial obligations at different stages of their career depending on their personal circumstances, such as supporting other family members.

A recent survey of members of the legal profession in the UK found that 94% of respondents stated their finances caused them some degree of stress, and just 35% of legal professionals believe they are saving enough for long-term plans.<sup>17</sup> This indicates that a lack of financial wellbeing can lead to stress and mental health issues, so being able to improve this dimension is a key component for improving overall wellbeing.

*Financial wellbeing is a state of being where a person can meet their current and ongoing financial obligations.*

### SOME FINANCIAL WELLBEING TIPS

- Gain awareness of how much you spend by tracking your expenditure for a period of time – this can be done manually or by using a financial tracking app that links to your credit cards
- Set yourself a budget to help you manage your money better, pay off debts, help build a buffer for emergencies and save/invest for your future
- Cut down on discretionary spending, e.g. takeaway coffees
- Invest in getting some independent financial planning advice to help you plan your finances now and for your future.

17 <https://www.brewin.co.uk/financial-report-legal-professionals>

## ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSION

Environmental wellbeing relates to the role of your surroundings in your overall wellbeing, and covers both our micro-environment (where we live and work) and our macro-environment (our communities, our country and our planet). The physical environment in which people live and work can have a large impact on their mental and physical health, with a safe, clean, clutter-free and sustainable environment being seen as conducive to overall wellbeing.

Whilst the Mindful Business Charter is a tool employers and teams can use to help create a more positive workplace environment in terms of how we interact and work with colleagues, clients and others, there are other tools that employers and we, as individuals, can employ to contribute to our environmental wellbeing, both at work and at home, immediately and for the longer term.

*The physical environment in which people live and work can have a large impact on their mental and physical health.*

### SOME ENVIRONMENTAL WELLBEING TIPS

- Assess your work environment both at the workplace and at home and consider what steps you can take to foster your wellbeing, such as making use of natural light, adjusting your ergonomics to make your work area more comfortable, and minimising distractions
- Seek to keep both your physical and digital workspaces organised and tidy to prevent clutter and stay organised
- Set aside some technology free time to give yourself a break from being “always on”
- Spend your work break or some leisure time outside in nature to get some fresh air, and consciously connect with what’s around you
- Contribute to protecting and restoring our natural environment, e.g.:
  - Volunteer with environmental organisations, either through work or in a personal capacity
  - Implement energy conservation practices in the workplace, at home and while travelling, e.g. by switching off lights and aircons when not needed, and using public transport
  - Use available recycling options, e.g. for electronic waste, household refuse
  - Make the switch to reusable products, e.g. using your own coffee keep cup

## PERSONAL WELLBEING ASSESSMENT

Set out below is a suggested approach on how you could assess your personal wellbeing, and then how you could look to make changes in the areas of your life where you feel this would support you best:

- Assess your personal wellbeing, taking into account the various sections of the wellbeing wheel set out above. Rate your level of satisfaction in each section to identify if there are any areas of your life that would benefit from attention
  - Choose not more than one to three initial areas to work on, to improve your chance of success
  - Once these are identified, consider setting some SMART<sup>18</sup> goals around the areas that you are wanting to work on
  - Think about what are some of the obstacles to your goals and how you will navigate them, what will help you remain accountable, how you will track your progress and what support will help you achieve your goals
- Reflect upon and review your progress on a periodic basis, and if needed, readjust your goals to make them more realistic and attainable
  - Seek support when needed from a trusted colleague at work, a friend, family member or a mental health specialist (see [Appendix C](#) of this Report for some mental health support resources)
  - Reassess your wellbeing wheel from time to time to help you identify which areas of your life would benefit from attention at that point in time.

*“Wellness is a conscious, deliberate process that requires being aware of and making choices for a more satisfying lifestyle.”<sup>19</sup>*

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<sup>18</sup> SMART goals are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound. Refer to the article [“Setting SMART Goals for Lifestyle Change”](#) by Verywell Mind which talks about how to set effective health goals using this method.

<sup>19</sup> Dr Peggy Swarbrick and Jay Yudof, Wellness in Eight Dimensions



## CLOSING COMMENTS

The lawyers who responded to the MBS mental health survey, and who shared their observations about Red line/Green line behaviours which create or remove unnecessary stress, have done the legal community in Singapore a service. From their contributions, we have learned some challenging and also encouraging things about ourselves, including:

- From the responses to the mental health survey as at October/November 2021, we have colleagues who were experiencing symptoms of measurable high levels of anxiety (40%) and depression (30%) affecting private practitioners and in-house counsel at all levels of seniority including partners, with junior lawyers in private practice and women lawyers showing higher levels of anxiety and depression than any other group
- Some of our everyday behaviours and habits at work are sources of unnecessary stress to our colleagues (and perhaps to ourselves), even if unintended
- When we feel psychologically safe to talk about how we feel at work without seeking to blame, we are capable of generating multiple practical ideas for changing how we work to remove or minimise unnecessary stress
- It is practically possible to work more sustainably - there are people and organisations within our Singapore legal community that are already intentionally incorporating wellbeing into the way they work and interact with others.

Following on from these learnings, MBS encourages the key stakeholders in the Singapore legal community to engage together to transform the legal profession into one which values and sustains wellbeing, fulfilment and effectiveness for ourselves and those we serve.

MBS also encourages all organisations that make up the Singapore legal community, including law firms, clients, the Judiciary, the Government legal service, as well as the teams and individual lawyers working within such organisations, to purposefully review and continue to review how they can help themselves, their people and each other to work more sustainably. Leveraging on your strengths as problem-solvers, how can you raise more awareness about mental wellbeing at work, make it safe to have conversations, and find out what practical support you and your teams could benefit from?

