

WELL-BEING:
A STUDY OF ATTORNEY BELIEFS, ATTITUDES, AND PERCEPTIONS

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Approval of the Dissertation

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Abstract

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Research reviewed indicated attorneys suffer higher incidences of suicide, depression, and substance abuse than other professions; however, very few studies addressed lawyers' psychological well-being. This study used a mixed-methods design to investigate the beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions of well-being among Arizona attorneys. An email with a link to the Scale of Psychological Well-Being, along with 15 demographic questions, was sent to 14,494 active members of the State Bar of Arizona, of which 691 returned surveys that qualified for the study, yielding a 4.7% response. Sixteen participants were divided in 2 focus-group discussions. Descriptive and Pearson correlations showed that Arizona attorneys reported experiencing well-being with 5 key distinctions: (1) Attorneys reported higher levels of autonomy than members of the normative group; however, they had lower levels of self-acceptance, purpose in life, and environmental mastery dimensions; (2) There was a significant positive relationship between total psychological well-being scores and (a) the self-reported level of life and career satisfaction; (b) those who enjoyed their practice area and those working in alternative dispute resolution, medical malpractice, and public law; and (c) environmental mastery; (3) Attorneys who did not consider their work stressful had higher psychological

well-being; (4) There was a positive correlation between length of time practicing law and psychological well-being; and (5) There was a significant positive relationship between attorneys' levels of environmental mastery and their psychological well-being and between years worked as an attorney and autonomy. The focus groups responded that: (a) law practice is inherently stressful with unique stressors that negatively impact well-being; (b) attorneys with significant legal experience expressed greater well-being; and (c) lawyers found satisfaction in their work based on many factors including helping people achieve their goals, having freedom in their work, good health, amicable colleagues, engagement in volunteer and recreational activities, intellectually stimulating work, positive relations with others, spiritual/religious beliefs and practices, making a good living, and creativity. Future research is needed to develop further understanding of attorney experiences, particularly how cultural and practice area attitudes and client interactions affect attorney well-being.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

I have been a practicing lawyer for more than 15 years. The years spent working within the legal community, alongside other lawyers, served as the catalyst for my research interest. The purpose of the study was to examine attorney well-being in the practice of law. By surveying and conducting focus groups of attorneys who are members of the State Bar of Arizona, it was possible to illuminate attorney perceptions concerning well-being, clarify the factors that enhance and hinder well-being, and make meaning of their experiences.

Several factors are believed to contribute to happiness or well-being. For some, the quest for happiness may be obtained from an internal desire for peace, joy, and contentment. For others, happiness is believed to derive from external pursuits such as familial and interpersonal relationships, occupational activities, and financial accomplishments. In some cases, the quest for success becomes the focus for the achievement of happiness and the pursuit of wealth becomes paramount. This can certainly be said of lawyers, who often confuse success with happiness (Tebo, 2000). This is particularly interesting in light of the fact that research studies have shown that there is no causal relationship between happiness and material success (Csikszentmihalyi, 1999); however, money does provide “some relief from worries, from drudgery, and makes more time available for one’s real work” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996, p. 334).

Research suggests there is a large population of attorneys who experience unhappiness and dissatisfaction in their lives. Many lawyers develop substance abuse problems, have higher incidents of depression, and suffer from anxiety (Beiner, 2007;

Benjamin, Darling, & Sales, 1990; Goren & Smith, 2001). Despite this fact, law school enrollment is up and overall life satisfaction of the average practicing attorney is down (Syverud & Schiltz, 1999). Specifically, there has been an increase in the number of approved law school enrollments, from approximately 98,042 students in 1972 to 147,525 in the fall 2010 (ABA, 2011) and various studies have suggested a correlation between law practice and career dissatisfaction (Lawyer Satisfaction, 2006). In today's legal environment, it is imperative that future and current lawyers are able to deal effectively with the unique stressors of practicing law. Understanding attorney beliefs, perceptions and attitudes is one way to expand upon the knowledge and help attorneys flourish in their lives and at work. For the purpose of this research the terms "attorney" and "lawyer" will be used interchangeably.

Context for the Inquiry

Attorneys serve an important role in American society. As trusted officers of the court, they seek truth and pursue justice, all within the context of an adversarial legal system. However, lawyers do not work on their own behalf; rather, they work in furtherance of their client's interest. Clients come in many forms including individuals, nonprofit organizations, corporations, and governmental bodies. Routinely clients seek legal advice, counsel, and help with a variety of personal and professional problems. Attorneys who provide representation are charged with providing each client with the same level of professionalism, competence, and zest. Attorneys are expected to be learned and principled in their representation to ensure that they provide strict confidentiality as they perform their duties. In some cases they must advocate for positions that are contrary to their personal values and belief systems. They also may be

required to represent demanding and emotionally-charged clients in contentious legal matters. Therefore, the practice of law presents both a tremendous opportunity to exert influence and power and a significant burden to further clients' interests and goals.

Typically, lawyers enter the profession with a strong desire to help others. They may also want to earn a good living, engage in intellectual pursuits, advance certain social causes, or obtain prestige (American Bar Association [ABA], 2005). Rather quickly, graduates realize that being a lawyer is an inherently stressful and challenging job that is full of excessive job demands related to time (pressure to bill), problem-solving, firm and agency politics and economics, and monitoring that contribute to lawyers feeling dissatisfied with their work (Wallace, 2005). Too often, lawyers become depressed or they turn to alcohol or other substances to cope. A survey of callers to LawCare, a legal professional counseling service that helps lawyers, found that (a) two-thirds of the callers had suffered from stress that felt intolerable, and (b) 80% who had abused alcohol had done so because of stress levels (Anonymous, 2005).

Lawyers are members of a helping profession. Other helping professionals include mental health workers such as clinical psychologists, psychiatrists, marriage and family therapists, and other counselors who provide psychological services; these professionals—who often work with trauma survivors—have been identified as being at a higher risk of being negatively affected by their work (Kadambi & Truscott, 2004). Professionals in other occupations have also been identified and studied for the potential effects of secondary stress (e.g., social workers [Bride, 2007; Clemans, 2004], nurses, and doctors [Bride, 2007]). The secondary effect of trauma is increasingly viewed as an occupational hazard of any professional or volunteer who comes to the aid of others and

provides direct services to traumatized populations (Bride, 2007; Rasmussen, 2005; Saakvitne & Pearlman, 1996). Murray and Royer (2008) concluded that the nature of the professional relationship and the “obligation to help manage the traumatic material toward some result” (p. 13) puts the professional at risk for the development of secondary trauma. Lawyers, like other helping professionals, work in a profession that is constantly engaged with stressful life situations including conflict, loss, and client trauma; therefore, attorneys may be susceptible to the stresses of burnout, boundary conflicts, secondary traumatic stress, and compassion fatigue (Gates, 2009; Silver, 2007).

Clients seek help for a myriad of personal and professional matters related to finances, business, contracts, birth, death, crime, divorce, abuse, personal injury, bankruptcy, employment, and child custody. Lawyers may be asked to record the minutiae of personal and professional histories revealed in client interviews and may witness families being torn apart by destructive behaviors, whether or not the behaviors were criminal (Murray & Royer, 2008). Listening to stories of trauma, victimization, and loss may invoke similar psychological distress and symptoms in lawyers (Murray & Royer, 2008).

The attorney-client relationship itself and the dynamics that occur within that relationship, provide an additional vantage point to assess attorneys’ perceptions regarding well-being. Analogous to the therapist-client relationship, the attorney-client relationship is revered within the legal profession. This relationship is special for the following reasons:

- (1) Attorneys are expected to be honorable in their representation of the clients they serve;

- (2) As agents who act on behalf of their clients' best interests, attorneys serve as helpers and trusted confidants who seek to further the goals and objectives that are established by their clients;
- (3) To ensure that attorneys adhere to a minimum set of ethical standards when representing their clients, all attorneys must follow a state code of ethics. This code establishes how attorneys are expected to act in their professional dealings with their clients and includes considerations related but not limited to confidentiality, diligence, communication, competence, and conflicts of interest;
- (4) In addition to representing their clients' interests, attorneys also serve as counselors and advisors such that they counsel their clients on any number of personal and legal matters. In these roles, lawyers render advice and may refer to the law as well as other considerations including moral, economic, social, and political factors that may be relevant to the client's situation; and
- (5) The nature of the attorney-client relationship requires that attorneys maintain a high level of confidentiality regarding all attorney-client communications. An attorney's duty to maintain confidentiality provides a safe space for clients to divulge personal information that may be difficult or traumatic in nature (Attorney, 1991; Code of Ethics, 2011).

Much can be gained from understanding how lawyers, as counselors and advisors, are impacted by working with their clients. For example, when representing a client in a divorce or business matter, an attorney may be exposed to a client's stories of abuse (sexual, emotional, or physical), harassment (sexual), or discrimination (racial, age) by a

supervisor. The concept of the attorney as a helping professional may lead to a deeper level of questioning and a broader perspective in the examination of the attorney-client relationship, the types of services lawyers perform, and the impact of the client-relationship on lawyers and their well-being.

Statement of the Problem

The legal profession is considered the most unhappy and unhealthy of all professions by some researchers and legal scholars (Huang & Swedloff, 2008; Syverud & Schiltz, 1999). Research has shown that not only do lawyers seem to be unhappy (Jordan, 1993), but there is a relationship between the practice of law and career dissatisfaction (Lawyer Satisfaction, 2006). This is important considering the fact that total law school enrollment has increased significantly. More than three times as many law students entered law school in the fall of 2010 (52,448) than in 1960 (15,607; ABA, 2010, 2011), which includes an increase in the number of women (from 11,878 in 1972 to 69,009 in the fall of 2010) and minority enrollment (from 6,730 to 35,045 during the same period; (ABA, 2011). The number of lawyers in practice is also increasing, although not very rapidly at 1.012% during an 8-year period. In 2000, there were 1.06 million lawyers in the United States; however, by 2008, that number had increased to 1.18, of which 73% were male and 27% were female (ABA, 2008). Most of these lawyers, close to 70%, work in private practice (ABF, 2007). The number of lawyers in Arizona has risen significantly from 18,584 in 2005 to 21,333 in 2011, with 65% of the population being male and 35% female (see Appendix A).

Legal scholars and researchers have agreed that lawyers: (a) experience higher rates of anxiety, hostility, and paranoia than other professionals; (b) drink to excess more

than people in other occupations; and (c) have the highest rate of depression and suicide of any profession (Benjamin, Darling & Sales, 1990; Goren & Smith, 2001; Syverud & Schiltz, 1999). No comprehensive studies have examined the entire legal profession; however, sporadic studies have investigated specific conditions such as depression, suicide, and substance abuse among lawyers. For example, a 1991 Johns Hopkins University study found that attorneys had the highest rates of depression among 104 occupations; and lawyers were three times as likely to suffer from depression than the norm (Eaton, Anthony, Mandell, & Garrison, 1990). Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers, a nonprofit association of Boston lawyers that was created more than 30 years ago as a support group for lawyers with drinking problems, reported a rise in the stress levels of people in the profession: Depression and anxiety have equaled or surpassed alcohol and drugs in what the group called a “presenting problem” for 5 out of the past 10 years (Pfeiffer, 2007, para. 15). In 2005, depression or anxiety was cited by 26% of all lawyers who sought counseling, alcohol and drugs were cited by 21%, and the number of lawyers who sought depression counseling jumped to 60% when the tally included those who wanted help with career and practice management assistance (Pfeiffer, 2007). In a study of Washington lawyers, 33% of respondents suffered from depression, a drinking problem, or cocaine abuse (Benjamin, Darling, & Sales, 1990).

There is widespread acknowledgement that many lawyers are stressed and unhappy; however, the research tends to focus on how attorneys cope with stress (e.g., depression, substance abuse). Few investigations have assessed whether unique stressors specifically contribute to attorney dissatisfaction or what may help to facilitate attorney well-being. Martin Seligman, a leader in the area of positive psychology, and Paul

Verkuil, a former dean of Cardozo Law School, used positive psychology research to identify four main causes of lawyer unhappiness: lawyer pessimism, low decision latitude of large law firm junior associates (the number of choices they believe they have), law school pedagogy, and the nature of the adversarial legal system (Seligman, Verkuil, & Kang, 2001). Although the researchers provided well-intended suggestions for understanding what reduces attorney happiness, the propositions were made based on general positive psychology research. As such, the suggestions may not be specific or relevant to lawyers.

An ABA poll of its membership showed that the majority of attorneys have: (a) constant pressure to bill hours and perform at work; (b) limited time outside of work; and (c) a tremendously high level of dissatisfaction with their jobs and lives (Jordan, 1993). In fact, many lawyers hate their jobs, but they work to pay their law school debt and large mortgages (Jordan, 1993). Because 80% of law students rely on educational loans, many new attorneys enter the workforce with law school debt that exceeds \$150,000 and mortgage-sized student loan payments that average \$1,187 per month (ABA, 2010). As a result, many attorneys do not choose legal positions in which they are interested because the salaries may be too low; instead, they opt for careers at law firms where they can earn enough money to pay their debts (ABA, 2002).

There is a tendency within legal education and the adversary legal process to de-emphasize emotions characterized as weak (e.g., sadness, fear) and to emphasize logic, rhetoric, analytical thinking and objectivity. Lawyers are expected to win their clients' cases and while doing so to remain objective, professionally detached from their own internal states of being, and reserved from the client. This expectation exists even when

the attorney is presented with traumatic material (Murray & Royer, 2008). Attorney well-being could improve if lawyers were encouraged to become aware of their emotions and if they were provided with the tools to develop emotional competence when working with their clients (Silver, 2007). For these reasons, it is especially important to explore attorney perceptions concerning well-being as lawyers may be especially susceptible to the stresses and strains derived from law practice.

Rationale and Purpose of the Study

Despite the widespread acknowledgement that many lawyers are unhappy, neither the ABA or the State Bar of Arizona, which has more than 21,000 members (14,494 who are active and practice law within the state), has conducted research to assess the overall well-being of their members (Arizona Bar Association, 2005; see Appendix A). As a result, the psychological needs of this special population are not fully understood. Research is needed to help: (a) better understand attorneys' subjective experiences; (b) discover ways to help reduce the high level of stress and anxiety among lawyers; (c) develop methods to help decrease the percentage of lawyers who drink to excess; and (d) potentially lower the excessive depression and suicide rates among lawyers.

Some legal scholars have suggested that an improved understanding of attorney affect can alleviate the negative effects that may be associated with the legal profession and increase happiness (Huang & Swedloff, 2008). Toward that end, this study examines the perceptions of 691 attorneys by using an online survey that utilizes the Scale of Psychological Well Being (SPWB). The SPWB encompasses six distinct dimensions of wellness (autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance; Ryff, 1989). In addition, this study

investigates attorney beliefs, attitudes and perceptions concerning what may hinder or facilitate attorney well-being by reviewing two focus group discussions.

Definition of Terms

Happiness

Merriam-Webster (2011) defined happiness as “a state of well-being and contentment; joy; a pleasurable or satisfying experience” (para. 1). *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (Happiness and Virtue, 2011) defined happiness as a translation of the ancient Greek word *eudaimonia* and suggests that happiness is not an occurrent mood or affective state but rather “a matter of having things go well. Being happy in this sense is living a life of what some scholars call ‘human flourishing’” (para. 18).

Happiness has also been described as both the absence of depression and the presence of a number of positive emotional (feelings), cognitive states (positive thoughts), and bodily experiences (Joseph & Lewis, 1998; Joseph, Linley, Harwood, Lewis, & McCollam, 2004). The term *happiness* is commonly used to refer to the state of being in which an individual feels peace and serenity and experiences a “durable state of balance between the individual’s wishes, goals, and needs on the one hand, and the surroundings or the world on the other hand” (Jacobsen, 2007, p. 39). Many psychologists and researchers refer to *happiness* as subjective well-being.

Life Satisfaction

Life satisfaction has been described as cognitive evaluations of well-being (Diener, 1984). Life satisfaction includes the overall assessment one makes of the various aspects and quality of one’s life including but not limited to health, career, and marriage (Ehrhardt, Saris, & Veenhoven, 2000).

Positive Psychology

Positive psychology describes the field of psychology that focuses on individuals' sense of well-being, contentment, and happiness or life satisfaction to develop an understanding of positive emotions and those traits and factors that make life better (Arthaud-Day et al., 2005; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

Psychological Well-Being

Psychological well-being is derived from three bodies of theoretical literature, including lifespan development, mental health, and personal growth (Frazier, Mintz, & Mobley, 2005). Psychological well-being is a theoretical construct that defines well-being in a broad context that extends beyond prevailing conceptions of subjective well-being that are focused on happiness, contentment, and life satisfaction (Ryff & Singer, 2008). The conceptualization concerns development of the individual and self-realization (Ryff & Singer, 2008) and focuses on factors that include self-acceptance, positive relations with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth. Psychological well-being is the main focus of the proposed research.

