



DR CATHERINE SYKES

A COACH AND THERAPIST FOR LAWYERS

A career in law comes with unique pressures and stress. Research demonstrates those very personality traits that make great lawyers also make them more vulnerable to burnout and other psychological problems.

During my 25 year career I have coached successful professionals through the challenges specific to high pressure careers, with 10 of those spent specialising in coaching and therapy for lawyers.

Throughout that time, I have developed an in-depth understanding of the unique challenges to mental health, physical health and relationships the work can bring.

I support lawyers to gain health, happiness and long-lasting success.





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“My goal is to help high-achieving lawyers to attain peak performance and lead happy and healthy lives.

I do this by identifying their psychological blocks and empowering them to take control of their anxieties and challenges. I have unique skills and experience.

My coaching and therapy are underpinned by my psychology background and supported by over 25 years of research and practice experience”.



COACHING AND THERAPY

My goal is to help high-achieving lawyers to attain peak performance and lead happy and healthy lives. I do this by identifying their psychological blocks and empowering them to take control of their anxieties and challenges. I have unique skills and experience. My coaching and therapy are underpinned by my psychology background and supported by over 25 years of research and practice experience.

I am an Associate Fellow (AFBPS) of the British Psychological Society (BPS) and a registered Coaching Psychologist. By strictly adhering to high professional standards, I have developed a solid reputation amongst professionals in the City of London. Alongside my professional and academic accreditations, I have extensive experience of putting these skills into practice through coaching partners, associates, trainees, business support staff and barristers, from a wide variety of legal organisations, including top ranking law firms and chambers.

WHAT MAKES YOU EXCEL IN YOUR CALLING CAN ALSO MAKE YOU VULNERABLE.

Having spent many years working with lawyers and researching the role from a psychological viewpoint, I am now comprehensively familiar with the specifics of a legal career, the distinctive workplace and the unique pressures that come with the legal profession. Research shows that the very personality traits common among high-performing lawyers also make them more susceptible to mental health problems.

I know that being a lawyer means:

- An intense route to entry into the professional arena
- Needing to navigate complex power dynamics
- A constantly competitive environment
- Unique stresses, pressures and psychological consequences
- Likelihood of burnout throughout your career
- Long hours that lead to conflict between work and home life
- Keeping up with a rapid pace of change
- Pressure for more billable hours and anxiety about what work counts as billable
- Extensive, and excessive, client demands
- Exposure to new social contexts and the resulting pressures of unfamiliar behaviour codes and expectations

THE UNIQUE CHALLENGES OF YOUR ELITE PROFESSION

Work and personal life are often challenging for high-achieving professionals, as success brings greater responsibilities and even greater stress! With the right coach, you can excel in both areas of your life and be happy. I often hear 'you have changed my life.'

Lawyers work long hours under immense pressure from multiple stake holders, each with their own demands. The profession is results driven but also requires the ability to communicate with people from all walks of life, meaning there are expectations in all areas and from all sides. An intense and pressurised career, even those that flourish in this environment are at risk of burnout.





AREAS OF PRACTICE

I am familiar with the intricate pressures and complexities of a lawyer's work and home life which can, and often does, lead to lawyer burnout and other psychological consequences.

LAWYER BURNOUT

Resulting from the often huge pressure and obligations placed on you in your legal career, your occupation has one of the highest rates of burnout. This is hardly surprising when those seeking a career in law are typically ambitious perfectionists, with the role requiring near constant availability. Success based on billable hours and results, and the constant pressure to maintain an outward appearance of control contribute to the unique stresses. I have helped many to gain back control of their lives and prevent or return from burnout.

BREAKING THROUGH THE GLASS CEILING

As a high performing lawyer in The City of London, you might find your frustration building at the, often invisible or unacknowledged, inequalities you face. My breaking through the glass ceiling programme is designed to empower you to have the confidence to act assertively to achieve goals that may have previously seemed unattainable. Together we'll explore ways we can build a positive cycle of thoughts and behaviours to raise you up to where you deserve to be.

CAREER DIRECTION

The intensity of a career in law means that many find themselves considering a change in career direction to a career that allows them a better work life balance, but still gives them the opportunity for challenge and success. I have guided many law professionals through this process into making the correct decision for them.

