

# FINDING EQUANIMITY WHEREVER YOU ARE: ON THE JOB, AT HOME AND EVEN UNDER PRESSURE

By Jill Anne Yeagley, Program Administrator  
Lawyers and Judges Assistance

In April 1991, concerns led the American Bar Association to convene a conference, *At the Breaking Point*, and issue a subsequent report in which they concluded “there is a growing trend in the legal profession, which left unchecked, threatens the well-being of all lawyers and firms in every part of the country.” This trend was a deterioration of the legal work environment, accompanied by declines in lawyers’ career satisfaction, physical health, and mental health.

Twenty-one years later, significant numbers of lawyers still report experiencing extensive pressure and tension, and studies continue to find rates of depression and substance abuse among lawyers to be two to four times higher than the national average. Although thousands of lawyers receive valuable help every year from their states’ assistance programs, far too many will continue to experience the deleterious effects of chronic stress until effective prevention practices become part of the professional culture.

In an effort to support a needed cultural shift, the New Mexico Lawyers and Judges Assistance Program (JLAP) and the Young Lawyers Division are excited to sponsor an introductory training on Feb. 15 for a research-based method of stress reduction titled Integrative Restoration (iRest®).

Developed by Dr. Richard Miller, a clinical psychologist and researcher, iRest® is a systematic form of guided deep relaxation/meditation. More elaborate than other types of meditation, iRest® brings immediate physical benefits such as reduced physical pain and better sleep, and it has specific components designed to bring a sense of ease and equanimity into one’s work and personal life.

Research studies show that iRest® slows down the brain waves and allows individuals to feel deeply relaxed while in a state of restful alertness. It is usually taught lying down, but with practice it can be done in many circumstances, even while walking or flying in an airplane. Best of all, it is enjoyable and deceptively simple to learn. Practitioners report often experiencing the effects of three to four hours of sleep in less than 30 minutes of practice and completing the practice refreshed and ready to resume work.

Regular practice of iRest® is thought to increase serotonin, dopamine, and oxytocin levels. These are the “feel-good/happiness” brain

chemicals that help reduce toxic cortisol release during stress and lead to significantly lower levels of anxiety, depression, discontent, dissatisfaction, and anger. A growing body of evidence-based research in positive psychology demonstrates that you can train your brain for rational optimism, and that happy people have higher levels of productivity, perform better in leadership roles, and are generally more successful.

iRest® was recently endorsed by the U.S. Army Surgeon General and Defense Centers of Excellence as a complementary and alternative medicine (CAM). The Department of Defense is successfully using iRest® as a treatment for trauma and stress for soldiers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, and its use by ordinary, “stressed-out” individuals is growing at business and community programs, hospitals and clinics, and universities across the country.

The instructor for the Feb. 15<sup>th</sup> training is New Mexico attorney and nationally certified Yoga Alliance E-RYT500 trainer, Hallie Neuman Love, BFA, JD. As an iRest® instructor, yoga therapist, and Pilates core trainer, Love has taught thousands of people for more than a decade how to feel more balanced, pain free and happier. Having received advanced teacher training from Miller and the Integrative Restoration Institute®, she specializes in teaching iRest® for lawyers. Love and co-author/law professor Nathalie Martin are currently writing a book for the American Bar Association entitled *Yoga Therapy for Lawyers: Mind-Body Techniques to Feel Better All the Time*.

University of New Mexico Associate Professor of Psychology Dr. Bruce Smith regularly uses iRest®, having been taught by Love. Smith has written over 50 articles in peer-reviewed psychology and science journals, trained at the National Institutes of Health in functioning neuroimaging, and teaches a course in positive psychology. He describes his personal iRest® practice as:

the most effective way that I have seen to put yourself into a deep state of relaxation that provides rest and rejuvenation and at the same time puts you in an alert and focused state. I’ve used it during the day to prepare me for challenging and important tasks and in the evening for relaxing and improving my sleep even after some very stressful days. The CDs allow you to continue to learn and grow in the practice.

## Discover iRest®

\$40 introductory session on Friday, February 15  
1–5 p.m. in the State Bar Keleher and Rodey classrooms

Space is limited.

Call Jill Yeagley at 505-797-6003 to register.

If you find this information intriguing but still aren't sure if iRest® is for you, consider what some New Mexico attorneys are saying about this course:

“. . . my productivity at work has skyrocketed. . . my state of mind is balanced. . .much more at peace for the rest of the day. . . .

“The legal profession is challenging and stressful. To be a “well attorney” requires more than average stress management. iRest® is a power tool for attorneys.”

“Prior meditation classes have felt like failures. This practice worked for me, and I felt alert and invigorated afterwards.”

“I was making myself sick with stress. . . . After iRest® I felt much calmer and 200 percent physically better. No more migraines. . . now able to listen patiently to others. I feel more positive, less burdened, and the hard things in my life go a whole lot easier. I sleep better too.”

“I felt relaxed and calm after the practice. I think many lawyers would benefit from this course. A more balanced and present attorney is a more effective attorney.”

1:

Research shows iRest®:

- Decreases stress, anxiety, fear and depression,
- Decreases perception of chronic and acute pain,
- Improves interpersonal relations, and
- Increases energy levels.

2:

Practitioners report experiencing the effects of three to four hours of deep restful sleep in less than 30 minutes of iRest® practice.



## TLC Cares

### This Legal Community Cares

- TLC Cares enables each of us to reach out to those within the legal community who experience a catastrophic illness, injury or other unfortunate circumstance.

TLC Cares is open to all members of the New Mexico legal community and their families, including court personnel and law firm employees.

To join the TLC Cares network, please send your email address to [TLCcares@nmba.org](mailto:TLCcares@nmba.org).  
For more information, contact Jill Yeagley at 505.797.6003

Supported by the State Bar of New Mexico and the New Mexico Supreme Court.