Subjective Well-Being

The field of subjective well-being (SWB) has also been defined as the scientific examination of how people view their lives, both in the moment and over long periods of time (Diener, 1984; Diener, Oishi, & Lucas, 2003). Subjective well-being research examines the experience of life and its emotions, not their mere expression (Arthaud-Day et al., 2005). As a result, research has suggested that the amount of time people experience positive affect, rather than the intensity of that affect, defines their level of happiness (Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, & Schkade, 2005).

Arthaud-Day, Rode, Mooney, and Near (2005) noted that well-being includes three components: (1) the presence of positive affect, (2) the relative lack of negative affect, and (3) people's cognitive evaluations of their life circumstances. *Well-being* is often used to describe a person's subjective "evaluation of his or her life" (Diener & Diener, 1996, p. 181).

Research Questions

This study addressed the following primary question: What is the perception of well-being among members of the Arizona Bar? Additionally, several secondary questions were explored using the focus group method:

- (1) What are the beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions about well-being among attorneys?
- (2) What are the shared beliefs, values, or practices within the legal culture that further or hinder attorneys' experiences of well-being?
- (3) What are the most important qualities that make attorneys happy/satisfied or unhappy/dissatisfied with work?
- (4) Does listening to clients' problems/stories of trauma affect attorney's levels of well-being?
- (5) What role does spirituality play in attorneys' lives/senses of well-being?
- (6) How do attorneys use creativity at work?
- (7) How do attorneys cope with adversity, stress, or change at work?
- (8) What can be done to improve attorneys' well-being?

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

All men seek happiness. This is without exception. Whatever different means they employ, they all tend to this end. The cause of some going to war, and of others avoiding it, it is the same desire in both, attending with different views. The will never takes the least step but to this object. This is the motive of every action of every man, even of those who hang themselves. (Pascal, c. 1910/1960, para. 425)

Most of the research to date on attorneys has focused on career satisfaction and stress, work/life balance, how law-school debt influences lawyers' decisions about their careers, law firm culture and billable hours, and the large number of attorneys who suffer from substance abuse and/or depression (Benjamin, Darling, & Sales, 1990; Eaton, Anthony, Mandell, & Garrison, 1990; Pfeiffer, 2007; Syverud & Schiltz, 1999). The following review of the literature first examines what the research says about happiness, life satisfaction, and well-being both generally and among lawyers. Next, the review focuses on well-being and examines several factors that may affect attorney perceptions of well-being: culture, resilience, spirituality, and creativity. Together, these two sections provide a framework for understanding what may influence and improve attorney well-being.

Understanding Happiness, Life Satisfaction, and Well-Being

Through the ages, many philosophers, including Plato and Aristotle, have sought to understand the meaning of *eudaimonia* (Aristotle, 2010; Plato, 2010). *Eudaimonia*, a Greek word, is often defined as happiness (Eudaemonism, 2010). However, in translating the original meaning of *eudaimonia* to *happiness*, the real significance of the word is lost. In ethics, *eudaimonia* is believed to represent more than one's state of mind or positive or negative affect (e.g., intense feelings and reactions or emotions people have; Wright &

Walton, 2003) that are normally associated with happiness. Rather, *eudaimonia* is believed to encompass a good, indwelling spirit that is separate from pleasure and considers the chief or highest good for humans (Eudaemonism, 2010). Although philosophers may disagree on the definition of happiness (and whether it equates to *eudaemonia*), one conclusion that has been drawn suggests that a good life is a happy life (Diener, et al., 2003). Since the early attempts to understand the real meaning of *eudaimonia* or *happiness*, much of the modern study of psychological well-being has focused on three concepts related to positive functioning: happiness, life satisfaction, and well-being.

During the past 25 years, psychologists have carved out the field of positive psychology, which identifies healthy aspects of people, including their strengths and resources, in a scientifically rigorous manner (Sheldon & Kasser, 2001). Positive psychology focuses on the subjective experiences of individuals, including their sense of well-being, contentment, and happiness or satisfaction (Arthaud-Day et al., 2005; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Seligman, one of the forerunners in the field, described positive psychology as follows:

Positive Psychology at the subjective level is about positive subjective experience: well-being and satisfaction (past), and flow, joy, the sensual pleasures, and happiness (present), and constructive cognitions about the future—optimism, hope, and faith. At the individual level it is about positive individual traits—the capacity for love and vocation, courage, interpersonal skill, aesthetic sensibility, perseverance, forgiveness, originality, future-mindedness, high talent, and wisdom. At the group level it is about the civic virtues and the institutions that move individuals toward better citizenship: responsibility, nurturance, altruism, civility, moderation, tolerance, and work ethic. (Seligman, 2002, p. 528)

The study of positive psychology has contributed much of the literature on happiness, life satisfaction, and subjective well-being.

Happiness

The literature indicates no universal acceptance of the meaning of *happiness*. Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, et al. (2005) suggested that happiness is most often described in terms of frequent positive affect, high life satisfaction, and infrequent negative affect. On the other hand, Ryff and Keyes (1995) asserted that happiness is obtained when there is a balance between positive affect and negative affect. Still others have described happiness as both the absence of depression and the presence of a number of positive emotions (feelings), cognitive states (positive thoughts), and bodily experiences (Joseph et al., 2004; Joseph & Lewis, 1998). Moreover, happiness also has been used to refer to a state of being in which an individual feels peace and serenity and experiences a “durable state of balance between the individual’s wishes, goals, and needs on the one hand, and the surroundings or the world on the other hand” (Jacobsen, 2007, p. 39).

Additionally, significant empirical studies have indicated that positive affect is an indication of happiness and high levels of positive affect may be rooted in personality predisposition (Lyubomirsky, King, & Deiner, 2005; Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, et al., 2005). Diener, Sandvik, et al. (2009) suggested that frequent positive affect correlates more strongly with happiness measures than intensity of positive affect, and frequent positive affect is both “necessary and sufficient to produce high scores on a variety of happiness measures” (p. 217). Chronically happy people have been shown to (a) have a positive attitude toward self and others; (b) be more likely to participate in social and physical activities, enjoy their leisure time, and experience flow; (c) be liked more than their less happy peers; (d) demonstrate prosocial behavior; (e) show higher levels of

physical well-being and coping; and (f) have greater problem-solving and creative ability (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997, 1999; Diener & Fujita, 1995; Rigby & Slee, 1993; Ryff, 1989).

The majority of U.S. residents rate personal happiness as very important (Diener, Suh, Smith, & Shao, 1995). In fact, the pursuit of happiness is an important value that has been woven into the culture (Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, et al., 2005). Thousands of books, guides, journals, magazines, Websites, and blogs on happiness discuss an array of topics: relationships, marriage, children, health, career, neuroscience, and daily living. For example, websites with blogs (www.psychologytoday.com, www.happinessblog.com, www.authentichappiness.sas.upenn.edu, www.happiness.com, www.positivityblog.com, www.happiness-project.com), and movies (*Amelie*, *Hairspray*, *Happiness*, *Happy-Go-Lucky*, and *The Pursuit of Happyness*) offer viewers proactive strategies for living a happy and successful life (e.g., meditation, yoga, balanced diet, gratefulness practice, making affirmations); others suggest ways to generate money, attract an ideal love, and develop healthy relationships.

Television shows (e.g., Dr. Phil, and Dr. Oz) are interspersed with advertising and marketing ads that depict an array of products, from vehicles to facial cream, all intended to help people “live the good life.” Individually, people utilize any number of goods (vehicles, clothes, jewelry), services (facials, manicures, massages), and substances (food, alcohol, drugs) to achieve higher states of well-being. With so much cultural emphasis on the attainment of better or higher states of happiness, it follows that happiness is important to many individuals, including lawyers.

Interest in happiness is not limited to the United States. Other countries throughout the world are increasing their study of the levels of happiness and well-being

among their citizens in order to develop a better understanding of their citizenry; inform health-related, quality-of-life issues; and help in public policy considerations (Diener, 2006).

Research Studies

A challenging question for researchers to answer is how does one provide guidance to help individuals obtain and maintain greater states of happiness or well-being? One answer might lie in an analysis of the compelling and sometimes competing internal and external factors that affect the adaptation process (McWilliams, 1999). From this perspective, the achievement of happiness may be based on one's ability to balance external and internal objectives. For example, people may look for happiness in outer objects, including familial and interpersonal relationships, occupational activities, and financial accomplishments. Alternatively, they may also focus on internal factors related to self-concepts including self-image, confidence, and self-esteem. As individuals seek happiness, they may employ coping mechanisms, many of which were previously learned, to engage with competing internal and external resources and respond to current stressors (McWilliams, 1999). The use of these coping mechanisms, even in difficult times, along with positive outcomes associated with them, may help people develop resilience and the ability to increase their happiness over time. The influence of resilience on well-being is discussed later.

Although there have been fewer investigations in the psychological literature of happy and very happy people than of unhappy individuals, Diener and Seligman (2002) investigated the characteristics of very happy people, those who were considered average, and very unhappy people. In a 51-day project, the researchers screened 222 college

students for high happiness using combined filters and found that (a) very happy people differed significantly from those who were in the average and unhappy groups as they had no suicidal ideation, could recall more positive life events, and reported more positive than negative daily emotions; (b) a large portion of the variance between the groups can be predicted based on good quality social relationships; (c) the very unhappy group was rated as dissatisfied by themselves and their loved ones and reported equal amounts of positive and negative emotions; (d) the average group was in between the very happy and unhappy groups as they were somewhat satisfied with life and experienced more positive than negative affect; and (e) the very happy groups scored higher on measures of extroversion and lower scores on the neuroticism scale (Diener & Seligman, 2002). These results suggest that not only was there a lack of pathology in happier individuals but that emotions play a significant role in the determination of whether a person is happy.

Another study examined high levels of happiness for potentially maladaptive or adverse effects and found that high levels of happiness and positive emotions did not necessarily create problems or dysfunction (e.g., arrogance, lack of motivation). Essentially, very happy people, or those who commonly experience positive emotions, are not overly happy or at significant risk to experience pathology. Friedman, Schwartz, and Haaga (2002) conducted a study that utilized the Balanced States of Mind (BSOM) model. The study identified five ratios, with anxiety and depression at one end and hypomania and pathological denial at the other end, to analyze whether one can have too much happiness. Additionally, stress reactivity was measured by heart rates that were recorded and checked periodically. Only those participants who were considered very

positive (mean ratio = 0.85 based on the BSOM) were allowed to participate in the study. The results of the study, which included 72 participants who were mostly (62%) Caucasian and highly educated (mean years of education: 16), were inconsistent with prior findings of the BSOM that happiness ratings above the .90 range were associated with dysfunction. This research substantiated the research by Diener and Seligman (2002), which concluded that very high levels of happiness are not necessarily dysfunctional.

The literature on happiness strongly suggests that happiness is not only a desirable state but that positive emotions are an indication of happiness, internal and external factors may influence happiness, specific traits are associated with happy people, and high levels of happiness and positive emotions do not necessarily create problems or dysfunction. Finally, happiness is often used synonymously with life satisfaction and subjective well-being, which are discussed in detail below.

Life Satisfaction

Life satisfaction, the cognitive complement to happiness, takes into consideration personal perceptions of well-being (Ryff, 1995). Essentially, evaluations of happiness or well-being are based on personal perception, and life satisfaction represents the degree to which individuals judge the overall quality of their lives in a positive or negative light (Ehrhardt et al., 2000). Some theorists, such as Veenhoven, suggested that life satisfaction has an affective dimension (Ehrhardt et al., 2000). However, the majority of researchers defined life satisfaction as a purely cognitive judgment of life or its facets (Diener, 1984).

The level of life satisfaction is based on the subjective experience of the individual. For example, people who provide a report of their experiences as well as the positive or negative emotions that they associate with them are actually evaluating their level of happiness or satisfaction with life (Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, et al., 2005). This level of life satisfaction can be measured over time. Changes in perceptions of happiness can be studied by comparing identical questions at different times; stability occurs when less of a change is observed (Ehrhardt et al., 2000).

Moreover, the ways that people perceive and think about the events that occur in their lives is more important than the objective nature of the events themselves (Lyubomirsky & Tucker, 1998). Interestingly, self-rated happy and unhappy people respond differently to life events in a manner that is supportive of their sense of well-being and self-regard. For instance, happy people rated positive events as making them more happy than did unhappy people (Lyubomirsky & Tucker, 1998). The cognitive evaluation of the experience is determinative of how people perceive their sense of life satisfaction.

A large number of studies have found that life satisfaction is an indicator of well-being (Lyubomirsky, King, et al., 2005; Mak, Ng, & Wong, 2011; Staw & Barsade, 1993). This makes sense if one considers that happy individuals tend to be less influenced by their moods and more likely to be satisfied with the rational appraisal of all of their choices (Lyubomirsky & Tucker, 1998). Happy people are also more likely to employ optimistic strategies, perceive life in positive ways, feel a sense of control over their outcomes, use humor, derive positive meaning from negative events, and possess confidence about their abilities and skills (Lyubomirsky, 2001). Researchers have

evaluated life satisfaction across a multitude of facets of life including but not limited to work, income, organizational citizenship, community involvement, social relationships, friendship and social support, marriage and romance, and physical and mental health (Lyubomirsky, King, et al., 2005). Additional research that evaluates life satisfaction among attorneys, related to these and other factors, would be enlightening.

Subjective Well-Being and Psychological Well-Being

Social scientists have developed several tools to gauge individuals' perceptions of existence; however, two general lines of well-being research have evolved, one involving subjective well-being (SWB) and the other, psychological well-being (PWB; Deci & Ryan, 2008; Lopez & Snyder, 2009). Despite the fact that the well-being traditions (SWB and PWB) evolved separately, "increasing evidence draws connections between the two" (Keyes et al., 2002, p. 1009).

Happiness and life satisfaction, together, are often known as subjective well-being (SWB). SWB is a scientific field that provides analysis of how people evaluate their circumstances and includes individuals' emotional responses, moods, and judgments about their lives (Diener, Oishi, et al., 2003). SWB research has been influenced by sociologists; quality of life and mental health researchers; and personality, social, and cognitive psychologists (Diener, Oishi, et al., 2003). Diener and Veenhoven have sought to bring together and integrate the interests of these various fields using a myriad of methods including surveys, laboratory experiments, and case studies (Diener, Oishi, et al., 2003).

As an umbrella term, *SWB* includes all types of evaluations, both positive and negative, that individuals make of their lives and encompasses the cognitive evaluations,

including work and life satisfaction, interest and engagement, and affective reactions to life that are related to happiness and sadness, fulfillment, and life circumstances (Diener, 2006; Diener, Oishi, et al., 2003). In this way, SWB has been defined as the scientific examination of how people view their lives, both in the moment and over long periods of time (Diener, Oishi et al., 2003).

Early SWB research clarified the notion that although people live in objectively defined environments, they respond subjectively to their defined worlds (Keyes, Shmotkin, & Ryff, 2002). For this reason, as an operational definition, SWB includes three components: (1) the presence of positive affect (pleasant moods and emotions), (2) the relative lack of negative affect (moods and emotions that are unpleasant), and (3) people's cognitive evaluations of their life circumstances (Arthaud-Day et al., 2005; Deci & Ryan, 2008). Essentially, SWB is used to describe a person's subjective "evaluation of his or her life" where the maximization of one's happiness has been seen as being synonymous with well-being (Diener & Diener, 1996, p. 181).

Moreover, SWB research investigates the experience of life and its emotions, not their mere expression (Arthaud-Day et al., 2005). The resultant research suggested that the amount of time people experience positive affect, rather than negative affect, not necessarily the intensity of that affect, defines their levels of happiness (Lyubomirsky, King, et al., 2005). Although subjective, personal experiences are the focus of SWB research, researchers believe that the manifestations of a person's experience can be observed objectively by using a number of different verbal and nonverbal mechanisms including behavior, biology, actions, attention, and memory (Diener, 2006). The primary

focus of SWB research has been on the personal, social-environmental, and cultural factors that lead to SWB (Deci & Ryan, 2008).