While recognising that no one size fits all, consider using the information and suggestions in this Report for ideas, for example:

- For your organisation and teams, review section 2 of this Report on “What can you do to remove unnecessary stress for your team or organisation?” for a suggested process to make use of the information in the Red lines/Green lines in [Appendix B](#) of this Report.
- For you as individual lawyers, review section 3 of this Report to assess your personal wellbeing to identify if there are any areas of your life that could benefit from your attention.

## WHAT'S NEXT?

MBS continues to work on the initiatives set out in the introduction of this Report to prioritise the removal of unnecessary sources of stress and promotion of mental health and wellbeing in the workplace. We are immensely grateful for the support we've received and continue to receive as we do this.

To help MBS in our mission to make work better for the legal community in Singapore, we encourage readers of this Report to share their thoughts on this Report via our [LinkedIn page](#).

*Make work better. Be brave.*

# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: THE 4 PILLARS OF THE MINDFUL BUSINESS CHARTER



The intention of the **Mindful Business Charter** is to remove unnecessary sources of stress and promote better mental health and wellbeing in the workplace. We recognise that there will be times and transactions when long hours and stress cannot be avoided, but this isn't always the case, and we want it to become the exception rather than the rule. In this way, the Charter is brave and commercial. It recognises that we cannot remove all sources of stress, nor will change happen overnight – but as a business community we have a responsibility to try to do things differently.

### MY ORGANISATION'S COMMITMENT

- Drive forward the actions and change necessary to support the Mindful Business Charter.
- Promote a culture where people can speak up early about any concerns that they might have with their wellbeing (or the wellbeing of colleagues).
- Make performance against the Mindful Business Charter / responsible business a priority standing agenda item for all client and supplier relationship review meetings.
- Ensure responsible business is included as an area of assessment during significant procurement processes.
- Once established, introduce the Mindful Business Charter to one new member every 12 months and report annually on your broader activity to the Mindful Business Charter community.

### MY COMMITMENT

#### Openness and respect

##### BUILDING TRUST AND EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION:

- Treating internal colleagues and external contacts with the appropriate level of respect and courtesy.
- Discussing upfront with my colleagues, clients and contacts their preferred method of communication and clarifying any relevant implications of an individual's working patterns.
- Asking for and providing feedback to others on a regular basis.

#### Smart meetings and communications

##### ADHERING TO SMART MEETING AND COMMUNICATION GUIDANCE:

- Being respectful of others' time by planning meetings properly (considering who needs to attend / giving appropriate notice / setting clear agendas and objectives) and avoiding last minute cancellations.
- Unless otherwise necessary, allowing people to join meetings by the method they deem suitable, providing video and call-in details as default on meeting invites to allow everyone to participate regardless of their physical location.
- Running meetings effectively, including
  - (a) allowing contribution from participants regardless of location and
  - (b) giving consideration to how different people process information and make decisions.
- Avoiding over-use of email and instant chat and avoiding copying people into messages that they don't need to receive.
- Where multiple communication media are used, agreeing how each is expected to be used and allowing people to log out for periods to enable focussed attention.
- Making use of subject lines in messages and ensuring these are reflective of the message's content.

#### Respecting rest periods

##### CONSIDERATION GIVEN TO THE NEED TO 'SWITCH OFF':

- Where support is required outside of someone's core working hours, giving them options for when that could be (early morning or evening / weekend).
- When sending communications outside of business hours, being clear whether it needs to be read / actioned promptly or considering sending pre-timed messages (so they are not received late at night and at weekends).
- Including working hours / availability as part of email signatures, so people are aware of each other's' working patterns.
- Respecting people's right to take annual leave without the expectation of them checking messages / being on call, and role modelling the same behaviour where possible.

#### Mindful delegation

##### IMPLEMENTING A BEST PRACTICE APPROACH TO COLLABORATION, INSTRUCTION AND DELEGATION:

- Respecting the need to provide sufficient context and information for a piece of work, ideally including the purpose and ultimate recipient.
- When instructing on a task, negotiating rather than imposing a deadline, being transparent where possible on the wider timetable, and promptly communicating timing changes which impact others.
- When being instructed on a task, being confident to flag when a deadline is unrealistic and / or unachievable.

