



## FLORIDA BAR NEWS

# THE MINDFUL LAWYER: THE HOLIDAYS AND TIPS FOR PRACTICE

By Scott Rogers ▶ Special to the News ▶ Columns

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The Mindful Lawyer column first appeared in this year's August 1 issue of the *News*, marking eight years since the publication initially reported on mindfulness and the law. Over the course of the past decade, interest in supporting the mental, physical, and emotional health and well-being of lawyers, law students, and judges has grown, with the legal academy, and local, state, and national bar associations taking

the lead. The reasons for this heightened attention are many, and much has been written in this area.

As we come to the end of 2017, and many of us reflect on the year, on our lives, and on our intentions and aspirations for the days to come, it might be useful to consider the role mindfulness can play, and some of the inexpensive and accessible ways to gain a deeper understanding of mindfulness and its practice.

### THE MINDFUL LAWYER COLUMN

This column seeks to illuminate the practical role of mindfulness in our professional and personal lives. It works like this: Lawyers and judges proffer questions about mindfulness and how it might be of benefit in challenging situations, and experts — be they lawyers and judges who have practiced mindfulness for many years, or leaders in the field of mindfulness — offer guidance. In September, Christina inquired about concerns with productivity and an attorney offered guidance based on his many years of practicing mindfulness and law. In October, Alejandro reflected on the challenges he experienced maintaining his mindfulness practice during an uncertain time, namely, Hurricane Irma, and Sharon Salzberg, one of the world's most prominent mindfulness teachers, offered insight on this perennial question. And, in last month's column, Rachel, who experiences periods of depression, commented on the challenges she faces as a supervisor of a group of attorneys, and Zindel Segal, one of the world's leading authorities on mindfulness and depression, replied. As we move into 2018, we look forward to sharing your real-world questions with those who have been exploring the same questions, either as members of the legal profession, or as mindfulness experts.

## THE HOLIDAYS AND MOMENTS OF MELANCHOLY

The holiday season, joyful as it is in so many ways, can also be a period of sadness, and our moods can take heartfelt twists and turns. You may find it helpful to look back on last month's column and reflect on Segal's comments on the role of mindfulness amid moments of melancholy and its connection to depression. The poignancy of this time of year can be deeply meaningful without being emotionally overwhelming, and mindfulness practice can be helpful in this regard. His book, "The Mindful Way Through Depression" serves also as an excellent treatment on mindfulness for a general audience.

## THE NEW YEAR AND THE NEW MOMENT

The New Year is often looked to as a time of renewal and fresh starts, and it is interesting how confident we can feel with our resolutions, only to watch them fade shortly after they blossom. One reason for this may be that it is all too easy to feel a level of enthusiasm and commitment for a challenging endeavor that is slated for the future. Mindfulness is a reminder that the only day there is, the only day we can truly count on, is this day, this moment. While it can be satisfying and, indeed, helpful to establish a New Year's resolution, you may also wish to resolve to be more fully present, engaged, and act in alignment with your intentions and aspirations now. Mindfulness practice can be helpful in this regard, and because you may find yourself with a little extra time to explore mindfulness this holiday season, below you'll find some helpful resources.

## PODCASTS

Podcasts and talks can be a helpful way of learning more about mindfulness. A popular podcast is ABC news correspondent Dan Harris' "[10 Percent Happier](#)," where he interviews interesting people and often begins by discussing their mindfulness or meditation practice. [Mindful Magazine](#) produces "The Mindful Practice Podcast" which offers a variety of different guided practices and discussions.

## APPS

Popular apps among lawyers include: [Insight Timer](#), [Headspace](#), [10% Happier](#), and [Calm](#). If you download [Insight Timer](#), join the *Mindfulness in Law* group. These apps, which can be free or carry a subscription cost, offer you the opportunity to listen to talks about mindfulness as well as a guided set of practices to help you meditate and develop your mindfulness practice.

## BOOKS

Good holiday read include: “[Mindfulness: An 8-Week Plan for Finding Peace in a Frantic World](#),” by Mark Williams and Danny Penman; “[Real Happiness](#),” by Sharon Salzberg; “[The Anxious Lawyer](#),” by Geena Cho and Karen Gifford; and “[Looking at Mindfulness: 25 Ways to Live in the Moment Through Art](#),” by Christophe Andre.

## MAGAZINES

The [magazine Mindful](#), which can be found locally and ordered through a subscription, provides readers with a wealth of mindfulness information, exercises, and practices, and makes a terrific holiday gift.

If you have a general question about mindfulness or a specific question about integrating mindfulness into the practice of law that you would like answered in this column, send it to [srogers@law.miami.edu](mailto:srogers@law.miami.edu).



*Scott Rogers, M.S., J.D., is a nationally recognized leader in the area of mindfulness in law and founded and directs the University of Miami School of Law's Mindfulness in Law Program where he teaches mindful ethics, mindful leadership, mindfulness and negotiation, and mindfulness in law. He is the creator of Jurisight, one of the first CLE programs in the country to integrate mindfulness and neuroscience and conducts workshops and presentations on the role of mindfulness in legal education and across the legal profession. He is author of the recently released, “[The Mindful Law Student: A Mindfulness in Law Practice Guide](#),” written for all audiences.*