The term *well-being* is commonly used instead of *SWB* to prevent the notion that something unreasonable or esoteric about the concept is involved (Diener, 2006). The term *well-being* has also been used in the literature to refer to psychological well-being (PWB). PWB is a multifaceted construct made up of life attitudes that takes into account the dynamic process of striving toward congruence, living up to one's potential, attaining optimal psychological growth, and finding meaning in life (Kafka & Kozma, 2002; Ryan & Deci, 2001; Ryff, 1989). Whereas SWB research serves as a relevant index for the measurement of quality of life, PWB research draws heavily on human development and existential challenges of life (Keyes et al., 2002). PWB focuses on the highest human good involving virtue and the realization of one's potential and is humanistically oriented and influenced by Jung, Maslow, Allport, and Rogers (Deci & Ryan, 2008; Ryff, 1989).

Ryff (1989) set out to establish a comprehensive definition of well-being that includes more than SWB. Ryff and her colleagues (e.g., Deci & Ryan, 2008; Ryff, 1989; Ryff & Keyes, 1995; Ryff & Singer, 2008) were among some of the first researchers to suggest an alternative method of understanding well-being. Additionally, Ryff sought to address the issue that one may report a feeling of happiness but may still lack meaning in life (Ryff, 1989). In so doing, she developed the Scale of Psychological Well-Being, a six-dimensional survey that seeks to measure all aspects of well-being (Kafka & Kozma, 2002; Ryff, 1989). The scale draws from points of convergence in mental health, clinical assessments, and life-development theories to find multiple, connecting aspects of positive psychological function (Ryff, 1989; Ryff & Keyes, 1995). It is significantly

related to the eudaimonic philosophy and conceptualization of well-being (Deci & Ryan, 2008; Frazier, Mintz, & Mobley, 2005; Ryan & Deci, 2001).

Finally, because it encapsulates concepts related to both happiness and life satisfaction, for the purposes of this study, whenever the term *well-being* is used it includes concepts related to SWB (e.g., happiness and life satisfaction) and PWB (e.g., personal development and self-actualization).

Factors that Influence Attorney Well-Being

Well-being has been studied from a variety of perspectives, however, very little research has examined the subjective perspectives of attorneys to determine (a) the extent to which attorneys experience well-being, and (b) how attorneys may achieve higher states of well-being. Often, clinicians focus on people's problems and not what may be going right in their lives (Richards, 1997). This certainly is the case regarding research that has been conducted to date on lawyers. Although much of the literature explores depression, suicide, substance abuse, anxiety, and work-related stress among lawyers, future research is needed to assess well-being and the factors that contribute to well-being to fill this gap.

A pilot study conducted by Ramos (2010) examined Arizona attorney perceptions concerning well-being in the practice of law. Eighty-two participants completed the Scales of Psychological Well-Being, and 7 participants participated in 2 focus group discussions. Arizona attorneys reported an overall experience of well-being, with three key distinctions. First, older attorneys who had more legal experience demonstrated higher levels of autonomy. Second, attorneys experienced significantly higher levels of autonomy and significantly lower levels of environmental mastery than the normative

group. Third, lawyers who enjoyed their practice area had significantly higher well-being scores across six dimensions: Total Score, Environmental Mastery, Personal Growth, Positive Relationships with Others, Purpose in Life, and Self-Acceptance. Focus group participants agreed that (a) attorneys must balance a plethora of competing interests; (b) well-being is impacted by internal (e.g., cognitions, behaviors, and attitudes) as well as external factors (e.g., family, age, success, the legal culture, and socioeconomic status); (c) law schools do not adequately prepare law students for the practice of law; and (d) specific things can be done by the State Bar of Arizona, the legal culture/law firms, and individual practitioners to reduce stress, create balance, and improve attorney well-being.

The following areas of literature are briefly reviewed to gain an understanding of what factors might influence attorney well-being: culture, resilience, spirituality, and creativity.

Culture

The meaning of the word *culture* can be difficult to grasp fully because it is used in so many different contexts and it continues to change over time. In its original framework, *culture* described husbandry or the tending of natural growth (Eagleton, 2001). Culture, defined from the perspective of human development, is understood as an expression of the collection of learned and shared beliefs, values, practices, behaviors, symbols, and attitudes that are characteristic of a particular group of people (Gardiner & Kosmitzki, 2005).

The meaning of the word *culture* has evolved based on new understandings of how power, political and historical factors, resistance, and influence have shaped the

social framework (Dirks, Ely, & Ortner, 1994). Michel Foucault is credited with conducting an examination of the field of power relations and developing theories on the impact of power on culture. For example, Foucault posited the idea that, rather than a static phenomenon, power is a productive and dynamic force that moves around within cultures (Dirks et al., 1994; Foucault, 1980; Foucault & Cote, 2004). As such, power may be used by all, including the weak and the strong as well as political operatives and private individuals (Dirks et al., 1994). Dirks et al. suggested that people who comprise a particular cultural group do not always share the same values; rather, their values may depend on a multitude of factors including ethnicity, class, politics, history, gender, etc. The relationship between competing players with opposing interests and values, each vying for varying levels of power and authority, cultivates cultural identification. In this context, individuals within a particular culture are believed to fight for power and control even if the battle is harmoniously reconciled. The winners who write history have the power to shape perception based on their viewpoints (Eagleton, 2001).

Culture has a tremendous impact on how individuals define and engage in the world. Every person, in one way or another, is impacted by culture. Because children, adolescents, and adults are molded by how they are socialized (Gardiner & Kosmitzki, 2005), we must question to what degree popular culture impedes or facilitates the evolution of individual and contemporary consciousness: “Through a shared identification, individuals are linked within the same psychological syndrome and will act together to preserve, defend and enhance their common identity” (Dien, 2000, p. 5). This is true except for those in popular culture who may seek to define their identities against the established order (Dirks et al., 1994). In those circumstances, complex and

challenging situations may arise between social movements and popular culture given the existence of class, gender, ethnic, and racial differences.

Individuals who are within a culture with shared identification are also involved in relationships with one another. Research has suggested that human beings are social creatures and that relationships, from birth, are important for human development and well-being (Eisler, 2007; Richards, 2007). Kohlberg's stages of moral development highlights the significance of interpersonal relationships (stage 3) and how the desire to maintain a functioning society (stage 4) influences people's moral development (Crain, 1992). Relational qualities are important to both men and women to allow the experience of personal development and well-being (Richards, 2007). Because there is so little discussion in the literature of how attorneys are impacted by relationships within the legal culture, it would be relevant to examine how relational qualities impact well-being.

The consciousness and instrumentality of popular culture may be represented in various institutions (e.g., business, church, philanthropic associations, public and private schools, government, and social and professional organizations) and perpetuated by a variety of media (e.g., radio, television, newspaper). Interactions within these organizations and the media provide opportunities for individuals either to go with the flow of culture or against its grain. Ortner proposed that society as a system poses powerful constraints on individuals, despite the fact that culture is created by human action and interaction (Dirks et al., 1994). Gardiner and Kosmitzki (2005) pointed out, "Cultural beliefs and values influence how individuals come to judge their efforts and accomplishments" (p. 211). For example, if the images projected by a certain culture on a person are perceived as positive, a person may adopt a positive self-image. Alternatively,

it is equally possible for a person to adopt negative beliefs. These concepts present interesting considerations for lawyers who exist within a legal culture that is adversarial in nature, emphasizes financial success and materialism, and exerts constant pressures to bill hours and perform at work.

Furthermore, Hawkins (2002) posited an integrated relationship between individual awareness and collective consciousness as conceived by Carl Jung:

The human mind is like a computer terminal connected to a giant database. The database is human consciousness itself, of which our own cognizance is merely an individual expression, but with its own roots in the common consciousness of all mankind. This database is the realm of genius; because to be human is to participate in the database, everyone, by virtue of his birth, has access to genius. . . . This is indeed an astonishing discovery, bearing the power to change lives, both individually and collectively, to a degree never anticipated. (pp. 34-35)

Hawkins's (2002) view underscores the idea that individual consciousness and its expression are rooted in a common consciousness of all mankind. If this concept is true, it comes as no surprise that cultural and social attitudes have a significant impact on how individual consciousness develops and cooperates with the collective consciousness. The interplay and tension between the individual and the collective, between those who have power and authority and those who are perceived as vulnerable, cultivates and develops individual and cultural identification. The interplay between personal and cultural consciousness may have powerful consequences for lawyers who may be perceived negatively by American society and within the legal subculture.

Culture may also be seen as a means to explain the diversity of the evolving human experience or as "a body of artistic and intellectual work of agreed value, along with the institutions which produce, disseminate and regulate it" (Eagleton, 2001, p. 21). Culture impacts each person differently in that it mirrors numerous discourses that merge

in a systemic manner (Dirks et al., 1994). Regardless of how one views the impact of culture on the individual, it cannot be reasonably disputed that cultural influences on human behavior have and continue to evolve; it is therefore important to consider how culture affects well-being.

There are significant differences in SWB between cultures (Diener, Oishi, & Lucas, 2003). Family, ethnicity, and social norms are just a few societal characteristics that contribute significantly to shaping people's identities and how they view their relationships to everything else in the world. In the modern era, with widespread global awareness and interaction among individuals who are increasingly born of mixed heritage, the study of culture and its impact becomes paramount. For example, a society's level of SWB depends on many factors, including the country's level of economic development (multinational research suggests that the move from extreme poverty to prosperity increases happiness, but the correlations weaken as one moves up the economic scale), social history (long periods of time as a communist or Protestant were influential), and political climate (a history of democratic institutions was relevant; Inglehart & Klingemann, 2000).

Other factors that may be relevant to the importance of SWB across nations include the ways cultural norms differ in the regulation of momentary experiences of emotion, how frequently people think of their SWB, and social desirability (Diener, Suh, et al., 1995). Diener, Suh, et al. studied national differences in reported SWB across 38 nations in studies in which life satisfaction and happiness were separated from income. The researchers found that (a) South Korea and Japan were below average in perceptions of happiness and life satisfaction compared to other countries, and (b) the United States

was higher than average, even when the study controlled for income. Additionally, cultures, like people, have a normal baseline of well-being that can be measured. This baseline may change moderately based on current events (Inglehart & Klingemann, 2000).

It is no surprise that in the United States, happiness is seen as a worthwhile endeavor, especially since it is often perceived to include “experiences of joy, contentment, or positive well-being, combined with a sense that one’s life is good, meaningful” (Lyubomirsky, 2001, p. 239). As noted earlier, happiness and the attributes associated with it are highly desired by most Americans (Diener, Suh, et al., 1995). This is true despite the vast number of cultural and ethnic differences of American citizens. For example, people who live in rural Idaho might differ in what makes them happy than native New Yorkers. However, regardless of the specific subjective measures of happiness employed by each individual, Americans, generally seem to share a common desire for happiness. In fact, in the United States, consistent with many national surveys, Americans have reported a positive level of well-being (Diener & Diener, 1996).

Finally, despite evidence that cultural awareness may have a positive impact on happiness, little research has measured the development of healthy cultural attitudes toward the self and well-being (Miville et al, 1999; Tesch-Römer, Motel-Klingebiel, & Tomasik, 2008). Some researchers have discussed the nature of the adversarial legal process, one aspect of the legal culture, as contributing negatively to attorney well-being (Seligman et al., 2001); however, none have specifically explored attorney perceptions concerning how the legal culture itself affects attorney well-being. Consequently, it is important to consider lawyers as human beings who may experience work-related

psychological distress as a result of the cultural aspects of their work. Because various factors impact attorneys' senses of well-being (Wallace, 2005), it is relevant to explore how lawyers might be influenced by any number of shared customs or practices within the legal culture and by society as a whole. Specifically, it is important to determine what are the shared beliefs or values that might further or hinder attorney experiences of well-being. Additionally, as stated earlier, research has shown that not only do lawyers seem to be unhappy (Jordan, 1993), but there is a relationship between the practice of law and career dissatisfaction (Lawyer Satisfaction, 2006). Further investigation of learned or shared beliefs, values, attitudes, or practices might provide some insight into why many lawyers seem so unhappy. It is equally as important to identify effective coping strategies lawyers might employ to positively impact their experience of well-being.

Resilience

Resilience research has provided insight into SWB. Research on resilience has increased, in part, because researchers have found it has a positive effect on health, well-being, and quality of life (Windle, 2011). The literature offers no concise, singular definition of resilience; rather, multiple definitions are commonly used by researchers (Arrington & Wilson, 2000). The most widely accepted meaning of *resilience* refers to an individual's ability to adapt successfully or the absence of a pathological outcome following exposure to stressful or potentially traumatic life events or life circumstances (Masten, 2007; Seery, Holman, & Silver, 2010; Windle, 2011). Resilience is defined as the ability of an individual to adapt to life situations and recover from adversity (Bonanno, Galea, Bucciarelli, & Vlahov, 2007). In this way, resilience is considered a process that results when an individual reacts to risk factors (e.g., stress) or

vulnerabilities that are present in their environment when the interactional process involves both individual characteristics and the environment (Cowan, Cowan, & Schulz, 1996; Windle, 2011).

Resilience does not mean invulnerability; rather, resilience should be examined relative to subjective experiences of stress, the individual's inventory of resources, and what researchers call a biography of success and failure (Arrington & Wilson, 2000). Resilience is best achieved when protective factors (e.g., assets, resources, or strengths) are present across three levels of functioning including individual, social, and community/society (Windle, 2011). In a study of adolescent resilience, Hjemdal, Friborg, Stiles, Martinussen, and Rosenvinge (2006) sought to clarify essential resilience factors and processes that could contribute to an understanding of individual stress adaptation. The researchers studied 421 adolescents on the successful development of a new scale, the Resilience Scale for Adolescents (READ), which was found to have sound psychometric qualities as a measure of all of the central aspects of psychological construct of resiliency (Hjemdal et al., 2006). READ is based on the developmental work of the Norwegian Resilience Scale for Adults, which identifies resilience on a consistent pattern of five factors: (a) *personal competence* (measures an individual's level of self-esteem and efficacy, self-liking, and other factors including hope, determination, and orientation to life); (b) *social competence* (measures extraversion, social adeptness, good communication skills, and the ability to initiate activities and be flexible in social matters); (c) *structured style* (measures the degree to which an individual plans and structures the day); (d) *family cohesion* (measures common family values and support as well as the family's ability to maintain a positive outlook regardless of hardship); and

(e) *social resources* (measures sense of access to external support, intimacy, and availability of the network of friends, relatives, and others who provide social support) (Hjemdal et al., 2006).

In addition, Benard (1995) asserted that resilience is not only fostered by the individual, environment, and protective processes but can itself foster positive attributes in individuals. From this human development and resilience perspective, every person is born with a biological imperative for growth and development that unfolds naturally within the environment and includes the ability for resilience to develop with social competence, problem-solving skills, autonomy, critical awareness, and a sense of purpose (Benard, 1995).

People have demonstrated that they can and often do transcend difficult childhood circumstances and later move on to rebuild their lives (Blum, 1998). This can be accomplished any number of ways, including (1) realizing that there is no time limit for the development of resilient behaviors and coping skills, (2) relying on faith and the possibilities that exist in the future, (3) believing in a higher power that can play a key role in helping to develop inner strength, (4) setting goals and planning for the future, and (5) believing in oneself and recognizing one's own strengths (Blum, 1998). Finally, faith and belief in a higher power may also contribute to the development of resilience because some individuals use their faith to develop strength and coping skills. This notion prompts a discussion of the influence of spirituality on well-being.

Spirituality

Many people draw upon their spiritual beliefs and religious faith as a resource to help them achieve well-being and cope with life challenges and stressors (Hill &

Pargament, 2003; Peres, Moreira-Almeida, Nasello, & Koenig, 2007). In the United States, more than 75% of Americans identify as Christian and 60% of adults belong to a religious congregation (Pew Forum, 2008; Walsh, 2010). During difficult times, many individuals rely on their faith. For example, a U.S. national survey conducted after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks showed that Americans turned to religion or spirituality in high numbers (90%) to cope with their stress (Schuster, et al., 2001). Therefore, the importance of spiritual and religious practice on individuals should not be ignored, underestimated or undervalued.

It is relevant, then, to examine the degree to which religion and spirituality affect well-being. An important initial inquiry concerns the meaning and relationship between religion and spirituality. Spirituality has its traditional roots in religion as a dimension of religious experiences; however, it has been separated and studied independently (Estanek, 2006). Whether this separation is useful has been the subject of an ongoing debate; many scholars view the concepts as analogous, although some scholars have defined *spirituality* as an internal, private process and religion as an external, public process (Rogers & Love, 2007). Religious behaviors may lack qualities of spirituality and vice versa (Ortiz & Langer, 2002).