**be brave.**



**APPENDIX B: MINDFUL BUSINESS CHARTER - RED LINES AND GREEN LINES**

Mindful Business Charter Pillar	Identified as unnecessary stressors <b>(Red lines)</b>	Actions/recommendations/ideas to remove unnecessary stressors <b>(Green lines)</b>
<p><b>OPENNESS AND RESPECT</b></p> <p>BUILDING TRUST AND EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussing upfront with my colleagues, clients and contacts their preferred method of communication and clarifying any relevant implications of an individual's working patterns.</li> <li>• Treating internal colleagues and external contacts with the appropriate level of respect and courtesy.</li> <li>• Asking for and providing feedback to others on a regular basis.</li> </ul>	<p><b>OPENNESS</b></p>	
	<p>Mindset of being "responsive service providers" at all costs.</p> <p>Sacrificing communication, personal capacity, personal needs, ideas, accuracy for "responsiveness".</p> <p>System in which reward is built around time/hours.</p>	<p>Mindset of being intelligent professionals who provide value.</p> <p>Having psychological safety/trust/feeling comfortable to communicate despite "power distance" about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• balancing one's capacity and personal needs with "responsiveness" and having that balance respected;</li> <li>• when things go wrong and lessons learned.</li> </ul> <p>Defining what "success" means holistically, incorporating wellbeing and effectiveness.</p>
	<p>Not knowing or having to make assumptions about what partners or colleagues think or expect regarding work or tasks.</p>	<p>Communicate to eliminate having to guess or make assumptions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• very important to have clear discussions and agreements upfront about each other's work responsibilities/expectations/ boundaries regarding work activities and workflow;</li> <li>• provide regular assurances as to what is happening.</li> </ul>
	<p>Regarding agile working policies/ work-from-home/ staggered work hours:</p> <p>- not having clarity about expectations regarding lawyers' agency and responsibility around their work hours and deliverables.</p>	<p>Communicate upfront with each other to build clarity/ empowerment/trust/ownership around each individual's work hours and deliverables.</p>
	<p>Feedback:</p> <p>- Discomfort with giving and receiving feedback.</p>	<p>Having a feedback process and interaction in which giver and receiver of feedback feel safe and feedback process is effective:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recognise that dynamics differ for different individuals and teams, hence interaction and feedback to be calibrated for each person;</li> <li>• create awareness that giver and receiver of feedback have responsibilities during the feedback process;</li> <li>• seek feedback, and act on feedback received;</li> <li>• empower team members who raise issues in feedback to work on solutions, e.g. empower the team to develop their own flexible working arrangements as a team. Let them know they have support where they have demonstrated their own effort and thought to try to make things better;</li> <li>• provide training to raise awareness on how to give and receive feedback effectively</li> </ul>

Mindful Business Charter Pillar	Identified as unnecessary stressors  (Red lines)	Actions/recommendations/ideas to remove unnecessary stressors  (Green lines)
<p><b>OPENNESS AND RESPECT</b></p> <p>BUILDING TRUST AND EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussing upfront with my colleagues, clients and contacts their preferred method of communication and clarifying any relevant implications of an individual's working patterns.</li> <li>• Treating internal colleagues and external contacts with the appropriate level of respect and courtesy.</li> <li>• Asking for and providing feedback to others on a regular basis.</li> </ul>	<p>Stigma about communicating mental wellbeing concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fear of approaching supervisors or colleagues about personal mental wellbeing issues such as stress, inability to rest, feeling overwhelmed, feeling burnt out.</li> </ul>	<p>Trust in communicating mental wellbeing concerns increases when people see:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• that leaders at the highest levels in the legal profession not only talk about mental wellbeing efforts, they are also seen to be implementing changes that systemically foster wellbeing across the legal profession;</li> <li>• leaders are building their own awareness of and sensitivity to stress and the causes of stress, and are actively communicating on and managing the way work is handled and delivered every day in a more humane way;</li> <li>• leaders sharing their personal challenges with mental wellbeing, their journey of recovery and self-care, and that past mental wellbeing issues have not been a barrier to getting good work, getting good performance reviews, and to personal career progression;</li> <li>• the organisation provides structured, fully subsidised mental wellbeing resources, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- access to psychologists on an anonymous, confidential basis,</li> <li>- mental wellbeing first-aid training to develop peer support within the organisation,</li> <li>- structured mental wellbeing advocacy and champions supported by the highest levels of leadership in the organisation;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• that leaders personally treat mental wellbeing at work as a core issue from a business and values perspectives;</li> <li>• the firm treats lawyers with past mental health issues on merit;</li> <li>• that leaders/partners walk the talk on mental wellbeing, that they avoid inconsistency between what they say (e.g. "it's important to respect boundaries") and what they do (e.g. they send emails late, on weekends, or while on holiday).</li> </ul>
	<p>Feeling that leaving the firm/legal practice/the legal profession is the only option for dealing with personal anxiety, stress, burnout or depression.</p>	<p>When the firm is supportive and willing to allow the lawyer to take the necessary time out/long leave from the firm to seek treatment to recover their mental wellbeing.</p>
	<p>Email/WhatsApp messages which sound curt, are hurtful.</p>	<p>Awareness of impact of messaging communications; paying attention to the tone and content of messages.</p>
	<p>Being told to be "resilient", to apply self-care, to get proper rest and exercise as the individual's responsibility, without regard to the power imbalance and systemic issues with work load, work culture/ environment, insufficient resources and work systems.</p>	<p>Organisations which recognise that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• individuals can only do so much;</li> <li>• sustainable wellbeing requires a deeper relook at and change in the way the organisation itself works; and</li> <li>• leaders and clients have a bigger role to play in bringing about change.</li> </ul>
	<p>Stress from operating in areas of ambiguity, from changes in the way we work – e.g. use of technology, new processes, new areas of work, new skills.</p>	<p>Leaders who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• communicate regularly with the team about what is going on;</li> <li>• acknowledge the difficulties and that change will be continuous and also remind the team how they have successfully navigated change before;</li> <li>• ensure training is provided in new, developing areas, and provide team members with both the time and space for such training.</li> </ul>