EMBRACING SOCIAL MOBILITY

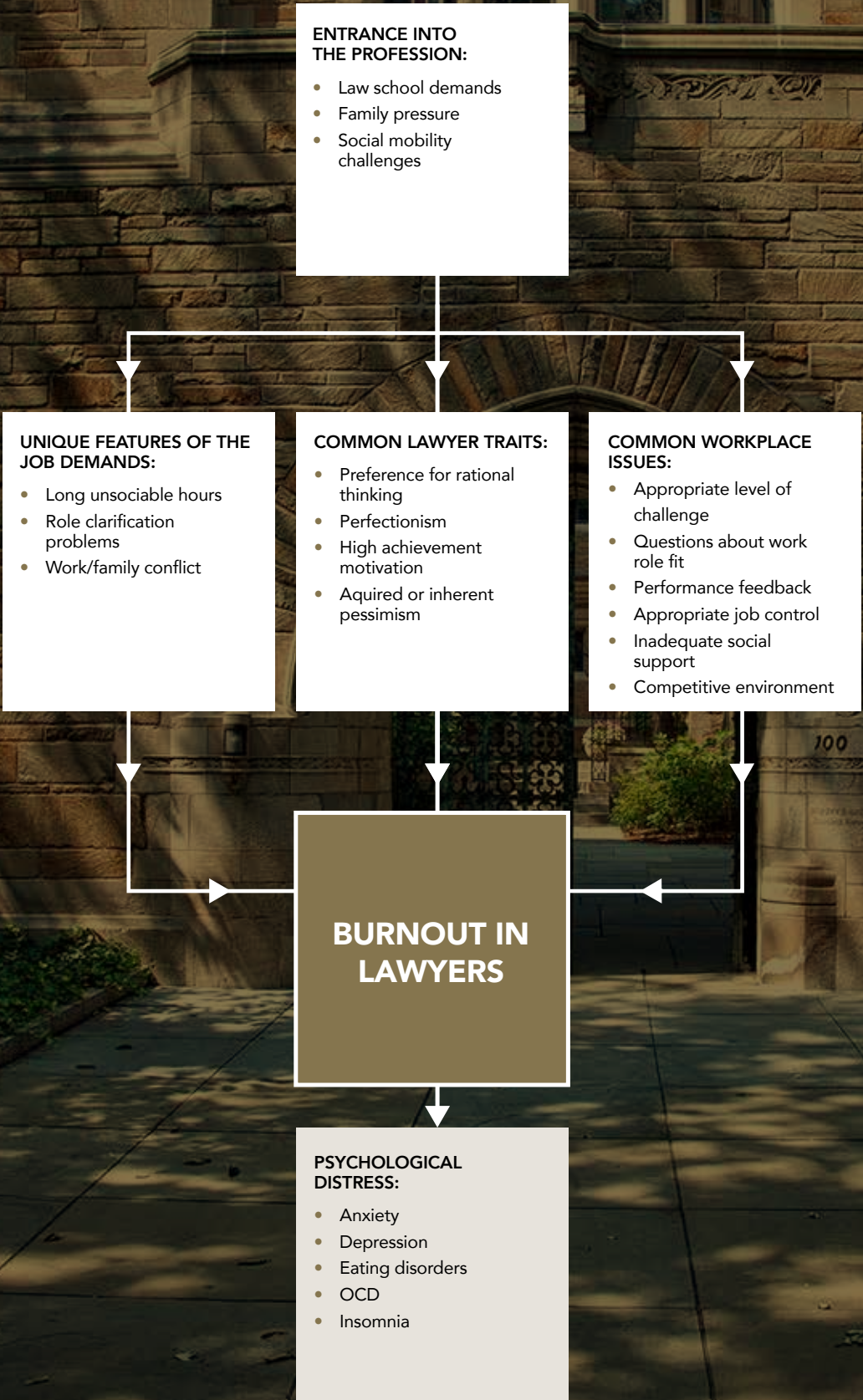
Entering the arena of law reveals many expectations that may not have been apparent when applying to law school or university. Expectations from new peer groups about the way you dress, talk, even eat and holiday leave many feeling embarrassed, socially awkward or unprepared. Changing to fit the new context can, in turn, make individuals feel they no longer fit in with family and friends either. I can support this transition without having to compromise individuality, as well as aiding those in a leadership position who are responsible for supporting social mobility.

IMPOSTER SYNDROME

Feeling that you don't belong in your position at work, that you need to constantly improve and that you've come by achievements through luck, is a common phenomenon known as imposter syndrome. Many high achieving lawyers feel like frauds or imposters which can be unsettling and leave you feeling agitated that you will be 'found out'. I can enable you to become confident in your own expertise and abilities and flourish at work, avoiding stress and working towards feeling content in your position.