Religion has been defined as an organized set of customs and beliefs in a divine or superhuman power among individuals who share traditions, practices, and structures and a fixed set of ideas or ideology (Hill & Pargament, 2003; Walsh, 2010). Religion also emphasizes shared worship and rituals performed in community with others (Saucier & Skrzypinska, 2006). On the other hand, spirituality is defined as a search for the sacred in which individuals use their beliefs as a process to transform whatever they hold as sacred

in their lives (Vaughan, 1991). Love and Talbot's (1999) definition of *spirituality* is commonly quoted and is considered one of the most comprehensive in the literature:

- (1) Spiritual development involves an internal process of seeking personal authenticity, genuineness, and wholeness as an aspect of identity development.
- (2) Spiritual development involves the process of continually transcending one's current locus of centricity.
- (3) Spiritual development involves developing a greater connectedness to self and others through relationships and union with community.
- (4) Spiritual development involves deriving meaning, purpose, and direction in one's life.
- (5) Spiritual development involves an increasing openness to exploring a relationship with an intangible and pervasive power or essence that exists beyond human knowing. (pp. 364-367)

Saucier and Skryzpińska (2006) estimated that 20% of Americans consider themselves to be "spiritual, but not religious" (pp. 1258-1259). Although it is seen as central to religion spirituality can be practiced outside of formal religious structures (Hill & Pargament, 2003; Saucier & Skrzypinska, 2006; Walsh, 2010).

How people define spirituality for themselves helps determine the degree to which they may experience their own spirituality (Estanek, 2006). This is relevant because some researchers have suggested that individuals with different dispositions tend to have different styles of religious and spiritual beliefs (Saucier & Skrzypinska, 2006). Spirituality, regardless of whether or not it is associated with religious affiliation, is the focus of this review.

The relationship between religion, spirituality, and well-being has been studied in the literature. Much of the research suggests there is a positive relationship between religious and spiritual beliefs and well-being (Ellison et al., 1989) and that an individuals' level of religious commitment has a significant impact on their social and political attitudes and behavior (Ellison et al., 1989). Other research has demonstrated that

spirituality plays a major positive role in the quality of people's lives (Richards, Campenni, & Muse-Burke, 2010).

Evidence from some studies suggested three types of variables in religious behavior that may be related to well-being: (1) personal belief, religious experience, and religious coping may keep individuals from feeling a loss of control and helplessness (individuals may draw upon their subjective spiritual practices and beliefs to make sense of and cope with their daily lives and reduce suffering, strengthen purpose, and provide hope); (2) amount of participation in religious activities (helps to increase social integration of individuals as they become involved in church or other group activities where shared values, nurturing relationships and social ties may be common); and (3) type and strength of identification with a religious community (whether a religious community is considered strong or weak, conservative or liberal; Ellison et al., 1989; Karakas, 2010; Peres et al., 2007).

Whether one practices Eastern philosophy, one of the Western religions, or no religion at all, consistent spiritual practices including cultivation of attributes such as love, compassion, patience, generosity (Dalai Lama & Cutler, 2009), and prayer and meditation may help one maintain a positive sense of well-being even during difficult times. For example, mindfulness, a form of meditation with roots in the Buddhist tradition, is one tool that researchers have concluded can be helpful in assisting individuals with their spiritual development, thereby increasing one's sense of peace, happiness, and well-being (Anderson, Lau, Segal & Bishop, 2007; Brown & Ryan, 2003). Mindfulness is defined as maintaining a broad awareness of and attention to one's present moment experience and surroundings (Anderson et al., 2007; Sternberg, 2000).

Mindfulness as a spiritual practice can assist in directing attention toward one's internal state of being, which can help develop a deeper sense of self-awareness. Brown and Ryan (2003) noted that meditation practice helps humans become aware of their thoughts, emotions, motives, and sensory and perceptual stimuli. In *The Art of Happiness: A Handbook for Living* (2009), the Dalai Lama emphasized the importance of meditating on compassion as a key in the development of happiness:

In generating compassion, you start by recognizing that you do not want suffering and that you have a right to have happiness. This can be verified or validated by your own experience. You then recognize that other people, just like yourself, also do not want to suffer and that they have a right to have happiness. So this becomes the basis of your beginning to generate compassion. So . . . let us meditate on compassion today. (pp. 128-129)

Individuals who use meditation as a spiritual practice and as a means to cope with stress may help reinforce positive mental frameworks that are hopeful and encouraging, thereby reducing stress and unhappiness and promoting their ability to make conscious choices that create positive change.

It is important to acknowledge that the relationship between religious coping and well-being is not always positive, and the effects of religious participation as a contributory factor to well-being have been disputed. For example, in a 2-year longitudinal study of medically ill elderly patients, negative religious coping (questioning God's love or sense of abandonment from God) was associated with increased mortality (Pargament, Koenig, Tarakeshwar, & Hahn, 2001).

In conclusion, the literature produced results that suggest a positive correlation between spirituality and well-being. This could be of benefit to lawyers who might be encouraged to use their spiritual beliefs and practices to develop healthy coping behaviors.

Creativity

Creativity has often been understood, studied, and organized based on the four P concepts, which were originally coined by Rhodes (1961): the creative product, the creative press (or environment), the creative person, and the creative process. Each of the four Ps provides insight into creativity and creative people, especially relative to what may be considered optimal human functioning in every individual.

The creative process and person. Csikszentmihalyi (1996) proposed that the creative process is based on five phases: (1) preparation, in which the person becomes immersed in a set of issues; (2) incubation, in which ideas churn below consciousness; (3) insight or the so-called a-ha moment, in which there is awareness on another level; (4) evaluation, in which the person must decide whether the insight is valuable; and (5) elaboration, the longest phase, which may involve more insight and evaluation. Csikszentmihalyi's model extends the one developed by Wallas in 1926, which contained four phases: preparation, incubation, inspiration, and evaluation (Horng & Hu, 2008; Wallas, 1926). Csikszentmihalyi (1996) acknowledged that although these five stages might be simplistic, they provide a valid basis for understanding how creative individuals work and organize sometimes very complex issues or problems.

Russ (1993) credited Guilford with the development of major theoretical contributions toward understanding the cognitive creative process. Guilford suggested that: (a) creative abilities fall along a continuum, (b) all individuals possess creative abilities on some level, (c) creative thinking and ability are different from intelligence, and (d) creativity is a form of problem-solving. The notion that all individuals possess creative abilities is powerful, particularly as it is so common for creativity to be seen only

in terms of the products produced by eminent individuals. Often creativity is acknowledged only when a person or act is considered valuable by society (Barron & Harrington, 1981; Maslow, 1968). However, the acknowledgment of creative potential in all people is a broader perspective. This view of creativity draws a distinction between pseudocreativity, or creativity that has a superficial aestheticism, and creativity in its authentic form, which is, simply, to bring something into being (May, 1975). Creativity, then, can be found in almost any role or job because of the focus on the person instead of the product (Maslow, 1968).

Researchers examined creativity and sought to understand it as a function of positive and negative attributes of the unconscious, an individual's cognitive ability, personality traits, hereditary characteristics, age, products, self-actualizing attitudes, and as a product of social and cultural influences (Helson, 1999). Helson (1999) used the term *creative personality* to refer to individuals who are consistently creative. Some people believe that creativity requires the simultaneous presence of a number of traits, including intelligence, perseverance, unconventionality, and the ability to think in a particular manner (Martindale, 2008). Dacey and Lennon (1998) identified ten traits of a creativity personality: (1) tolerance of ambiguity (ability to remain open-minded in the face of vagueness), (2) stimulus freedom (ability to bend the rules to meet needs or to assume that rules are nonexistent when there is ambiguity), (3) functional freedom (free thinking), (4) flexibility (openness to the world and change), (5) risk-taking, (6) preference for disorder (bringing order to disorder), (7) delay of gratification, (8) freedom from sex-role stereotyping, (9) perseverance, and (10) courage (p. 98). Moreover, Landau and Maoz (1978) suggested that the creative personality is daring in

its tendency to choose its own way, to step out of what might be socially acceptable, thereby actualizing potential and giving meaning to the creative person's life.

Early work on the creative personality led researchers to believe that the main source of originality is the unconscious and that creative individuals have greater access to the unconscious than other individuals (Helson, 1999). The unconscious, then, has been viewed as the primary source of creative inspiration.

Creativity and health. Richards (1990) suggested that research on whether creativity stems from mental illness or mental health produced contradictory evidence, some of which involves methodological issues. Research demonstrated that "there is a higher level of psychopathology among eminent writers and artists than scientists" (Richards, 1990, p. 305). The area is complex but speaks often about the healing potential of creativity, in which certain people with a psychological disorder (either mild or during times of only mild disability) may have a creative compensatory advantage that can work in the interests of health. There is even evidence that psychologically normal relatives may show this creative advantage, consistent with an inverted U relationship; hence, it may not be (or only be) about illness but may represent a different type of potential running in families (Richards, Kinney, Lunde, Benet, & Merzel, 1988).

This concept is not necessarily at odds with the position of humanistic psychologists that creativity can be an expression of human development. Studies have suggested that creative tasks might help restore positive mental health and improve physical well-being (Richards, 1990). The humanistic perspective, as represented by Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers, views creativity as an expression of health, growth, and development and as a means to express individual potential (Richards, 1990). From

this perspective, every human being can be seen as being creative or as having creative ability. Maslow and Rogers posited that creativity is a manifestation of mental health and, in its highest form, self-actualization (Richards, 1990). Rogers suggested that the mainspring of creativity is similar to the tendency of individuals to actualize themselves (Runco, Ebersole, & Mraz, 1997). Like Rogers, Maslow (1971) viewed self-actualization and creativity as interdependent. Maslow asserted that creativity facilitates self-actualization and vice versa (Runco et al., 1997). For Maslow (1971) said “The concept of creativeness and the concept of the healthy, self-actualizing, full human person seem to be coming closer and closer together, and may perhaps turn out to be the same thing” (p. 57).

Researchers who wrote about the connection between creativity and health identified specific traits that demonstrate that creative mental activity can be developed including psychological openness, lack of defensiveness, and access to material at the threshold of consciousness (Richards, 1998, 2007a). The healthy effects of creativity also are believed to help people cope with their problems and boost their immune system (Richards, 2007b). Other research has indicated that: (a) creative older persons have more flexible and open attitudes about life transitions; and (b) children with high creativity demonstrated fewer aggressive impulses (Richards, 1998). These findings suggest that creativity may have a positive effect on both the young and the old.

Interestingly, Maslow and Rogers relied on their respective clinical observations when they concluded that there is a relationship between creativity and self-actualization. Other researchers, including Landau and Maoz (1978), also found “a very high correlation between self-actualization and creativity” (p. 124), whereas others suggested

that as humans become more fully human, they also become more creative (River, 2002). However, some theorists believe there have been few studies that uphold the notion of a correlation between self-actualization and creativity. Runco et al. (1997) concluded that little supportive empirical evidence exists because: (a) it is difficult to define and assess creativity, (b) creativity measures in contradictory studies may not have taken into account the unique characteristics of self-actualized individuals, and (c) earlier research focused on creative products instead of creative personality.

Runco et al.'s (1997) conclusions are particularly interesting and can be exemplified in Maslow's findings. Maslow, a father of humanistic psychology, focused on a different kind of creativeness as well as the self-actualizing personality. Maslow (1954) believed that people have the ability to show love and creativity in interactions with others. He focused on a type of creativeness that is best illustrated by improvisation, rather than eminent works of art that others may designate as great. In doing so, Maslow (1968) differentiated between primary, secondary, and integrated creativity when he suggested:

Self-actualization creativeness stresses first the personality rather than its achievements, considering these achievements to be epiphenomena emitted by the personality and therefore secondary to it. It stresses characterological qualities like boldness, courage, freedom, spontaneity, perspicuity, integration, self-acceptance, all of which make possible the kind of generalized SA creativeness, which expresses itself in the creative life, or the creative attitude, or the creative person. I have also stressed the expressive or Being quality of SA creativeness rather than its problem-solving or product-making quality. SA creativeness is "emitted," or radiated, and hits all of life, regardless of purpose or design or even consciousness. It is emitted like sunshine; it spreads all over the place; it makes things grow (which are growable) and is wasted on rocks and other ungrowable things. (p. 145)

In viewing creativity as a means by which to express the evolving person or personality, Maslow (1971) focused on individuals as they are during the creative

activity. The object that is manifested in the creative product is secondary to the development of the growing person. Therefore, the creative process itself may be seen as an opportunity for growth. Supporting the notion that the creative process should be explored as a means to realize the highest degree of emotional health, particularly for those individuals who are in the process of self-actualization, May (1975) posited that the creative process includes both an encounter with the creative space (e.g., idea, landscape, inner vision) that must include engagement or absorption as well as intensity. Basically, when people are creative, they engage in a subjectively creative endeavor. The creative activity may be seen as an interaction, process, or relationship designed by creative persons between the self and their world (May, 1975).

Creativity is neither static nor linear. Rather, it is “spontaneous, effortless, innocent, easy, a kind of freedom from stereotypes and clichés” (Maslow, 1968, p. 139). Creative activities allow individuals to experience uninhibited expressiveness and beingness. Viewing creativity from this perspective, it makes sense that the creative process can help facilitate growth, particularly if a person manifests the qualities identified by Maslow (boldness, courage, freedom, spontaneity, perspicuity, integration, and self-acceptance) while engaged in creative activity.

Everyday creativity. During his study of ordinary people who engaged in ordinary tasks (e.g., housekeeping, teaching) Maslow distinguished between “special talent creativeness” and “self-actualizing creativeness” and found that people with self-actualizing creativeness had a tendency to do anything creatively (Maslow, 1968, p. 137). Ordinary individuals with self-actualizing creativeness were often perceptive, spontaneous, natural, and less controlled and inhibited in their behavior than others

(Maslow, 1968). Maslow and May (1975) touched on the idea of *everyday creativity*, although they did not coin the term. Rather, the term has evolved over time as a result of the work of psychologists, psychiatrists, philosophers, educators, and other scientists (Richards, 2007a). Everyday creativity has been defined as “the originality of everyday life, the doing of something new in the course of one’s activity at work or at leisure,” which involves innovative elements that have meaning to others (Runco & Richards, 1997, p. 97). Essentially, this concept includes almost anything one creates with originality in an everyday context (Richards, 2010).

The concept of *everyday creativity* accepts as a basic premise that every human being has the capacity to be creative and to manifest creativity in day-to-day tasks such as sewing, painting, decorating, cooking, speaking, etc. However, many people do not consider themselves creative in any sense, particularly as creativity is viewed largely as pertaining to the arts or sciences (Richards, 2010). Rather, these individuals refrain from accepting the creative abilities of their own minds as normal (Richards, 1990, 1996).

In sum, the research suggested that creativity has the potential to make a positive impact on everyone and may, in many instances, contribute to improved mental health, growth, and self-actualization. The connection between creativity and well-being provides an opportunity for lawyers to engage meaningfully in creative activities that may assist them in developing into healthier and happier individuals.

Summary of Literature and Focus of the Research

The review of the literature, which examined SWB and PWB as two alternative and converging approaches to understanding well-being, revealed insight into what

comprises well-being and reviewed four factors (culture, resilience, spirituality, and creativity) that may influence well-being.

Points of convergence indicate that well-being is influenced by more than one quality or characteristic. Rather, taken together, well-being may be seen as encompassing features of both SWB and PWB: positive and negative feelings associated with happiness, cognitive evaluations of one's life, and dimensions related to self-acceptance, personal growth, autonomy, relationships, environmental mastery, and purpose in life.

The general research on happiness, life satisfaction, and well-being provides some insight into the various factors that might positively influence attorney well-being: culture, resilience, spirituality, and creativity. For example, research suggests that culture has a significant impact on individuals and engagement in spiritual practices and creative endeavors can develop and promote happiness and well-being. In addition, people who have developed coping skills appear to be more resilient when they face stressful or difficult life situations. Knowing this, it is possible that attorneys can learn to focus on the development of the attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors that may contribute to a greater expression of well-being.

The SWB research has shown that people can transcend difficult circumstances or self-concepts and become well-adjusted, resilient, happy people. This is consistent with the humanistic approach of PWB research, which supports the notion that people can live up to their potential and attain optimal psychological growth.

This review of the literature focused on areas that may provide a better understanding of attorneys' subjective experiences; discover what may be done to reduce

the high levels of stress, depression, suicide; and substance abuse among lawyers, and improve attorney well-being.

A void exists in the literature with respect to attorney beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions concerning well-being and the practice of law. Though various studies have explored subjective well-being, psychological well-being, creativity, spirituality, resilience, and culture, generally, little is known about the effect of these factors on attorneys. This research was designed to provide insight and begin to fill this void.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions concerning well-being from the perspective of Arizona attorneys who are engaged in the practice of law.