Mindful Business Charter Pillar	Identified as unnecessary stressors  (Red lines)	Actions/recommendations/ideas to remove unnecessary stressors  (Green lines)
<p><b>OPENNESS AND RESPECT</b></p> <p>BUILDING TRUST AND EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussing upfront with my colleagues, clients and contacts their preferred method of communication and clarifying any relevant implications of an individual's working patterns.</li> <li>• Treating internal colleagues and external contacts with the appropriate level of respect and courtesy.</li> <li>• Asking for and providing feedback to others on a regular basis.</li> </ul>	<p>Fear of making mistakes, of showing vulnerability, of mentioning a different view.</p>	<p>Leaders who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• show they are open to discussion and listening;</li> <li>• show that it is ok to disagree, that they genuinely value diversity of thought;</li> <li>• share stories about personal failures and learnings/ experience of how to bounce back despite having made mistakes.</li> </ul>
	<p>Legal training and expectations that lawyers must be "right", "better" than others, cannot show vulnerability.</p>	<p>Being aware of our impact on how we make others feel.</p> <p>Practice little acts of kindness, and awareness of the impact that has.</p> <p><i>"I have learnt that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will not forget how you made them feel"</i> – Maya Angelou</p>
	<p>Struggling with conditions such as when mind not working well, dizziness, sleeping too much or too little, nervous energy even when not working; having difficulty grasping/accepting that it could be a condition of the brain and not just a physical condition.</p>	<p>Having someone to talk to who listens and understands.</p> <p>Being taught how to identify indicators of stress, burnout, anxiety, depression.</p> <p>Having support to get medical help.</p>
	<p>Resistance by leaders to making work better by removing unnecessary sources of stress – for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• holding the perspective that removing unnecessary stress makes the organisation less competitive;</li> <li>• holding the view that reducing stress will reduce billable hours ;</li> <li>• "back in my day, it was worse...";</li> <li>• "what I went through, they should too";</li> <li>• "strawberry generation".</li> </ul>	<p>Leaders who think about how we can work in better ways as human beings, who recognise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• unnecessary stress is man-made;</li> <li>• the research and evidence that stressful working conditions are ultimately unproductive and unsustainable;</li> <li>• that a paradigm change in old, conditioned thinking is possible and necessary;</li> <li>• that even if people suffered stressful work conditions in the past, that is not a reason to inflict the same on others.</li> </ul> <p>Leaders who empower their individual teams to initiate conversations with their clients about, and encourage adoption of, some thoughtful ways of working better together.</p>
	<b>RESPECT</b>	
	<p>Personal attacks regarding work; shouting and aggressive behaviour treated as the norm.</p>	<p>Have formal firm-wide initiatives that set clear standards/ boundaries for what behaviours are acceptable and not acceptable/will not be tolerated.</p> <p>Initiatives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• published written guidelines;</li> <li>• training at partner and associate levels, for new joiners and for all at regular intervals;</li> <li>• structures and tools which empower employees to say no to unacceptable behaviour and to raise issues of concern, including support for speaking-up and 360 degree reviews.</li> </ul> <p>Critically important for seniors to model the desired behaviour.</p> <p>When junior lawyers are confident about speaking up and saying "no" to unacceptable behaviours.</p>



Mindful Business Charter Pillar	Identified as unnecessary stressors  (Red lines)	Actions/recommendations/ideas to remove unnecessary stressors  (Green lines)
<p><b>OPENNESS AND RESPECT</b></p> <p>BUILDING TRUST AND EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussing upfront with my colleagues, clients and contacts their preferred method of communication and clarifying any relevant implications of an individual's working patterns.</li> <li>• Treating internal colleagues and external contacts with the appropriate level of respect and courtesy.</li> <li>• Asking for and providing feedback to others on a regular basis.</li> </ul>	<p>Litigation tactics, e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• caustic communications;</li> <li>• service of documents/emails at 11th hour; treated as the norm, or justified as "for the client's best interests" or "the client's instructions".</li> </ul>	<p>Treat others as we would like to be treated.</p> <p>Set a respectful tone from the start.</p> <p>Be lawyers who seek to communicate courteously with opposite counsel.</p> <p>Practice of reaching out to opposite counsel at the start of matter to build communication and work through the process of the matter; focusing on resolving the issues rather than targeting opposite counsel or their clients; not giving up even if initially rebuffed by opposite counsel who may need time to trust and respond to this approach.</p> <p>Lawyers who have consciously stopped doing Friday evening document "dumps" and making unreasonably-timed demands on opposite counsel, recognising that these practices are not respectful and can perpetuate tit-for-tat behaviours.</p> <p>Opposite counsel who discreetly help by pointing out a mistake.</p> <p>Be kind to opposite counsel; they may one day instruct you if they go in-house.</p> <p>Alternative Dispute Resolution can humanise the way we work, give parties more control over the process, counsel typically do not resort to underhand tactics.</p> <p>Keep communications simple and short.</p> <p>Adhere to rules 7 &amp; 8 of the Professional Conduct Rules on treating fellow members of the profession with respect.</p>
	<p>Mismatch of values between client and law firm.</p>	<p>Clients who seek to work with law firms which share their culture/values, for mutually beneficial, sustainable relationships.</p> <p>Clients who are willing to "stand down" working with law firms where there is no alignment on culture/values.</p> <p>Law firms which start the conversation about their values with clients, and put such values into their proposals and engagement letters at the outset.</p> <p>When partners in law firms discuss and have an understanding among themselves about the kind of values/behaviours they want in clients, and the values/behaviours they will decline to work with, so as to protect the wellbeing of their lawyers and staff even if some fees are sacrificed.</p> <p>When partners assure associates that they have the partners' support where clients have acted unreasonably.</p> <p>When partners make the call to disengage from clients who act unreasonably towards associate lawyers and staff.</p>
	<p>When clients want "good, cheap and fast" work.</p>	<p>Being respectfully upfront with clients and having them choose "good", or "cheap", or "fast". This will help lawyers to calibrate how the work is to be handled.</p>
	<p>When good work is not recognised or due credit is not given.</p>	<p>Recognise good work, give credit to whom it is due.</p> <p>Create an official recognition system that allows people to recognise a colleague who has gone above and beyond (while being mindful not to encourage unsustainable work behaviour).</p>