PATHWAYS TO BURNOUT IN LAWYERS



EXAMPLE OF OTHER AREAS OF PRACTICE:

- Executive coaching
- Stepping into a leadership role
- Confidence at work
- Positive public speaking
- Resilience in the workplace
- Gain social acceptance
- Positive return to work after an illness
- Transform your family life
- Moving forward in your career
- Adult ADHD
- Leadership in a crisis
- Anxiety and Panic Attacks
- Bulimia
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
- Addictions



COACHING AND SUPPORT PACKAGES

I am familiar with the pressures on a lawyer's time and know that hourly sessions each week may not be suited to your busy, variable work schedule. Instead, I offer a range of packages that are flexible and can be arranged to suit your individual needs.

PSYCHOLOGICAL THERAPY

Psychological therapy focuses on your mental health and specific clinical issues such as anxiety and depression. I use my years of experience and range of expertise, including cognitive behavioural therapy, to work in my own unique style. Establishing my own approach to therapy means I can differentiate it to suit the needs of each individual. In these sessions, I will provide a safe and confidential space to explore your thoughts and emotions in relation to past experiences and ongoing difficulties.

RAPID DISCOVERY

You will discover powerful insights that will elevate your professional performance, or your personal happiness and health. You may have specific outcomes, such as a career changing presentation or interview, and your preferred approach is highly dynamic, then a rapid discovery approach will deliver the outcomes you seek.

Following an assessment of your personal needs, I will develop an intense half-day session specially designed to meet your needs. We will gain clarity on your key issues, behaviour and mindset. You will receive personalised techniques and strategies to help you take action to change or enhance your performance.

You have the option to follow up with telephone sessions to seek clarity or support as you implement the techniques and strategies.

IMPACT COACHING HOURS

Receive your coaching on an as needed basis. You can choose regular ongoing coaching, or occasional sessions to suit your requirements. During these hourly sessions I can help you identify and make the changes that enable you to achieve your performance objectives.

UNLOCK AND GROW

Your professional life may be fast-paced and your personal life full, but this may not be how you wish to address your workplace and lifestyle challenges. Designed to allow reflection with sustained support, during this programme we will work together in monthly sessions to gradually unlock and understand your needs. You will have time to reflect on your progress, have support to implement solutions and can come back each month with clear goals for growth.

BESPOKE COACHING

For the elite, high performing City professional who adopts the same strategy for personal wellbeing and performance as they do to their work, I provide a uniquely bespoke holistic service. You may want an Executive Coach who can provide a little more expertise. Someone with whom you want an ongoing relationship throughout all stages of life, for work and personal needs, as your personal psychologist, ensuring your resilience through transitions and milestones. I can assure total discretion as I understand the need for privacy.



ACCREDITATIONS

Law and finance in The City of London are strictly regulated, an environment where professionalism, exceptional standards and confidentiality are service qualifiers. You have high expectations of your fellow professionals and should expect the same from your psychologist and coach.

I am accredited by the British Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies (BABCP), a member of the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) and an Associate Fellow (AFBPsS) of British Psychological Society (BPS). I am on the BPS register of Coaching Psychologists.

Mastering a profession and establishing your personal brand as one of the high performing elite in your field requires investment in staying not just abreast of but ahead of the trend. To inform my practice, I am actively involved in research, peer reviews, writing and interviews with the general media.

RESEARCH

A lawyer's world is complex, with new developments requiring constant focus to remain one of your profession's elite.

To maintain my knowledge and thought leadership, I have been involved in research for 20 years, making significant contribution to psychological research and publishing numerous scientific, peer-reviewed research articles.

As well as presenting work at international conferences, I write books, papers and articles, including a best-selling book on cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT). I serve on the editorial board of the Journal of Health Psychology, peer reviewing the latest research of my academic and professional contemporaries.



HOW YOU BENEFIT

I help lawyers to attain peak performance and lead happy and healthy lives by identifying their psychological blocks and coaching them to take control of their anxieties and challenges. Over 10 years working with lawyers means I fully understand the world you come from and the unique circumstances a vocation in law brings, enabling me to understand and work with that context from the start, therefore expediting the improvement process.

Working within a package that suits you, we can invest the time and energy to enable you to maintain the success at work and in your home life, that you aspire to.

- Personal growth
- Energy
- Understanding
- Productivity
- Confidence
- Calm
- Control
- Relaxation
- Self-belief
- Balance
- Safety
- Boundaries
- Resolution
- Security
- Assertiveness
- Communication
- Positivity
- Progress
- Promotion
- Hope
- Fulfilment
- Self-investment
- Support
- Growth
- Executive Presence
- Connection with the authentic self

I often hear

“you have changed my life”

To benefit from my expertise, experience and approach to achieve your goals through therapy or coaching, contact me via my Executive Assistant:

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