Research Questions

In light of the lack of support in the literature that examines attorney well-being in the practice of law, the present study asks the following primary question: *What is the perception of well-being among members of the Arizona Bar?* Additionally, several secondary questions were explored using the focus group method:

- (1) What are the beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions about well-being among attorneys?
- (2) What are the shared beliefs, values, or practices within the legal culture that further or hinder attorneys' experiences of well-being?
- (3) What are the most important qualities that make attorneys happy/satisfied or unhappy/dissatisfied with work?
- (4) Does their listening to clients' problems/stories of trauma affect attorneys' levels of well-being?
- (5) What role does spirituality play in attorneys' lives/senses of well-being?
- (6) How do attorneys use creativity at work?
- (7) How do attorneys cope with adversity, stress, or change at work?
- (8) What can be done to improve attorneys' well-being?

Primary Hypothesis

The majority of Arizona attorneys will have significantly lower psychological well-being scores than the normative group for at least half of the six subscales using Ryff's Scale of Psychological Well-Being (SPWB).

Supplemental Hypotheses

- (1) SPWB responses will confirm that there is a significant positive relationship between gender and well-being, with women having lower well-being scores than men.
- (2) SPWB responses will confirm that there is a significant positive relationship between the level of environmental mastery attorneys have and their total well-being score.
- (3) SPWB responses will confirm that there is a significant positive correlation between years worked as an attorney and autonomy.
- (4) SPWB responses will confirm that there is a significant positive relationship between age and attorneys' total well-being scores, with middle-aged attorneys having higher scores than older and younger lawyers.
- (5) There will be a significant difference in well-being based on an attorney's practice areas.
- (6) There will be a significant difference in well-being based on an attorney's ethnic group.

Design

The research design, including methods and instruments used, is fundamental to research because it determines both internal and external validity (Maxim, 1999). A

parallel mixed-methods design was used in this study. In parallel mixed designs, qualitative and quantitative phases are planned and implemented to answer related aspects of the same basic research questions (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). The mixed-methods design presents an alternative to the use of either quantitative or qualitative methods alone. This design is useful in answering research questions by using whatever methodological tools are needed and presents information in both narrative and numerical forms (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Ideally, mixed-methods procedures allow researchers to take advantage of the best parts of qualitative and quantitative methods and to sidestep or mitigate their weaknesses (Maxim, 1999).

Survey researchers have noted that the most thoroughly studied combinations of qualitative and quantitative methods include the use of surveys and focus groups (Morgan, 1997). In the current study, I combined the results from the quantitative method with those from the qualitative method.

Study 1: Quantitative Component Method

Quantitative research includes the collection of numeric data from participants' answers to specific, narrow questions. The quantitative method of investigation included a survey to determine the perception of well-being among members of the State Bar of Arizona (hereinafter, *the Bar*). Surveys are useful as a way to provide information about the characteristics of a wide range of people as well as the relationships between those characteristics (Robson, 2002). Surveys also provide a constructive means to collect data from large numbers of participants such that confidentiality is easily addressed because of the anonymity of a large mailing (Borg & Gall, 1989).

The SPWB was selected for inclusion in this parallel mixed-methods design (Appendix B). A 15-item, self-report questionnaire provided demographic information as well as data about attitudes about life and career satisfaction of attorneys (Appendix C). This also was included to allow correlation with Ryff's six subscales. The quantitative method of data analysis was used to provide descriptive statistics about the participants and to explore psychological well-being using Ryff's SPWB and to test relationships between variables.

Participants

SIRB approval was obtained prior to initiating this research. To ensure that participants were licensed lawyers, individuals were recruited through the Bar, a nonprofit organization that operates under the auspices of the Arizona Supreme Court and provides education and development programs for attorneys. The Bar has more than 21,000 members, of which 14,494 are active and practice law in the state of Arizona (Appendix A).

Data Collection

The full active membership was initially contacted (all of whom were aged 21 years or older) to participate in the online survey. On my behalf, the Bar forwarded to each potential participant, via email, a request to participate in the survey (Appendix D). Potential participants who agreed to complete the survey were instructed in the text of the email to click on a link that directed them to Survey Monkey (Appendix D). A statement regarding anonymity and informed consent was provided to all participants in the body of the email before they were able to proceed with the survey (Appendix D). At the conclusion of the survey, each participant was asked to provide basic demographic

information (e.g., age, gender, race/ethnicity, income range, length of time in practice, practice area; see Appendix C for the questionnaire). Additionally, each participant was asked to answer a self-report question, on a 6-point scale, regarding their satisfaction with their life and career as a lawyer (Appendix C). Finally, a debriefing statement was included in a final statement that restated the purpose of the study and thanked the participants for their participation (Appendix D). No other identifying information was requested or maintained.

Instrument

This study utilized the SPWB (see Appendix B). The scale was developed by psychologist Carol Ryff to measure well-being and integrate mental health, clinical, and life development theories to find multiple converging aspects of positive psychological functioning (Ryff, 1989). The survey defined six core dimensions that are believed to be indicators of well-being:

Self-acceptance: An individual's sense of self-acceptance, which is a central feature of mental health and a characteristic of self-actualization, denotes optimal functioning, and maturity;

Positive relations with others: The ability to love, trust, and establish deep relationships with others;

Autonomy: A focus inward on self-determination, independence, with an internal locus of control;

Environmental mastery: Includes the ability to choose or create environments suitable to the individual's psychic conditions, advance in the world, and change it to meet needs;

Purpose in life: The beliefs that give one the feeling of purpose and meaning in life with goals, intentions, and a sense of direction; and

Personal growth: The ability to continue to develop one's potential and expand as a person (Akin, 2008; Ryff, 1989; Ryff & Keyes, 1995).

In the original validation study, each of the dimensions were operationalized with a 20-item scale that was divided between positively and negatively phrased items; internal (alpha) coefficients ranged from .86 to .93 (Ryff, 1989; Ryff & Essex, 1992). Ryff has three length options for the scale, including a 14-item (84 questions), 9-item (54 questions), and 3-item (18 questions) measure. Internal consistency (alpha) coefficients range from 0.82 to 0.90 for the six scales (Schmutte & Ryff, 1997). These scales have been used in hundreds of research studies on personality and well-being (C. D. Ryff, personal communication, June 25, 2010).

Ryff and Keyes (1995) tested Ryff's 6-factor model, using a 3-item scale, with a nationally representative model of 1,108 adults aged 25 years and older, and found that confirmatory factor analyses supported the six dimensions joined by a single higher order factor defined as well-being. Additionally, Ryff's scales correlate positively with other measures of well-being, including the Affect Balance Scale (Bradburn, 1969) and the Life Satisfaction Index (Neugarten et al., 1961; Schmutte & Ryff, 1997). Conversely, Kafka and Kozma (2002) conducted a study of 277 university students to establish the construct validity of Ryff's scale as well as its relationship to standardized measures of subjective well-being and found: (a) Ryff's scale is limited to face validity; and (b) the results failed to support a relationship between the PWB construct and the SWB construct. Kafka and Kozma (2002) cautioned that their results should be interpreted with

caution as their study had an over-representation of college students, which likely affected generalizability, and participants were tested in different settings, individually and in groups, which could have affected respondents' judgments about well-being.

Each dimensional scale has 20 items equally split between positive and negative items. Ryff recommended that researchers take one item from each scale successively and place them into a single self-report document (Frazier et al., 2005). The survey for the present study included a total of 54 questions, 9 items taken from each of the 6 dimensions. As suggested, items from the separate scales were merged by taking one item from each scale sequentially into one self-report instrument. The specific items for the 9-item scales include autonomy 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 14; environmental mastery 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 13, 14; personal growth 1, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14; positive relations with others 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 12; purpose in life 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11; and self-acceptance 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 10, 12, 13.

Participants responded by using a 6-point format: strongly disagree (1), moderately disagree (2), slightly disagree (3), slightly agree (4), moderately agree (5), and strongly agree (6). Responses to negatively scored items (-) were reversed in the final scoring procedures so that high scores indicate high self-ratings on the assessed dimension (Ryff & Keyes, 1995; Ryff & Singer, 2006; C. D. Ryff, personal communication, October 1, 2010). A sample autonomy question is, "Sometimes I change the way I act or think to be more like those around me" (Appendix B). A high autonomy score suggests that the participant is self-determining and independent, is able to resist social pressure, and regulates behavior from within; whereas a low autonomy score suggests that the participant is concerned about the assessment of others, relies on others

to make decisions, and obeys social pressures. Additionally, high scores in other areas indicate that the participant has a sense of mastery and competence in managing the environment (environmental mastery); has a feeling of continued development and sees the self as growing and expanding (personal growth); has warm, satisfying, trusting relationships with others (positive relations with others); has goals in life and a sense of directedness (purpose in life); and has a positive attitude toward the self while acknowledging and accepting multiple aspects of the self, including good and bad qualities (self-acceptance). Low scores indicate the opposite of positive scores (e.g., the participant is concerned about the expectations and evaluations of others [autonomy], has difficulty managing everyday affairs [environmental mastery]).

The validity of the scale was assessed using a sample of 321 participants including men and women who were well-educated, socially connected, financially secure and physically healthy (Ryff, 1989). To examine the life-course patterns of the well-being dimensions, the participants were divided among young ($n = 133$, mean age = 19.53, $SD = 1.57$), middle-aged ($n = 108$, mean age = 49.85, $SD = 9.35$), and older adults ($n = 80$, mean age = 74.96, $SD = 7.11$; Ryff, 1989). In the original validation study, Ryff (1989) was guided by the construct-oriented approach to personality assessment when she: (a) used psychological theory to construct the scale and defined high and low scores for each of the six dimensions; (b) allowed multiple independent writers to compose self-descriptive items that fit with the definitions that could be applied to both genders; and (c) discarded self-descriptive items using criteria of face validity (Ryff & Singer, 2008).

Since Ryff's original study, other researchers have investigated the factorial validity of PWB and have used confirmatory factor analyses to support Ryff's theory-

guided, 6-factor model (Ryff & Keyes, 1995; Ryff & Singer, 2008; Springer & Hauser, 2006; van Dierendock, Díaz, Rodríguez-Carvajal, Blanco, & Moreno-Jiménez, 2008).

Ryff (1989) reported correlations with prior measures of positive function to be positive and significant, with coefficients ranging from .25 to .73 and correlations with prior measures of negative functioning to be all negative and significant with coefficients ranging from -.30 to -.60.

Data Analysis

The statistical software, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), was used to test attorney well-being. The primary dependent variable for the quantitative component of this study was the *total score* from the 54-item SPWB (Appendix B; Ryff, 1989). These 54 items were subdivided into 6 subscales (*self-acceptance, positive relations with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth*) along with a *total score*. The primary quantitative independent variables for this study were the 15 demographic variables, including one self-report item (Appendix C). Initially these variables were tabulated using standard summary statistics (means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages). Bivariate comparisons were conducted between the scale scores and the demographic variables using either Pearson product-moment correlations or one-way ANOVA tests, depending on the level of measurement of the demographic variable. Pearson correlations were used to compare the scale scores with the continuous independent variables such as age, income, and years of law practice. For dichotomous variables such as gender, ethnicity (Caucasian versus others), whether married or have children, point-biserial correlations were used. When the independent variable was nominal/categorical (e.g., practice area, county, or setting),

one-way ANOVA tests followed by Scheffe post-hoc tests were performed. As a final analysis, a multiple regression equation was developed using the *well-being total score* as the dependent variable and the 15 demographic variables, including one self-report item, as independent variables.

The first level of analysis included an assessment of the means and standard deviations between the current sample and a normative sample of men and women who had been a part of a larger Wisconsin longitudinal study (WLS; Table 6). The WLS was a 40-year study of a random sample of 10,317 men and women, and their randomly selected brothers and sisters, who graduated from high school in 1957 (Hauser & Sewell, 1957-2005). The 1992/1993 survey involved 8,493 respondents who provided detailed occupational histories; job characteristics, income, and assets; social and economic characteristics of parents, siblings, and children and descriptions of the respondents' relationships with them; and extensive information about mental and physical health and well-being (Hauser & Sewell, 1957-2005). The WLS sample is broadly representative of white, non-Hispanic, American men and women who completed at least a high school education. People of German, English, Irish, Scandinavian, Polish, and Czech ancestry constituted the majority of the sample (Hauser & Sewell, 1957-2005). Psychological well-being was assessed using 9-item scales that were divided between phone interviews and mail questionnaires to analyze past work and family experiences and how they influence the health and well-being of adults at midlife across six dimensions of well-being (C. D. Ryff, personal communication, October 1, 2010; Hauser & Sewell, 1957-2005).

Ryff (1989) reported the following internal consistency reliability coefficients: .86 for autonomy, .90 for environmental mastery, .87 for personal growth, .91 for positive relationships with others, .90 for purpose in life, and .93 for self-acceptance. Over a six-week period, on a subsample of participants ($n = 117$), the test-retest reliability coefficients for the 20-item scale were .85 for self-acceptance, .83 for positive relations with others, .88 for autonomy, .81 for environmental mastery, .82 for purpose in life, and .81 for personal growth (Ryff, 1989). van Dierendock et al. (2008) also reported that the reliability of Ryff's scale, in terms of internal consistency, is good. Most recently, in 2008, when the scale was translated into Turkish and examined for validity, it was found that it had high validity and reliability scores and that it may be used as an efficient instrument by which to assess psychological well-being (Akin, 2008).

Study 2: Qualitative Component Method

The qualitative method included focus group discussions. Focus groups are important because they allow researchers to collect personal experiences and beliefs on a topic (Morse, 1994). Focus groups also offer a comparative advantage because they allow the researcher to observe interaction on a topic, the flow of discussion, and the evolution of the experiences described (Morgan, 1997; Morse, 1994). Furthermore, focus groups are a valuable tool used for follow-up data collection for exploratory aspects of analysis (Morgan, 1997).

Focus groups are used in 1 of 3 ways: a *self-contained method* (in which they serve as the principal source of data), as a *supplementary source* (in which other primary methods, such as a survey, are employed), and in *multimethod studies* (in which two or more means of gathering data are combined (Morgan, 1997). In this study, the group

discussions were included as a component of a mixed-methods study in combination with the well-being survey.

In the current study, focus groups were conducted to explore lawyer beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions regarding well-being including any factors that may enhance or hinder well-being. I engaged the focus groups using a less structured approach to maximize exploration. In this way, the discussions gave participants more opportunity to pursue the topics that interested them while they engaged in a lively exchange among themselves without much guidance from me (Morgan, 1997). Fundamentally, the goal was to learn something new from the participants by allowing them to speak for themselves (Morgan, 1997).

Participants

Potential participants were recruited based on advertisements submitted to several online state bar association publications, including *eLegal*, the Bar's on-line magazine; the Arizona Black Bar Association, Los Abogados-Arizona's Hispanic Bar Association, the Arizona Asian American Bar Association, and the Native American Bar Association of Arizona (see Appendix F). The advertisement included my contact information and potential participants were asked to email me to participate in a focus-group discussion (see Appendix F).

All participants who expressed an interest in participation in the study were contacted via email, and the purpose and scope of the study was explained to them. Interested participants were sent, via first class mail or e-mail, a copy of the Informed Consent Form and Questionnaire, which was completed and returned prior to the scheduled focus group session. The Informed Consent form (Appendix G) explains the

purpose and procedures of the study, provides the benefits and risks, and explains what the participant can expect. The questionnaire (Appendix C) is a short form that requests basic background demographic information (e.g., age, gender, ethnic origin, setting of practice, income, education, law practice area[s], year[s] in practice) about each participant and asks about satisfaction with life and career. Focus group participants were licensed members of the Bar who were at least 21 years of age.

Data Collection

Optimal group size varies from 5 to 12 per session, depending on the sensitivity and complexity of the topic as well as the abilities, expectations, and needs of the group members; however, better quality data are likely to be collected from fewer participants (Morse, 1994). For this reason, the focus groups comprised 9 and 7 individuals, respectively. Each attorney who expressed an interest in participating in the study was contacted via email and the purpose and scope of the study was explained. The first 20 individuals who contacted me and agreed to participate were selected. Ten participants, per group, were confirmed to account for attorneys who might not attend on the scheduled day. Before confirming the selection of participants, I made an effort to (a) balance the focus groups for age, ethnicity and gender; and (b) ensure the participants completed the SPWB via the online survey.