Mindful Business Charter Pillar	Identified as unnecessary stressors  (Red lines)	Actions/recommendations/ideas to remove unnecessary stressors  (Green lines)
<p><b>SMART MEETINGS AND COMMUNICATIONS</b></p> <p>ADHERING TO SMART MEETING AND COMMUNICATION GUIDANCE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allowing people to join meetings by the method they deem suitable, providing dial in details as default on meeting invites unless it is imperative that everyone attends in person.</li> <li>• Being respectful of other's time by planning meetings properly (considering who needs to attend/ giving appropriate notice/ setting clear agendas and objectives) and avoiding last minute cancellations.</li> <li>• Avoiding over-use of email and not copying people into emails that they don't need to receive.</li> <li>• Making use of subject lines in emails and ensuring these are reflective of the email's content.</li> </ul>	<p><b>SMART MEETINGS</b></p> <p>Uncertainty around meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• about attendance, e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- in-person or virtual;</li> <li>- not knowing if an individual's attendance is required or optional during entire meeting/ sections of meeting;</li> <li>- not having an option for an individual to feel safe to say that they will not be attending;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• expectations at virtual meetings, e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- whether or not video camera should be on (where video-on implies dressing for a professional appearance on camera);</li> <li>- dress code;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• taking/receiving meeting notes/recording.</li> </ul> <p>Meetings which run over time, stray from agenda.</p>	<p>Better prepared meetings, e.g. :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• before the meeting, plan it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- be mindful of time zones when scheduling meetings.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Communicate in advance about what to expect at meetings including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- meeting agenda – what is this meeting about?</li> <li>- set clear meeting objectives/outcomes sought; highlight decisions to be made/questions to be addressed at meeting;</li> <li>- how much time is allocated to each topic – allow enough time;</li> <li>- breaks in meeting – state when;</li> <li>- attendance - who needs to attend, whose attendance is optional, be mindful not to exclude, whether non-attending invitees will receive minutes/recording of meeting;</li> <li>- meeting flow - organise and time agenda items so that people can attend only where they need to and then leave – recognise when not everyone needs to be present all the time;</li> <li>- record of meeting – whether meeting will be video recorded and/or minutes kept; whether record of meeting will be shared with all invited attendees;</li> <li>- camera – whether on or off;</li> <li>- pre-reading material - provide context and highlight relevant points in materials for the reader;</li> <li>- dress code, if relevant.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• during meetings, be intentional about psychological safety: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- be inclusive; openly acknowledge that everyone has a voice;</li> <li>- encourage participation/ solicit views of quiet ones; ensure everyone has their say;</li> <li>- leaders listen actively, speak less, seek to understand.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• after meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- share meeting notes/recording with all invited attendees where possible;</li> <li>- in the spirit of continuous improvement, review what went well and what can be improved about the meeting process.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Establish protocols for disciplined meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• start on time;</li> <li>• encourage people to be succinct;</li> <li>• focus on desired outcomes not just information-sharing;</li> <li>• have a "rabbit-hole monitor" who ensures meeting is beneficial and stays focused/on point. Rotate the role;</li> <li>• have a timekeeper. Rotate the role;</li> <li>• send in advance material which can be read before the meeting, so that the meeting can focus on discussion instead of "presentation" of material which can be pre-read;</li> <li>• consider having meetings standing up – helps to keep to the agenda, to keep discussions succinct and can raise people's energy.</li> </ul> <p>Have training on meeting protocols to ensure consistency within organisation.</p>

Mindful Business Charter Pillar	Identified as unnecessary stressors  (Red lines)	Actions/recommendations/ideas to remove unnecessary stressors  (Green lines)
<p><b>SMART MEETINGS AND COMMUNICATIONS</b></p> <p>ADHERING TO SMART MEETING AND COMMUNICATION GUIDANCE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allowing people to join meetings by the method they deem suitable, providing dial in details as default on meeting invites unless it is imperative that everyone attends in person.</li> <li>• Being respectful of other's time by planning meetings properly (considering who needs to attend/ giving appropriate notice/ setting clear agendas and objectives) and avoiding last minute cancellations.</li> <li>• Avoiding over-use of email and not copying people into emails that they don't need to receive.</li> <li>• Making use of subject lines in emails and ensuring these are reflective of the email's content.</li> </ul>	<p>Meeting/Zoom fatigue. Too many virtual meetings, especially with work-from-home arrangements where there is an assumption that people are "free" to attend.</p>	<p>Being considerate about meetings, e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• adopt at least one day of the week as "no meetings"/ "Zoom-free" day ;</li> <li>• no internal meetings after 6pm;</li> <li>• having leaders and colleagues who recognise and support each other's need to rest and to switch off in order to bring their best to work.</li> </ul>
	<p>Timing of meetings outside work hours.</p>	<p>Being considerate about time zones:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• if meeting schedules cannot avoid some colleagues attending during their non-work time, consider rotating the meeting timing for future meetings so the same people need not consistently take on unsociable hours;</li> <li>• consider recording meetings so that colleagues in different time zones have the option to either attend the meeting or to listen to the recorded meeting afterwards;</li> <li>• without excluding relevant colleagues in different time zones, give colleagues the option to choose whether or not to join the meeting.</li> </ul>
	<p>Meetings that take too long.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shorter meetings – e.g. plan to end at 25 minutes instead of 30 minutes; 50 minutes instead of 1 hour – frees up 5 to 10 minutes to stay fresh.</li> <li>• Build breaks into meetings.</li> <li>• Avoid back-to-back meetings. Plan for at least 5 to 10 minute breaks between meetings.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>SMART COMMUNICATIONS</b></p>	
	<p>Email subject lines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• which do not clearly reflect the content of the email;</li> <li>• practice of using the original subject line in email chain even if no longer descriptive.</li> </ul>	<p>Have email subject lines which clearly reflect the content of the email to make finding relevant emails easier.</p>
	<p>Receiving communications through multiple channels e.g. via emails, WhatsApp, Telegram, WeChat, and multiple group chats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- repetition of messages, repetition of reading and replying over multiple channels and group chats;</li> <li>- blurs boundary between work and personal life.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and designate mode of communication on work matters, avoid multiple communication channels.</li> <li>• Be disciplined about communicating through designated channels.</li> <li>• Consider having clear policy to communicate all work matter messages through emails only, so that there is only one platform to check and to respond on – this is also safer from a record-keeping, data protection, risk-management viewpoint.</li> <li>• Consider whether face-to-face would be better than email.</li> <li>• Even without written policy, each person has personal responsibility to be aware of impact on others of his/ her mode of communications.</li> </ul>
	<p>Emails after working hours.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree on email etiquette/protocols about keeping emails to office hours.</li> <li>• Use IT/email settings to delay sending emails until office hours.</li> <li>• Let colleagues know when one will routinely not be available, e.g. 6pm-9pm family time/bedtime.</li> <li>• Emails which include a note that recipient need not respond to sender outside their working hours.</li> <li>• Out-of-office response message which states recipient's working hours.</li> <li>• Even better if people including leaders, do not send such emails at all after working hours.</li> </ul>
<p>Timing of emails – email "flood" at the start of working hours</p>	<p>Phase timing for sending emails.</p>	



