

Many students and lawyers find themselves confronting mental health and wellness issues during their career. If you find yourself dealing with depression, anxiety, addiction, or other mental health or wellness concerns, know that you're not alone. The Ontario Member Assistance Program ("MAP") is a confidential, independent program operated by Homewood Health that provides resources and counselling at no cost to Ontario lawyers and students.

Increasing awareness and new resources available to legal professionals in Ontario are building a healthier, more resilient, and stronger profession.

The MAP offers a wide variety of online resources available through the online portal of homeweb.ca, along with in-person professional assistance.

Short and longer-term counselling

Confidential short-term and crisis counselling is available in-person, online, or over the phone from experienced therapists who specialize in issues such as stress, anxiety, substance abuse, depression, burnout, and other personal and mental-health issues.

The MAP provides secure and private online counselling sessions, either through private and confidential message exchange, where a counsellor will respond to a private message within two business days, or through real-time interaction in a private chatroom environment via a secure web board, where all communications are confidential and private.

Longer-term counselling—up to 20 sessions—is available for members seeking treatment for depression or trauma related issues.

Peer-to-peer support

Designed specifically for members of the Ontario legal profession, the MAP's peer-to-peer support service connects members with a peer who has experienced and overcome the same issues they may be experiencing.

Lifestyle coaching

The MAP's "Life Smart" resources provide coaching on a variety of subjects such as childcare and parenting, elder and family care, financial and legal issues, nutrition and smoking cessation, as well as career, retirement, and workplace issues.

Online lifestyle and learning resources

Historically, despite the MAP's commitment to privacy and confidentiality, many lawyers have remained reluctant to reach out for necessary assistance due to concerns that their health issues may become known to colleagues or the Law Society. For that reason, the MAP provides self-directed online resources.



Member
Assistance
Program

Myassistplan.com

A curated collection of Homewood's resources are available to Ontario lawyers through the myassistplan.com online portal, which provides a large online library of health and wellness assessments and self-directed learning resources, including videos, articles, podcasts and e-courses designed to improve personal health and well-being. Resources can be accessed on any desktop or through Homewood's mobile app. Homewood offers licensees the ability to create an individual profile and receive guided, personalized content and recommendations, including a self-paced online cognitive behavioural program called "i-Volve." Members can easily access articles on subjects such as anxiety, PTSD, grief and loss, mindfulness and meditation, understanding and treating depression, and myriad other topics, or take online courses that can be completed in a single sitting aimed at taking control of anger, career, stress, and other aspects of their lives.

12weekstowellness.com

Homewood also provides an online, goal-oriented wellness resource under the banner of "12 weeks to wellness." Individuals set their own goals regarding lifestyle habits, weight, peace of mind, self-esteem, and other wellness aspects, and receive coaching while tracking their progress through assessments and a personal profile. ■

5 Tips for Developing Emotional Intelligence

Developing emotional intelligence can make you a more effective lawyer.

1

SELF-AWARENESS

Are you avoiding a file? Dig deeper for what the reasons might be, and how you can approach the work. Avoiding work on a file may lead to missed deadlines.

2

SELF-REGULATION

Before sending a heated response to opposing counsel, pause and reflect on whether such a response would be productive.

3

EMPATHY

Actively listening without making assumptions or judgments can help you better understand your clients concerns and provide tailored solutions.

4

SELF-MOTIVATION

Focusing on gratitude and positivity improves overall health and well-being, which is beneficial for you and your clients.

5

RELATIONSHIPS

Communicating with clients with transparency and empathy helps set expectations, leading to fewer disappointments/misunderstanding.

Take a look at some resources available for free from the Member Assistance Program such as eCourses on resilience, responsible optimism, resolving conflict, and taking control of your mood.