Each focus group meeting lasted approximately two hours and was held in a private room at a centrally located public library in Phoenix, Arizona. No compensation was offered to participants who agreed to participate in this study; however, lunch was provided. Both focus groups were guided conversations rather than structured inquiries in which I (a) used mainly an established line of questions and (b) asked questions in an

unbiased manner. At the beginning of the focus group, I reviewed the details of the informed consent form, answered any questions of the participants, and provided ground rules for the discussion (Morgan, 1997). The actual questions posed to each focus group were fewer than those originally developed (Appendix E). The discussion explored attorney perceptions about well-being, the legal culture, and other factors that might impact well-being in the practice of law. I avoided following a predetermined order of topics in a rigid fashion. Instead, I used the list of questions, beginning with the first question, and proceeded through systematically, but probed more deeply where necessary, skipped areas that already had been covered, and followed new topics as they arose (Morgan, 1997).

Instrument

Questions were posed from the focus group protocol to initiate the conversation (see Appendix E). I developed a strategy of asking questions that started in a nonthreatening manner and then progressed to more challenging questions regarding well-being and the legal culture.

During the group discussion, I sought to (a) encourage the members to manage the discussion themselves, (b) ensure participation by all group members, (c) stress that all experiences and perceptions were equally as important, and (d) observe the interaction between group members. Participants were asked to discuss their perspectives on: (a) overall sense of well-being; (b) factors that influence happiness and/or life satisfaction; (c) the legal subculture; (d) spirituality; (e) creativity; (f) resilience/coping skills; and (g) working with clients and the attorney-client relationship.

Finally, to ensure that anonymity was maintained, the participants' names did not appear on any of the data collected and the informed consent forms were kept separate from the data. Focus-group discussions were recorded using a digital recording device and were later transcribed for the purpose of data analysis. The transcripts were later reviewed for accuracy and clarity.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is a dynamic process that includes transcription of the data for analysis, reduction of the data into themes in a process of coding, condensing the codes, and representing the data in figures, tables, or a discussion (Creswell, 2007; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Analysis ranges from superficial descriptions to theoretical interpretations (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Three common ways to code focus group transcripts include (a) noting all mentions of a given code, (b) specifying whether each individual participant mentioned a given code, and (c) indicating whether each group's discussion contained a given code (Morgan, 1997).

The use of questioning is fundamental to analysis (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). In asking questions, the researcher should seek to probe, develop provisional answers, think outside the box, and become acquainted with the data (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Researchers also should keep in mind that questions are based on the evolving analysis that is specific to particular research (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Because the two group discussions covered basically the same topics in more or less the same order, the analysis and reporting addresses the same topics using a systematic process that summarizes each group's responses based on topics including cross-group comparison (Morgan, 1997). I engaged in an in-depth analysis to dig deep beneath the surface of the data to create

themes and categories wherein I: (a) conducted a detailed examination of each of the two groups before I applied any codes; (b) addressed the most significant aspects of each focus-group discussion by considering whether both groups mentioned a given topic; (c) included information based, in part, on how many people within each group mentioned a topic; and (d) examined how much energy and enthusiasm was generated by a topic (Morgan, 1997).

Comparative analysis is a staple feature of social science research (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Constant comparisons are used to differentiate one category or theme from another and to identify properties and dimensions specific to that category (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). I used comparative analysis to identify conceptually similar incidents that could be grouped together under a higher level descriptive concept.

Finally, I relied upon my personal experiences as a practicing attorney to discern meaning from the focus-group discussions. It makes sense for researchers to use similar life and cultural experiences to gain insight into the circumstances described by participants (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). It is equally important to note that I maintained distance and refrained from adding my own commentary during the discussions so as not to inject bias; however, I did use my experiences as a lawyer to discover possibilities of meaning.

It is important to ensure that the main threats to the validity of flexible designs (description, interpretation, and theory) have been anticipated and addressed during the research design. For this reason, I digitally recorded the interviews, took copious notes, and remained mindful of imposing a framework or meaning on the focus-group

discussions. Additionally, I made an effort to seek data that were not consistent with my theories about the subject matter.

Coding is critical. Coding can be thought of as a form of analysis in which codes are given tags or labels to assign units of meaning to information compiled during a study (Miles & Huberman, 1994). For each focus group, I reviewed the field notes that were created contemporaneously during each focus-group meeting. I noted affective responses (e.g., facial expressions, head nodding) that were not captured by the digital recorder. Transcripts were then coded beginning with the first question and continuing, question by question, until all of the responses to each question were analyzed. This was done to reduce the data into meaningful segments.

In analyzing the data in this study, I employed the following strategies:

- (1) Wrote in the margins of the field notes,
- (2) Drafted a summary sheet for the field notes,
- (3) Created a spreadsheet from the transcripts,
- (4) Developed codes from the field notes and transcript spreadsheets,
- (5) Noted patterns and themes,
- (6) Counted the frequency of the codes, and
- (7) Built a logical chain of evidence while making contrasts and comparisons.

Tentative codes were developed based on relevant concepts for this study and linked to the research questions. Codes were not predetermined; instead, codes reflected the phenomena that were noted during the data collection (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Data were initially coded by labeling segments of text.

The textual data from the interviews were stored in a Microsoft Word document organized in a spreadsheet. Additionally, the taped interviews were transcribed by a professional transcriptionist (Appendix H). Initially, the focus group data were manually coded. Additionally, NVIVO 9 was used as a secondary method of review wherein the transcript data were separately placed into codes from which themes were derived.

Ethical Considerations

Whenever a researcher works with human participants, questions arise about ethical considerations related to informed consent procedures, deception or covert activities, confidentiality, benefits versus risk of the research to participants, and participant requests that may go beyond what is normally acceptable (Lipson, as cited in Creswell, 2007). All participants in this research were asked to complete an informed consent form (Appendices D and G) prior to participation in the study. The informed consent document explained the study, guaranteed participants their rights in the study, and stated that participation was voluntary and could be stopped at any time.

During the process of obtaining informed consent from the focus group participants, I ensured that each participant understood the nature of the study as well as what was expected of them. Further, I communicated the confidential nature of the study and what could be expected, including any risks and/or benefits that could result from participation. Finally, I informed the participants that two sessions with a mental health professional would be made available to anyone who experienced emotional distress as a result of their participation in the research.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This chapter is designed to present the findings of the study by summarizing the survey results, discussing the primary and supplemental hypothesis and whether or not they were supported, synthesizing the focus group discussion into primary themes and subthemes, and presenting additional findings. Recommendations and suggestions to improve attorney well-being and satisfaction in the practice of law also are provided.

Study 1: Quantitative Component

This statewide survey asked a central research question: What is the perception of well-being among members of the Arizona Bar?

Participants

Initially, 923 individuals consented to participate in the study; however, 593 completed the online survey in its entirety, including the demographic information. An additional 84 completed all but 1 question and 14 completed all but 2 questions. The results are based on a total of 691 responses, including 98 for which all but 1 or 2 questions were completed (for these 98, average scores were used for the missing questions). The remaining 257 participants were excluded from the study because they did not complete 3 or more different questions. This resulted in a final sample of $N = 691$, with a response rate of 4.7%.

Table 1 displays the frequency counts for selected variables. Nearly half of the group (53.3%) included males. Participants' ages ranged from 21 to more than 71 years ($Mdn = 48$ years). Almost all of the participants were practicing law when they completed the survey (98%). The vast majority practiced law in Maricopa County

(73.1%), followed by Pima County (24.3%), Pinal County (11.6%), Yavapai County (7.5%), and Coconino County (7.2%). Slightly less than half of the lawyers (46.4%) had practiced law for more than 14 years ($Mdn = 18$ years). The median income was \$75,000. More detailed information about the participants is reported in Tables 1-3.

Table 1

Frequency Counts for Selected Variables (N = 691)

Category	n	%
Gender		
Male	368	53.3
Female	323	46.7
Age Range ^a		
21 to 25	6	0.9
26 to 30	60	8.7
31 to 35	77	11.1
36 to 40	66	9.6
41 to 45	80	11.6
46 to 50	86	12.4
51 to 55	106	15.3
56 to 60	90	13.0
61 to 65	61	8.8
66 to 70	37	5.4
71 years or older	22	3.2
Married		
No	196	28.4
Yes	495	71.6
Have Children		
No	242	35.0
Yes	449	65.0
Ethnicity		
Asian/Pacific Islander	13	1.9
Caucasian	645	93.3
Native American	4	0.6
African American	3	0.4
Hispanic/Latino(a)	26	3.8
Annual Income Range ^b		
< \$50,000	70	10.1
\$50,001-\$100,000	304	44.0
\$100,001-\$150,000	164	23.7
\$150,001-\$200,000	63	9.1
Above \$200,000	90	13.0
Law as First Career		
No	240	34.7
Yes	451	65.3

Table 1, Cont'd.

Category	n	%
Practice Setting		
Sole Practitioner	184	26.6
Public	33	4.8
Law Firm	264	38.2
Judge	3	0.4
Justice	1	0.1
In-house Counsel	29	4.2
Government	127	18.4
Legal Services	6	0.9
Not-for-profit	12	1.7
Military	2	0.3
Law School	4	0.6
Non-law-related	7	1.0
Not currently employed	11	1.6
Inactive	3	0.4
Retired	5	0.7
Enjoyment of Current Practice Area		
No	96	13.9
Yes	595	86.1
Daily Work Stressful		
No	187	27.1
Yes	504	72.9
Years Practicing Law ^c		
2 years or less	73	10.6
3 to 5 years	70	10.1
6 to 7 years	34	4.9
8 to 10 years	37	5.4
10 to 15 years	92	13.3
16 to 20 years	71	10.3
20 or more years	314	45.4

Note. ^a Age: $Mdn = 48$; ^b Income: $Mdn = \$75,000$; ^c Years Practicing Law $Mdn = 18$ years.

Survey participants worked in various practice areas. The highest concentration of attorneys was in litigation ($n = 215$, 31.1%), criminal law ($n = 137$, 19.8%), business law ($n = 120$, 17.4%), and real estate ($n = 108$, 15.6%; see Table 2).

Survey sampling considerations, which are an important part of enquiry, pervade all aspects of research and relate closely to external validity and generalizability (Robson, 2002). The demographic characteristics of the current sample are somewhat inconsistent with demographic data of the overall Arizona Bar membership, based on information provided by the Bar. To illustrate, state Bar attorneys are mostly male (65%), Caucasian (85.49%), and practice mostly in Maricopa County (74%). (See Appendix A and Tables 1, 2, and 3). It is important to note that there is sizable difference in the percentage of men who responded to the survey (53.3%) and the percentage of men who are members of the state Bar (65%) as well as the number of Caucasians who participated in the survey (93.3%) compared to the number of Caucasian Bar members (85.5%), which may reflect a lack of generalizability. As a result, caution should be taken in interpreting the results.

Table 2

Frequency Counts for Attorney Practice Areas (N = 691)

Practice Areas	n	%
Administrative	91	13.2
Alter. Dispute Resolution	45	6.5
Antitrust	2	0.3
Appellate Practice	71	10.3
Banking	7	1.0
Bankruptcy/Receivership	45	6.5
Business	120	17.4
Collections	40	5.8
Construction	44	6.4
Corporate Counsel	49	7.1
Criminal	137	19.8
Elder	24	3.5
Environmental and Natural	21	3.0
Family/Domestic Relations	94	13.6
Government	97	14.0
Health	21	3.0
Immigration	17	2.5
Indian	15	2.2
Injury and Wrongful Death	85	12.3
Insurance	60	8.7
Intellectual Property	30	4.3
International	5	0.7
Juvenile	48	6.9
Labor and Employment	81	11.7
Legal Malpractice	21	3.0
Litigation	215	31.1
Medical Malpractice	29	4.2
Probate and Trust Law	71	10.3
Public Lawyer	48	6.9
Real Estate/Property	108	15.6
School/Education	17	2.5
Securities Regulation	13	1.9
Tax	29	4.2
Tort	83	12.0
Workers' Compensation	12	1.7

Note. A respondent could practice in multiple areas, so totals are more than 100%.

Table 3

Frequency Counts for Law School and County of Practice

Category	n	%
Law School		
In State	345	50.0
Out of State	343	49.6
Out of Country	3	0.4
County of Practice		
Apache	15	2.2
Cochise	29	4.2
Coconino	50	7.2
Gila	23	3.3
Graham	17	2.5
Greenlee	10	1.4
La Paz	16	2.3
Maricopa	505	73.1
Mohave	33	4.8
Navajo	25	3.6
Pima	168	24.3
Pinal	80	11.6
Santa Cruz	19	2.7
Yavapai	52	7.5
Yuma	31	4.5

Note. A respondent could practice in more than one county so totals are more than 100%.

Table 4

Frequency Counts for Life and Career Satisfaction

Category	n	%
Life and Career Satisfaction		
Completely dissatisfied	19	2.7
Very dissatisfied	61	8.8
Somewhat dissatisfied	101	14.6
Somewhat satisfied	209	30.2
Very satisfied	252	36.5
Completely satisfied	49	7.1

Findings

Seventy-four percent (73.8%) reported that they were satisfied with their life and career as lawyers, including 30.2% who identified as “somewhat satisfied,” 36.5% who identified as “very satisfied,” and 7.1% who reported themselves as “completely satisfied” (see Table 4).

Table 5 displays the psychometric characteristics for the total and six summed scale scores. The Cronbach alpha reliability coefficients ranged from $\alpha = .80$ to $.90$, excluding the total score, with a median alpha of $\alpha = .85$. This suggested that all scales had adequate levels of internal reliability (Maxim, 1999).

Table 5

Psychometric Characteristics for Summed Scale Scores (N = 691)

Score	Number of Items	M	SD	Low	High	A
Total	54	247.48	39.36	116	323	.95
Autonomy	9	41.92	7.08	17	54	.80
Environmental Mastery	9	38.19	9.15	11	54	.86
Personal Growth	9	43.44	7.06	19	54	.81
Positive Relations w/Others	9	41.42	8.69	14	54	.85
Purpose In Life	9	42.11	7.74	15	54	.82
Self Acceptance	9	40.40	9.67	10	54	.90

To interpret statistically significant comparisons of the SPWB between the two independent samples, *t* tests for independent means were calculated to compare the means, standard deviations, and sample sizes of each group. To reduce the likelihood of a family-wise type I error in the bivariate comparisons, the alpha level was set at $\alpha = .001$ and the interpretative emphasis was placed on correlations of at least $|r| = .30$. Cohen (1988) suggested some guidelines for interpreting the strength of linear correlations. He

suggested that a weak correlation typically has an absolute value of $r = .10$ (about 1% of the variance explained), a moderate correlation typically has an absolute value of $r = .30$ (about 9% of the variance explained), and a strong correlation typically has an absolute value of $r = .50$ (about 25% of the variance explained). However, for the overall multiple regression model, the alpha level remained at $\alpha = .05$ because it is one test. The resulting calculations demonstrated whether there was a significant difference at the $p < .05$ level between each independent sample along each of the six dimensions, using a 6-point Likert scale (Table 6). Table 6 compares the current sample of attorneys to the normative sample across the six well-being dimensions. No significant differences were noted for 2 of the 6 dimensions: personal growth and positive relations with others. However, for 4 of the dimensions, significant differences were noted. Specifically, the current sample of attorneys had significantly higher scores for the autonomy dimension ($t = 2.39, p < .05$) but significantly lower scores for environmental mastery ($t = 22.10, p < .001$), purpose in life ($t = 6.67, p < .001$), and self-acceptance ($t = 10.67, p < .001$).

Table 6

Comparison of Current Sample to Normative Sample for Well-Being Scale Scores

Scale	Sample	N	M	SD	t
Autonomy	Current	691	41.92	7.08	2.39 *
	Normative	8,493	41.29	6.63	
Environmental Mastery	Current	691	38.19	9.15	22.10 ****
	Normative	8,943	43.90	6.27	
Personal Growth	Current	691	43.44	7.06	0.45
	Normative	8,943	43.56	6.68	
Positive Relationships with Others	Current	691	41.42	8.69	0.93
	Normative	8,943	41.68	6.92	
Purpose in Life	Current	691	42.11	7.74	6.67 ****
	Normative	8,943	43.97	6.98	
Self-Acceptance	Current	691	40.40	9.67	10.67 ****
	Normative	8,943	43.48	7.07	

Note. Scales based on 9 items using a 6-point Likert scale (maximum score of 54 points): 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 6 = *Strongly Agree*. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .005$, **** $p < .001$.

The second level of analysis included a Pearson correlation of well-being among 15 demographic variables: gender, age, marital status, parental status, race, annual income range, work status related to Maricopa County, enjoyment of practice area, and years practicing law. This was done to analyze the correlation between each of the demographic variables with the dimensions of attorney well-being (Table 7a/b).