Mindful Business Charter Pillar	Identified as unnecessary stressors  (Red lines)	Actions/recommendations/ideas to remove unnecessary stressors  (Green lines)
<p><b>RESPECTING REST PERIODS</b></p> <p>CONSIDERATION GIVEN TO THE NEED TO 'SWITCH OFF':</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where support is required outside of someone's core working hours, giving them options for when that could be (early morning or evening/weekend).</li> <li>When sending emails outside business hours, being clear in the title whether it needs to be read/actioned promptly or considering sending pre-timed emails (so emails are not received late at night and at weekends).</li> <li>Including working hours/availability as part of email signatures, so people are aware of each other's working patterns.</li> <li>Respecting people's right to take annual leave without the expectation of them checking emails/being on call, and role modelling the same behaviour where possible.</li> </ul>	<p><b>REST PERIODS</b></p> <p>Leave/holidays not taken or respected.</p> <p>When leaders view team members who are on leave as team members who "have time", and send emails to team members on leave with the expectation of a reply.</p> <p>When leaders on leave work/take calls intending to "be with" the team, setting poor example to junior lawyers regarding sanctity of leave.</p> <p>When lawyers on leave feel insecure about losing their client.</p> <p>Expectations that with technology, a person should be reachable and therefore should be checking emails and responding even when on leave.</p> <p>Expectations that people should be on top of things as soon as they return from leave, therefore expecting them to keep track of matters and to clear emails while on leave.</p> <p>Instructions that come in after work hours, on Friday evenings or weekends, with weekend or Monday deadlines which require lawyers to work outside work hours.</p> <p>Clients who expect advice, calls, responses during non-work hours and weekends – sometimes because they haven't had time during the week.</p>	<p>Establish rules regarding taking mandatory annual leave, emphasise importance of taking and clearing annual leave.</p> <p>Have an official system (stated in handbooks/policies) for proper leave preparation and handover procedures and management of files by colleagues including partners. Colleagues who handle files/duties of individual on leave know that someone at the appropriate level of seniority and expertise will cover for them when it is their turn to be on leave.</p> <p>Having trust between colleagues when covering for leave.</p> <p>Plan leave calendar with rest of team/internal client.</p> <p>Colleagues who know how to respect each other's rest time, knowing it will be reciprocated.</p> <p>Not having only one person managing a matter.</p> <p>Out-of-office messages which are mandatory as part of office's requirements and guidelines.</p> <p>Set boundaries and conditions in written policy for situations when and how a person on leave can be contacted, and communicate policy to all.</p> <p>Recognising that we can and do justify why we work during our rest periods/leave, and that it is important that we draw the line for ourselves and for the sake of others.</p> <p>Leaders who set the right tone and role model respect for their own rest periods, so that team members feel safe to be fully offline while on leave.</p> <p>Compulsory sabbaticals for everyone, not just seniors.</p> <p>Mandatory "Out of office" messages, with no expectation of response from the individual on leave.</p> <p>No meetings for at least one work day after individual returns from leave, to allow individual returning from leave to catch up and ease back into work.</p> <p>Leaders who manage clients' expectations so that weekends/rest time of team are respected.</p> <p>Leaders who actively make the call for the team as to whether or not clients' deadlines are genuinely unavoidable.</p> <p>For non-essential deadlines, feeling safe to send brief "holding" emails acknowledging receipt of email and stating a realistic time during work hours/work days by when the response will be sent.</p> <p>Having leaders who manage such clients' expectations;</p> <p>When leaders choose to disengage from acting for clients who consistently do not or are not able to respect the teams' work times and wellbeing.</p>