Table 7a

Pearson Correlations for Selected Demographic Variables with Well-Being Scale (N = 691)

Demographic Variable	Well-Being Scale Scores			
	Total Score	Autonomy	Environmental Mastery	Personal Growth
Life and career satisfaction	.63 ****	.22 ****	.66 ****	.36 ****
Law first career ^b	-.00	.03	.02	-.09 *
Enjoy current practice area ^b	.39 ****	.15 ****	.38 ****	.21 ****
Consider daily work stressful ^b	-.22 ****	-.13 ****	-.31 ****	-.11 ***
Years practicing law	.08 *	.18 ****	.14 ****	-.06
Gender ^c	.07 **	-.04	-.04	.16 ****
Caucasian ^b	.04	.06	.05	.01
Age	.15 ****	.23 ****	.20 ****	.02
Married ^b	.07 *	-.03	.06	-.03
Children ^b	.10 **	.11 **	.07	.00
Income range	.17 ****	.10 **	.22 ****	.04

Table 7b

Demographic Variable	Positive Relationships with Others		Purpose in Life	Self-Acceptance
Life and career satisfaction	.44 ****		.56 ****	.68 ****
Law first career ^b	.01		.02	-.02
Enjoy current practice area ^b	.31 ****		.37 ****	.38 ****
Consider daily work stressful ^b	-.12 ****		-.18 ****	-.19 ****
Years practicing law	.03		-.01	.07
Gender ^c	.12 ****		.10 **	.05
Caucasian ^b	-.01		.02	.06
Age	.07		.05	.12 ***
Married ^b	.10 **		.08 *	.11 ***
Children ^b	.13 ****		.06	.08 *
Income range	.07		.16 ****	.18 ****

Note. * p < .05. ** p < .01. *** p < .005. **** p < .001. ^a Well-Being Scores: 1 = Total Score; 2 = Autonomy; 3 = Environmental mastery; 4 = Personal growth; 5 = Positive relationships with others; 6 = Purpose in life; and 7 = Self-acceptance. ^b Coding: 0 = No, 1 = Yes. ^c Gender: 1 = Male 2 = Female.

Table 7a/b displays the results of the Pearson product-moment correlations for the 11 demographic variables with the 7 well-being scale scores. Inspection of the table reveals that 45 of the resulting 77 correlations were statistically significant. Three demographic variables were of particular note. The respondent's self-perceived level of life and career satisfaction (survey item 1) had significant positive correlations with all 7 well-being scores ($r = .63, p < .001$), with the strongest correlations being for satisfaction with self-acceptance ($r = .68, p < .001$) and environmental mastery ($r = .66, p < .001$). Whether the attorneys enjoyed their current practice area(s) also was positively related to all 7 well-being scores with the strongest correlations being between practice enjoyment and total well-being ($r = .39, p < .001$), environmental mastery ($r = .38, p < .001$), and self-acceptance ($r = .38, p < .001$). A third notable demographic variable in this table was whether the attorneys considered their daily work to be stressful. Those who did had significantly lower well-being scores for all 7 measures with the strongest negative correlation being with environmental mastery ($r = -.31, p < .001$; Table 7a/b).

Hypotheses and Results

A variety of statistical methods (descriptive, correlational, multiple regression) were used to test the hypotheses. Several of the hypotheses were supported. Table 8 provides a summary of the results for each hypothesis.

Table 8

Summary of Study Results by Hypothesis

Hypothesis	Method	Result
Primary. The majority of Arizona attorneys will have significantly lower psychological well-being scores than the normative group for at least half of the 6 subscales using Ryff's SPWB. (Table 6)	Descriptive t tests	Hypothesis supported
1. SPWB responses will confirm a significant positive relationship between gender and psychological well-being, with women having lower well-being scores than men. (Table 7a/b).	Pearson correlations	Hypothesis not supported
2. SPWB responses will confirm a significant positive relationship between attorneys' level of environmental mastery and their total psychological well-being score. (No table cited).	Pearson correlations	Hypothesis supported
3. SPWB responses will confirm a significant positive correlation between years worked as an attorney and autonomy. (Table 7a).	Pearson correlations	Hypothesis supported
4. SPWB responses will confirm a significant positive relationship between age and attorneys' total psychological well-being score, with middle-aged attorneys having higher scores than older and younger lawyers. (Table 9)	Descriptive One Way ANOVA Scheffe Ad Hoc	Hypothesis not supported
5. There will be a significant difference in well-being based on an attorney's practice areas. (No table cited)	Pearson correlations	Hypothesis not supported
6. There will be a significant difference in well-being based on an attorney's ethnic group. (Table 7a)	Pearson correlations	Hypothesis not supported

Primary hypothesis. The primary research hypothesis predicted that “The majority of Arizona attorneys will have significantly lower psychological well-being scores than the normative group for at least half of the six subscales using Ryff’s SPWB.” The resulting calculations demonstrated whether there was a significant difference at the $p < .05$ level between each independent sample along each of the six dimensions, using a 6-point Likert scale. Table 6 displays the Pearson product-moment correlation for the psychological well-being scores comparing the normative sample to the current sample. There was a statistically significant difference between the level of autonomy among respondents of the current sample compared to members of the normative sample,

with respondents from the current sample scoring higher on the autonomy dimension ($p = .02$).

There was a statistically significant difference between the level of environmental mastery among respondents of the current sample compared to the normative sample, with respondents from the current sample scoring lower in the environmental mastery dimension ($p < .001$). There was a statistically significant difference in the purpose of life dimension among respondents of the current sample compared to the normative sample ($p < .001$) with respondents from the current sample scoring lower. Similarly, there was an extremely significant statistical difference in the self-acceptance dimension among respondents of the current sample compared to members of the normative sample ($p < .001$) with respondents from the current sample scoring lower.

There was not a statistically significant difference between reported levels of personal growth among respondents of the current sample compared to the normative sample ($p = .65$). Similarly, there was not a significant difference between the positive relations with others dimension among the current sample compared to the normative sample ($p = .35$). These findings support the primary research hypothesis.

Supplemental hypotheses.

(1) Supplemental Hypothesis 1 predicted that “SPWB responses will confirm a significant positive relationship between gender and psychological well-being, with women having lower well-being scores than men.” To test this hypothesis, a Pearson product-moment correlation was used to compare total psychological well-being scores with gender. The correlation was significant ($r = .07, p < .01$; table 7a), but not in the hypothesized direction. These

findings did not support supplemental Hypothesis 1. Given the fact that the correlation was significant, it is important to note that the coefficient of determination (r^2) was .005. Because .05% of the variance may be explained by gender, any interpretive conclusion that is drawn would be considered tentative at best.

- (2) Supplemental Hypothesis 2 predicted that “SPWB responses will confirm a significant positive relationship between attorneys’ level of environmental mastery and their total psychological well-being score.” To test this, a Pearson product moment correlation compared total psychological well-being scores with the environmental mastery subscale. There was a significant positive correlation between the environmental mastery subscale and the total psychological well-being score ($r = .86, p < .001$, no table shown). These findings support supplemental Hypothesis 2.
- (3) Supplemental Hypothesis 3 predicted that “SPWB responses will confirm a significant positive correlation between years worked as an attorney and autonomy.” To test this, a Pearson product moment correlation compared years practicing law and autonomy. There was a significant positive correlation between years practicing law and autonomy ($r = .18, p < .001$, Table 7a). These findings support supplemental Hypothesis 3.
- (4) Supplemental Hypothesis 4 predicted that “SPWB responses will confirm a significant positive relationship between age and attorneys’ total psychological well-being score, with middle-aged attorneys having higher scores than older and younger lawyers.” To test this hypothesis, the

respondents' age was broken into thirds to represent young (21 to 40 years), middle-aged (41 to 55 years), and older (56 years and older attorneys; Table 9). Next, a one-way ANOVA was performed. There was a significant positive relationship between age and psychological well-being ($r = .15, p < .001$, Table 7a). Additionally, Scheffe post hoc tests were performed and found psychological well-being was higher for attorneys aged greater than 55 years ($M = 256.70$) than for attorneys aged 41 to 55 years ($M = 244.11$) and attorneys aged 21-40 ($M = 242.60$). However, given that the hypothesis predicted the highest levels of well-being for middle-aged attorneys, supplemental Hypotheses 4 was not supported. (Table 9).

Table 9

Total Well-Being Based on Age Groups (N = 691)

Age Group ^a	Age and Well-Being		
	n	M	SD
21 to 40 years	209	242.60	35.53
41 to 55 years	272	244.11	42.42
56+ years	210	256.70	37.42

$F(2, 688) = 8.55, p = .001$

^a Scheffe post hoc tests: 1 ≈ 2 ($p = .92$); 1 < 3 ($p = .001$); 2 < 3 ($p < .002$).

(5) Supplemental Hypothesis 5 predicted "a significant difference in well-being based on an attorney's practice areas." There are 35 practice areas (see Table 2). To test this hypothesis. Pearson product moment correlations compared attorneys' total psychological well-being score to each of the 35 practice areas. For three of the practice areas, attorneys in that specific area had significantly higher psychological well-being scores than their counterparts in other practice areas. Specifically, well-being was higher for attorneys who

practiced alternative dispute resolution ($r = .13, p = .001$), medical malpractice ($r = .08, p = .04$), and public law ($r = .08, p = .04$) (No table shown). Given that the hypothesis predicted a significant difference in well-being based on attorney practice areas, and only 3 of 35 correlations were statistically significant, Supplemental Hypotheses 5 was not supported.

- (6) Supplemental Hypothesis 6 predicted “a significant difference in well-being based on an attorney’s ethnic group.” Given that the number of Caucasian respondents in the sample (93.3%) was 14 times larger than the size of the non-Caucasian sample (6.7%), this supplemental hypothesis was examined with extreme interpretive caution. A comparison of racial ethnic group (Caucasian vs. others) for the seven scales was performed using one-way ANOVA tests. None of the seven tests were significantly different at the $p < .05$ level. Therefore, supplemental hypothesis 6 was not supported.

Additional Findings

Table 10 displays the results of the results of the stepwise regression model that predicts attorneys’ total well-being scores based on 43 candidate variables. The final 5-variable model was statistically significant and accounted for 43.5% of the variance in total well-being. Inspection of the beta weights found total well-being to be higher when the attorney: (1) had a higher life and career satisfaction rating ($\beta = .56, p = .001$); (2) did not perceive the daily work to be stressful ($\beta = -.12, p = .001$); (3) had an alternative dispute resolution practice ($\beta = .10, p = .001$); (4) was female ($\beta = .08, p = .008$); and (5) enjoyed the current practice area ($\beta = .08, p = .02$; Table 10). It should be noted that the

life and career satisfaction variable by itself accounted for 40.1% of the variance in total well-being ($r = .63$).

Table 10

Prediction of Total Well-Being Based on Selected Variables: Stepwise Regression (N = 691)

Variable	B	SE	B	p
Intercept	160.43	5.79		.001
Life and career satisfaction	18.82	1.15	.56	.001
Consider daily work stressful ^a	-11.00	2.59	-.12	.001
Alternative dispute resolution practice ^a	16.59			.001
	4.60		.10	
Gender ^b	6.01	2.28	.08	.008
Enjoy current practice area ^a	9.27	3.85	.08	.02

Note. Final model: $F(5, 685) = 105.36, p = .001$. $R^2 = .435$. Candidate variables = 43.

^a Coding: 0 = No 1 = Yes. ^b Gender: 1 = Male 2 = Female.

To look for other possible correlates to well-being, the same analysis was performed again excluding life and career satisfaction (Table 11). The final 6-variable model was significant ($p = .001$) and accounted for 23.7% of the variance. Inspection of the beta weights found total well-being to be higher when the attorney: (1) enjoyed the current practice area ($\beta = .35, p = .001$); (2) did not perceive the daily work to be stressful ($\beta = -.22, p = .001$); (3) had higher income ($\beta = .15, p = .001$); (4) had an alternative dispute resolution practice ($\beta = .13, p = .001$); (5) was female ($\beta = .10, p = .002$); and (6) worked as a public lawyer ($\beta = .07, p = .05$; Table 11).

Table 11

Prediction of Total Well-Being Based on Selected Variables (Without Self-Reported Life and Career Satisfaction Variable; Stepwise Regression [N = 691])

Variable	B	SE	β	p
Intercept	199.88	6.39		.001
Enjoy current practice area ^a	39.49	3.86	.35	.001
Consider daily work stressful ^a	-19.44	2.98	-.22	.001
Annual income range	5.06	1.16	.15	.001
Alternative dispute resolution practice ^a	20.17	5.34	.13	.001
Gender ^b	8.20	2.69	.10	.002
Public lawyer ^a	10.39	5.18	.07	.05

Note. Final model: $F(6, 684) = 35.44, p = .001$. $R^2 = .237$. Candidate variables = 42.^a
Coding: 0 = No 1 = Yes. ^b Gender: 1 = Male 2 = Female.

Study 2: Qualitative Component

Participants

The first focus group included 9 participants, of which 5 were males and 4 were females. The second included 7 participants (4 males and 3 females). More detailed information about the focus group participants is reported in Table 12.

Table 12

Demographics by Focus Group

	Group 1 (n = 9)	Group 2 (n = 7)
Gender		
Male	5	4
Female	4	3
Ethnicity		
Caucasian	8	7
African American	1	0
Marital Status		
Married	7	4
Single	2	3
Children		
Yes	6	6
No	3	1
Median Age		
	58	43
Law First Career		
Yes	3	5
No	6	2
Median Years in Practice		
	20	18
Setting of Practice		
Government	0	2
Law Firm	2	4
Pro Bono	1	0
Sole Practitioner	6	1
Stressful Practice		
Yes	7	7
No	2	0
Enjoy Practice Area		
Yes	9	7
No	0	0
Median Income		
	\$125,000	\$125,000
Practice Area ^a		
Administrative		1
Bankruptcy/Receiviorship	2	
Business Law		1
Collections	1	1
Construction		1
Corporate Counsel		1
Family and Domestic Relations	1	1
Government		1

Table 12, Cont'd.

Immigration		
Injury and Wrongful Death	1	1
Insurance		1
Intellectual Property	1	
Legal Malpractice		1
Litigation	2	2
Medical Malpractice	1	
Pro Bono	1	
Public		1
Real Estate/Property	1	1
Tort	1	2
Worker's Compensation	1	
County of Practice ^b		
Coconino	8	7
Gila	0	1
Maricopa	1	
Mohave	1	2
Navajo	1	
Pima	1	2
Pinal	1	2
Santa Cruz	1	
Yavapai	1	1
Yuma	1	1
Life and Career Satisfaction		
Completely dissatisfied		
Very dissatisfied	1	
Somewhat dissatisfied		
Somewhat satisfied		1
Very satisfied	4	5
Completely satisfied	4	1

^a A respondent could have more than one practice area so totals are more than 100%.

^b A respondent could practice in more than one county so totals are more than 100%.

Findings

The aim of this study was to uncover the beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions of Arizona attorneys regarding their state of well-being including what affects well-being and what can be done to improve well-being in the practice of law. Distilled themes were then used to make recommendations to improve lawyer satisfaction with the practice of law and well-being generally.

Interestingly, despite the fact that participants acknowledged that stress is a common work-related experience, members of both focus groups reported that they felt either satisfied or very satisfied with the practice of law and self-reported a high level of well-being. Although the participants acknowledged that they were inspired to become a lawyer for varying reasons, there was almost unanimous agreement that a primary motivator was the desire and commitment to be of service to others. To help clients achieve their goals was key.

Consensus was rapidly reached in both groups that: (a) there is no homogeneous “legal culture” to which all members of the Bar belong, although they agreed that there are shared values (e.g., honesty, fiduciary, putting client’s interests first); and (b) well-being is heavily dependent on two primary components: practice area and work-related experience. Three factors or dominant themes appeared to be important in the exploration of attorney well-being. Although there was significant overlap between themes, the themes and subthemes are differentiated for ease of comprehension. The themes include: (a) law practice is inherently stressful, (b) experience (age) significantly impacts well-being, and (c) law practice is satisfying and meaningful. Some suggestions for the improvement of attorney well-being also have been included. To maintain the anonymity of the participants, they are referred to as Male A, Female B, etc. in Focus Group 1 (FG1) and Focus Group 2 (FG2).