Mindful Business Charter Pillar	Identified as unnecessary stressors  (Red lines)	Actions/recommendations/ideas to remove unnecessary stressors  (Green lines)
<p><b>RESPECTING REST PERIODS</b></p> <p>CONSIDERATION GIVEN TO THE NEED TO 'SWITCH OFF':</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where support is required outside of someone's core working hours, giving them options for when that could be (early morning or evening/weekend).</li> <li>When sending emails outside business hours, being clear in the title whether it needs to be read/actioned promptly or considering sending pre-timed emails (so emails are not received late at night and at weekends).</li> <li>Including working hours/availability as part of email signatures, so people are aware of each other's working patterns.</li> <li>Respecting people's right to take annual leave without the expectation of them checking emails/being on call, and role modelling the same behaviour where possible.</li> </ul>	<p>Lunch breaks not respected – when meetings, training sessions are scheduled over lunchtime.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognising people need a break to eat properly so that they can be focused, productive and function at best levels.</li> <li>Not scheduling meetings during lunchtime.</li> <li>If meetings are unavoidable during lunchtime, ensure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>these are on, and are stated to be on, non-mandatory topics;</li> <li>people can feel safe to decline attending without being disadvantaged.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	<p>Not being allowed to set "Out of Office" messages</p>	<p>Regular reminders that everyone has a right to be out of office and should post their "Out of Office" message.</p>
	<p>Culture of not taking leave, of not having the "luxury" of cover during leave.</p>	<p>Having an accepted culture which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>makes clear that everyone needs and deserves a break, and sends regular reminders on this;</li> <li>encourages people to take leave in decent blocks of time so as to get adequate rest;</li> <li>discourages cancelling leave;</li> <li>discourages continuing to work during leave;</li> <li>leverages technology for reminders to manage handover before the leave date.</li> </ul>
	<p>Culture of treating stress and long work hours as the norm.</p>	<p>Having a culture which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>makes working late the exception rather than the rule;</li> <li>sees consistently working late as a red flag needing attention, e.g. is there need for more resources?</li> <li>recognises that an individual's stress at work can arise from a combination of private life/family situations which are invisible to colleagues, as well as from work;</li> <li>has internal support structures, e.g. Mental Wellness Advocate, training on mental wellbeing, seniors who care to reach out to team members to know them and what is going on for them in their lives; seniors who remind all to be kind to each other;</li> <li>has external support structures, e.g. confidential paid access to psychologists;</li> <li>recognises that while some stress helps with achievement, it is important to build in recovery time from stress so that we can bring our best to work;</li> <li>cares about whether the work and relationships at work are energising for the individual; asks lawyers "do you have energy at the end of your day?"</li> </ul>
	<p>Court timelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>which take account of lead counsel's calendar but not calendars of second and third chairs;</li> <li>where counsel have insufficient time to prepare for trial;</li> <li>where counsel for both parties agree on a date and court sets a different date.</li> </ul>	<p>Having leaders who consult with team before agreeing to timelines with court;</p> <p>When there is accommodation of counsels' calendars, e.g. when leave has already been booked.</p> <p>Having wellbeing protocols for the benefit of judges, court staff and lawyers.</p> <p>Consider wellbeing approach of Sir Andrew McFarlane, President of the UK Family Division:  <i>"Judges and courts should do a full day's work, but no more. Time must be kept for the lawyers, court staff and the judges to do work on other cases, and importantly, to have a life outside their work. We are all playing a long game in terms of our careers, our health, and our private and family lives."</i></p>
<p>Meetings requiring attendance at night due to teams being located across different time zones.</p>	<p>If inevitable due to working across regions, important that the inconvenience is acknowledged.</p> <p>When inconvenience is unavoidable, that there is a sense of mutual compromising across time zones, and that people's social lives are respected. For example, different regions alternating between evening and morning calls to ensure no one region bears the full brunt of night calls.</p> <p>Protocols and training are provided to ensure consistency within organisation.</p>	

Mindful Business Charter Pillar	Identified as unnecessary stressors  (Red lines)	Actions/recommendations/ideas to remove unnecessary stressors  (Green lines)	
<p><b>4. MINDFUL DELEGATION</b></p> <p>IMPLEMENTING A BEST PRACTICE APPROACH TO COLLABORATION, INSTRUCTION AND DELEGATION:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respecting the need to provide sufficient context and information for a piece of work, ideally including the purpose and ultimate recipient.</li> <li>When instructing on a task, negotiating rather than imposing a deadline, being transparent where possible on the wider timetable, and promptly communicating timing changes which impact others.</li> <li>When being instructed on a task, being confident to flag when a deadline is unrealistic and/or unachievable.</li> </ul>	<p><b>MINDFUL DELEGATION</b></p>		
		<p>Conflicting work demands from multiple stakeholders, such as clients and seniors.</p>	<p>Having leaders who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>distinguish with clients and associate lawyers important work from urgent work which needs to be prioritised (because not everything important is genuinely urgent);</li> <li>monitor lawyers' work loads to ensure it is evenly allocated/distributed;</li> <li>plan the process, timeline, deadlines for drafts, before delegating the work.</li> </ul>
		<p>Imposed/self-imposed unreasonable deadlines, assuming that clients want immediate responses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Having open conversations upfront with clients and team about deadlines. Ability for associates to approach seniors to check/discuss deadlines with clients.</li> <li>Being mindful of whether it is due to bravado/ego rather than necessity when lawyers promise short timing for work delivery.</li> <li>Discuss with clients about timing for delivery of work, instead of assuming urgency on all matters. This can also increase trust and respect between clients and lawyers.</li> <li>When seniors ask juniors about whether deadlines are feasible/reasonable for them, given their existing workloads and prior deadlines. This can help to increase camaraderie in the team for when tight deadlines are in fact unavoidable.</li> <li>When clients/seniors work with lawyers to make an effort to break down a project into phases with different priorities/dates for delivery where possible.</li> </ul>
		<p>Uneven workloads placed on some associates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When workloads are monitored by seniors to ensure work is evenly allocated.</li> <li>Assess whether a "pool" system or a "teams" system for allocation of work to associates works better to reduce burnout, and improve lines of communication.</li> <li>Being considerate and communicating with juniors when allocating stimulating work vs. "boring" routine tasks vs. stressful work. Fatigue can affect lawyers assigned stressful work as well as boring work.</li> </ul>
		<p>Fear of missing out/trying to do it all by oneself.</p>	<p>When lawyers practice mindful delegation, including ensuring that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the right tasks are delegated to the right person under the right circumstances such as within given deadlines;</li> <li>timing of instructions gives enough time for the task to be completed by lawyers;</li> <li>there is appropriate communication and full understanding of what is required;</li> <li>the right amount of supervision is given as required, without micro-managing.</li> </ul>
		<p>Insufficient clarity on work tasks/work flows.</p>	<p>When:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>instructions are clear upfront regarding tasks, workflows and deadlines;</li> <li>there is regular feedback and assurances to team and clients as to what is happening as the project progresses.</li> </ul> <p>These habits can in turn have a positive impact on managing clients' expectations on timelines.</p>
<p>When quick turnaround/response creates future expectations for all.</p> <p>When being thanked for working weekends and fast turnarounds sets the "standard" for more weekend work/fast turnaround.</p>	<p>When priorities/limits/boundaries are clarified at the start of each project, so that things are not left to assumptions and lawyers are not left feeling overwhelmed.</p>		

## APPENDIX C: MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT IN SINGAPORE

EMERGENCY SUPPORT		
<b>Samaritans</b>	Tel: 1767 (24 hour hotline) WhatsApp: 9151 1767 (24 hour care textline) Email: <a href="mailto:pat@sos.org.sg">pat@sos.org.sg</a> (care mail) <a href="https://www.sos.org.sg/">https://www.sos.org.sg/</a>	Suicide prevention and crisis helpline
<b>Institute of Mental Health</b>	Mental Health Helpline: 6389 2222 (24 hour hotline)	24 hour emergency services are located at the hospital: Buangkok Green Medical Park, 10 Buangkok View, Singapore 539747
NON-EMERGENCY SUPPORT		
<b>Institute of Mental Health</b>	Outpatient Appointment Tel: 6389 2200 Email: <a href="mailto:imh_appt@imh.com.sg">imh_appt@imh.com.sg</a>	
<b>AWARE</b>	AWARE Helpline Tel: 1800 777 5555 (Mon-Fri, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.) <a href="https://www.aware.org.sg">https://www.aware.org.sg</a>	Counselling and helpline for women
<b>Family Service Centres</b>	ComCare Hotline: 1800 222 0000 <a href="https://www.msf.gov.sg/our-services/directories">https://www.msf.gov.sg/our-services/directories</a>	Provide help on family, socio-emotional, interpersonal and other social issues
<b>GPs, Polyclinics</b>	Speak to your GP or visit a Polyclinic who can refer you to a mental health specialist	
<b>Government and Private Hospitals</b>	All Government and Private Hospitals have professional mental healthcare services available. Call the hospital helpline and ask for these services.	
<b>Mindline</b>	<a href="https://www.mindline.sg">Mindline.sg</a>	An anonymous digital stress management platform that aims to empower and equip individuals with tools, knowledge and pathways to self-care and seek out professional help where needed
ADDICTION SUPPORT		
<b>Alcoholics Anonymous</b>	Tel: +65 8112 8089 WhatsApp: +65 8112 8089 Email: <a href="mailto:help@singaporeaa.org">help@singaporeaa.org</a> <a href="https://www.singaporeaa.org/">https://www.singaporeaa.org/</a>	
<b>Narcotics Anonymous</b>	Tel: +65 84058432 Email: <a href="mailto:publicinfo@nasingapore.org">publicinfo@nasingapore.org</a> <a href="https://nasingapore.org/">https://nasingapore.org/</a>	



<b>Institute of Mental Health</b>	<p>All Addictions Helpline Tel: 6-RECOVER (6-732 6837) Mon - Sun (including PH), 8am – 11pm</p> <p>National Problem Gambling Helpline Tel: 1800-6668-668 Mon - Sun (including PH), 8am – 11pm</p>	
<b>SUPPORT FOR LAW SOCIETY MEMBERS</b>		
<b>The Law Society of Singapore's Members' Assistance &amp; Care Helpline</b>	Hotline: 6530 0213 (Mon - Fri 9am to 5pm)	Law Society member benefit that provides confidential and personal support and assistance for members facing personal or professional issues
<b>LawCare (provided by The Law Society of Singapore)</b>	<p><a href="https://www.lawsociety.org.sg/the-law-society/support-schemes/lawcare/">https://www.lawsociety.org.sg/the-law-society/support-schemes/lawcare/</a></p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:cheiliang@counselingperspective.com">cheiliang@counselingperspective.com</a> / <a href="mailto:info@counselingperspective.com">info@counselingperspective.com</a></p>	A confidential counselling service administered in conjunction with the Law Society's partner, Counseling Perspective Pte Ltd. Under the scheme, Law Society members may seek advice and counselling from a qualified counsellor with their partner for a certain number of sessions on a co-pay basis
<b>EMPLOYER SUPPORT</b>		
<b>EAP</b>	Check if your employer has an Employee Assistance Programme in place that you can utilise.	
<b>Medical Insurance</b>	If you have medical insurance through your employer, check if it covers mental health support.	
<b>Mental Health First Aider</b>	Some employers have Mental Health First Aiders who you can go and speak to for support.	

## CONTRIBUTORS

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Susan de Silva, Life & Executive Coach, The Silva Coach

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