Law practice is inherently stressful. The most prominent theme that emerged from the focus groups was the stressful nature of law practice. Participants in both focus groups discussed the various factors that influence attorney well-being, and stress was identified as the primary inhibitor. There was unanimous agreement that the practice of

law is riddled with work-related stressors. Some stressors are common in all practice areas and others may be specific to certain areas. Several subthemes of the most significant work-related stressors emerged and are discussed below: (1) attorneys identify with subcultures within each practice area, where unique stressors are common: lawyers serve as sole practitioners and business managers; litigation, court maneuvering, and deadlines; client interactions, demands, and relationships; contentiousness among lawyers; and public perception; (2) the adversarial nature of law practice; (3) billable hours and the expectation to work long hours; and (4) client interactions within the attorney-client relationship including unreasonable expectations and time requirements, attending to clients' emotional demands, managing and resolving client problems, listening to client problems and traumatic stories, and personal attachments and friendship.

Practice area subcultures: Common unique stressors. The participants offered a wide range of experience and expertise. They had diverse knowledge and skills in various areas of the law including criminal defense, prosecution, bankruptcy, civil racketeering, consumer protection, litigation, administrative law, education law, intellectual property, procurement, real estate, personal injury, immigration, business law, construction, collections, family law, worker's compensation, government, appellate practice, and taxation. It is from this broad range of experience with various practice areas that the participants discussed unique stressors within the areas of expertise.

Participants from both focus groups agreed that the concept of one homogeneous "legal culture" is a misnomer. Instead, the participants acknowledged that although they were members of the Bar and bound by certain ethical guidelines and norms, they were

influenced mostly by the dynamics that take place within their particular practice area(s).

For example, across the two focus groups, participants described the influence of subcultures on law practice and well-being in the following ways:

I don't know that there is a general description of the legal culture. There's a really broad spectrum of different types of lawyers and different types of people that I deal with in my practice, which was all civil litigation and really now, personal injury and wrongful death litigation. (FG1: Male E)

I think in each kind of subdivision of practice, there is a different culture. I agree with [Male E] in like how personal injury, tort litigation, there is a culture and it's typically that older or more experienced attorneys have an easier time getting along . . . and they go hand-in-glove with prosecutors or defense attorneys and the younger lawyers fight or squabble more. (FG1: Male J)

When I have a client and I'm managing a litigation matter, I do go home with knots in my stomach. If I have a transactional matter, I think there's a big difference in my opinion from what I see or from the outside between transactional practice and litigation practice. (FG1: Male A)

Unique stressor 1: Serving as sole practitioners and business managers. Unique stressors were identified by participants who not only practice law but also work as sole-practitioners who are responsible for overseeing the daily operations of their own legal practices. These sole practitioners described that they were stressed by the tasks associated with the management of their businesses while they simultaneously served as counselors and advisors to their clients. Difficulties sometimes arose because of the level of work required and clients' failures to pay their bills:

I represent debtors and creditors inside and outside of bankruptcy. . . . The challenge of being a sole practitioner, you, being a businessman as well as an attorney can be a grind sometimes. . . . I like the challenge of it, but it's a grind just doing it day in and day out. (FG1: Male F)

Irrespective of our practice, those of us who are sole practitioners, also have to be good business people and that in and of itself can be stressful. (FG1: Male A)

At the same time, balancing as a solo attorney [creates] practical issues. So the client doesn't want to pay her bill. [She says], "I'm a single mom. I can't afford to

pay you. I know I owe you thousands and thousands of dollars, but could you please just keep working on my case." And having to explain to them like you, I'm sure you go to work and you wish to get paid. See my staff, my one person wishes to get paid and you know, I have small children, well they're not so small anymore, but they like it if I could occasionally feed them. (FG2: Female B)

Unique stressor 2: Litigation, court maneuvering, and deadlines. Participants from both focus groups offered insight into how litigators experience unique stressors related to the pursuit of legal action in court. Litigation of cases can be stressful both because of the adversarial nature of this type of practice and the legal maneuvering that is inherent in advocating against an opponent.

I chose not to be a litigation attorney because it makes me crazy. I'm evidently very good at it, but it makes me crazy. It puts me in so much stress. I think it's finding what either turns you on . . . and determining what's the best practice style and life for you. But there's no question, stress is part and parcel of every high-end profession, whether you're a lawyer or a doctor. (FG1: Female G)

I used to do more civil litigation. There were so many days where I'd go in thinking I really don't want to make that phone call or I'm really hoping that other lawyer doesn't call me. I mean it was constantly contentious, which again is like anti-my personality. (FG2: Female E)

In addition, the constant need to meet deadlines creates added pressure. As one participant noted, "[I]n patent law . . . it's very deadline intensive. Every day, there's deadlines and you can't escape them" (FG1: Female C).

Unique stressor 3: Client interactions, demands, and relationships. One participant with a family law practice noted how the adversarial nature of her job as a divorce lawyer, along with the pressure of being a sole practitioner and the emotional demands of her clients, created a recipe for stress:

But then there are those that we refer to as e-vicious attorneys. The ones that play games. The ones who flood your fax machines starting at 4:30 p.m. on a Friday night with 97 pages knowing you're self-employed. Or the ones that send the vicious letters demanding an immediate response when they know darn well you're in trial. Those personalities and sometimes it's your own client who wants

to know why you are not immediately responding to their 16 emails, 14 texts, and 6 phone calls regarding some obscure issue. And I think that balance of, and maybe it's because I deal with this high emotional practice, that being able to successfully disconnect at the end of the day is hard. (FG2: Female B)

Prosecutors also encounter unique stressors that other attorneys may not. A participant who was a family law practitioner at the time of the focus group was a former prosecutor. She was able to draw a distinction between the stressors and challenges she experienced in these two distinctly different practice areas. As a prosecutor, she feared the outcome for victims of a crime if she was not successful.

I felt the weight of the world on me at all times, especially when I was handling some of these sex crime cases where you know if I screwed up, this little kid could be molested again. I think that was far more stressful than even my divorce clients are. And it's almost a joke I make. You know, when people say how on earth can you do divorce law. I'm like, when I tell you what I used to do, this is a freaking cake-walk, let me tell you. (FG2: Female B)

Similar views were expressed by a former prosecutor in the other focus group, who noted that she found it difficult to know that potentially innocent people may have been sent to jail because of her.

As a prosecutor, the worst thing that ever happened to me was when I won a case I thought I should have lost. The defendant brought up something I thought, "Well, that would be reasonable doubt." And I was right ready to dismiss everything and that was really convincing. And the judge said, "Guilty." That was the worst thing that happened to me because I didn't think it was fair and, at that point, there was nothing I could do. (FG1: Female D)

Interestingly, another participant, who had 15 years of experience as a prosecutor, offered his perspective on the benefits of being a prosecutor because he felt that he did not face certain stressors that seemed to plague other lawyers:

A job as a prosecutor is great. Everything from the practical side of things of not having billables, merit protection, not having to worry about keeping different personalities happy. . . . I worked for two different law firms in law school. I quickly realized that firms have their own personalities. One, I fit in very well, and the other one was okay, but I didn't want to stay there for any extended

period of time. . . . [I've been] allowed to stay in a career that I love whereas I have friends of mine who I still see on a very regular basis who loved the job when they worked for my office, but the financial realities or the family pressures tied in with that forced them to look for employment elsewhere. (FG2: Male F)

Unique stressor 4: Contentiousness among lawyers. Participants from the first focus group further noted that within each practice area, there are customs that can positively or negatively impact how attorneys work together with colleagues. For instance, some practice areas are more contentious, which can make work and life difficult and stressful. To engage opposing counsel in a combative manner also can complicate the legal process and lead to problematic working relationships. This topic is discussed in more detail below under “*The Adversarial Nature of Law Practice.*”

Interestingly, participants from the first focus group, who included bankruptcy and workers’ compensation lawyers, noted that they had learned to work together in a harmonious fashion with other lawyers. Participants provided examples of how lawyers can come together to resolve problems that impact a particular practice area and in the process, develop a congenial working relationship.

Everybody involved in the bankruptcy practice, consumer mostly, was really concerned about what was going to happen. So, [we] started a mentoring group. . . And there’s now 220 of us and we teach...As a direct result of doing this, we’re finding that the community is much more cooperative with each other. (FG1: Female G)

I’ve got the flipside of what, you know, what you just heard. In the workers’ comp practice. . . . I’m a plaintiff’s lawyer. There’s maybe a couple of dozen defense lawyers I’m dealing with regularly. There’s a dozen judges. We all know one another. It’s a small little subculture. So if there’s a bad actor, you’re going to be dealing with these same people time and time again and it’s going to blow off in your face. (FG1:Male A)

Unique stressor 5: Public perception. Other participants discussed how attorneys are perceived by the public based on practice area. For example, a female participant

stated that she had been treated differently based on the three practice areas in which she worked during her professional life and how these various reactions caused her angst.

I practiced in three different areas of law in my career, over the last 18 years, and it [how lawyers are perceived] depended on what I was doing. When I was a prosecutor, I think the public perception of me was sky high. I could literally do no wrong. I could explain to people what I did for a living and they would thank me, you know, for my service and life was good. Pay was horrible but life was good. When I became a divorce attorney, because of the public perception, I now hide what I do for a living. When asked, I may mutter I'm an attorney. I may, if they push, I may say I'm a family law attorney. I will avoid whenever possible mentioning the *D* word. When I was teaching at the law school it was again, you know, a great public perception. (FG2: Female B)

In sum, although there were different experiences based on practice areas, there are two common denominators: (1) all attorneys are bound by a set of common values that pertain to how they approach their work and represent their clients. Some of those values include helping clients achieve their goals, maintaining loyalty, being ethical in all attorney-client relationships, advocating the client's position, serving as fiduciaries and putting the clients' interests first, and ensuring honesty in all communications; and (2) the practice of law is inherently stressful and is influenced by the unique stressors and circumstances that occur in each practice area.

The adversarial nature of law practice. Participants from both focus groups acknowledged that there is more contentiousness in some areas of law practice than others. Litigation, in which clients and their lawyers seek relief in a court of law, is notorious for being adversarial and highly confrontational. The oppositional nature of this practice area creates challenges and stress for attorneys.

The reason I thought about leaving [the practice of law], I was a litigator and I despised the contentiousness of it. It hurts me to hear that people are opposing you or don't like you or hate you. I just didn't accept that, that it has to be that confrontational. I also got very bored and disgusted with discovery. Answering

interrogatories and propounding interrogatories, admissions. I have worked at the attorney general's office many of these years, and there were big cases, and I actually took a deposition for three days where the defendant invoked the Fifth Amendment in everything but the first question. (FG2: Female D)

I'm a real estate lawyer and my clients are big corporation types . . . but every time I get involved in litigation, it's just so much more contentious and difficult to get things accomplished. (FG2: Male A)

I wake up in the middle of the night wondering if I've missed a deadline or if I've forgotten to do something and I hate that feeling. You know? Thank God for remote access. I'm able to get on and I do litigation but it's very specialized. (FG 2: Female E)

Participants from both focus groups discussed how the adversarial nature of law practice aids some clients to use the legal system as a means to cause harm and inflict pain on their opponents. The combative nature of litigation can have the effect of simultaneously: (a) aiding clients who want to cause financial, emotional, and/or mental harm; and (b) creating an ethical or moral dilemma for lawyers who must help their clients achieve nefarious goals. Because clients want to win their cases and lawyers are hired, on both sides of the case, to serve the interests of their clients, when the interests of the client are mean-spirited, some attorneys experience inner conflict:

As a litigator, of course it's inherently stressful because you've got an opponent whose trying to keep you and your clients from getting what the two of you are trying to get. That there's no way around. (FG1: Male A)

I have clients coming to me all the time that are angry, that want to be vindictive, that part of their objective is to hurt and to cost someone money and do whatever, all negative things. Now I try and not let that influence the way I run my cases, but I know at the end of the day my clients are probably more satisfied by having someone else's life made worse than necessarily even winning. And that's just reality. I can't talk them out of that oftentimes and that does trouble me at points. I wonder sometimes if there's a tally sheet around somewhere that I'll need to answer for. (FG2: Male C)

Typically, at the end of a legal case, unless a compromise is reached and the case is settled, there will be a winner and a loser. Attorneys on both sides are acutely aware

that at the conclusion of a case, they may have to walk away, along with their clients, in defeat. As a result, the participants discussed how attorneys must simultaneously anticipate and prepare for victories as well as losses. Losing cases, hedging one's bets by preparing a client for a loss, and accepting personal defeat can create stress and anxiety for attorneys. Some participants acknowledged that courtroom losses are painful:

I think because we're constantly preparing for the worst, we're preparing our clients for the worst, we're trying to help them avoid the worst. I mean we're always thinking that bad thing is there. My goal is to keep you away from that bad thing and I'm going to do everything to keep you away from that bad thing. (FG2: Female B)

I catch myself saying "we" when I talk to opposing counsel. I say "we're" ready to do this or "we're ready" to do that, but after all this time, I think it's partially artifice. I think I just do that because it frames the issue in opposing counsel's mind as well. But when I go home, I still wake up in the middle of the night thinking about stuff. A lot of it is deadline-related or, oh, did I do that the best I could have? Is there a better argument to make but I didn't? . . . It's painful. And it's even when you have not adopted your client's problems as your own. Nobody likes to lose. Nobody wants to be in the bottom half and in a two-person trial; if you lose, you're the bottom half. (FG2: Male G)

Perhaps the profession, maybe law school, maybe the personalities that law school attracts, we agree but a lot of us, every mistake we make tends to be amplified, and we tend to be very hard on ourselves. Aren't most lawyers not, because of what we do, we're not generally optimistic people. We're always protecting, at least in transactions, we're protecting the downside risk, and so the perception is that generally you think attorneys are probably more glass-half-empty type people. (FG2: Male A)

Finally, one participant, a county prosecutor, had a different perspective regarding the adversarial nature of law practice. He discussed the potential of civility even in the face of adversity:

I feel as a prosecutor, I have the opportunity to practice what a colleague of mine calls "pure law" without the business and the money aspects to everything. And I think that makes all the difference in the world in terms of civility. There are opposing counsel I've worked with for years, and they're some of my best friends, even though we've had many cases against each other. And not to make

light of criminal offenses, but we can kind of sit back and laugh at various aspects of the process on a regular basis. We even have a common bond. (FG2: Male F)

The adversarial nature of law practice is stressful for many reasons including:

(a) having to engage regularly in contentious and combative processes against an opponent, (b) representing clients and in some cases aiding clients in causing harm to others, and (c) planning and preparing self and clients for losses. Lawyers who become emotionally vested in the outcomes of their cases must manage the stress associated with this aspect of their work.

Billable hours and the expectation of long work hours. Participants in both focus groups expressed displeasure with the billable hour as the primary measure of attorney compensation and worth. As a whole, the participants perceived the billable hour as having a detrimental impact on attorney well-being. Although there was some debate concerning the economic realities of lawyers who must charge for their time, nearly all of the participants believed that attorney well-being was stymied by the billable hour.

Having worked as an associate in a private firm where I put in 276 to 300 billable hours per month on top of my committee work, pro bono work, personal life, everything else, that's insane. I don't think that I was necessarily even capable of doing the best job I could with that kind of workload. So, I'm not a big fan of that model. (FG1: Female D)

I'm not going to lie, when I didn't have billable hours, my life was not nearly as stressful, and I did it both in the public sector and teaching. (FG2: Female B)

For me, it depends on whose billable requirements they are. If they're mine personally that I've given to myself, it's not a problem. If its imposed by somebody else, that is a problem. . . . I came from a large firm practice originally where sort of an arbitrary expectation, and that to me was horrible. I hated the idea that at the end of the day, you know, if I hadn't had a great billable day, I needed to try and find some way to get more hours that night before I came in the next day, or I was just going to be backsliding, and I would never catch up, and it was completely arbitrary. (FG2: Male C)

I think I found it very stressful to have a billable hours requirement. I think partly because I would always cut my own hours. I'd work on something and I'd think I was spinning my wheels. I wasn't getting it, so I'd cut my hours. And then I wasn't making the requirement. And after I had my first child, it was sort of like I knew I couldn't last there. I just knew in my heart it would never work because of the billable hours requirement. (FG2: Female E)

There was general agreement in both focus groups that attorneys are often valued for and expected to work long hours, which can create stress, teach lawyers to lie about their time, and create competition among lawyers to work excessively long hours. Two attorneys put it this way:

The really sad part of it . . . is that people learn to work long hours. . . . I mean people don't . . . have real lives. You can't bill 40 hours a week in 40 hours. You gotta work 60 hours a week. (FG1: Female H).

It's huge on the young ones because it teaches them to lie to begin with. Their value is based upon the number of hours on their timesheets, not the quality of the work. Therefore, they will actually lie as to how much time they spent to do whatever it was, or they'll make it last longer so they can have higher hours. So, it teaches inefficiency and it teaches competition inside their own firm. (FG1: Female G)

Consequently, some participants noted that many attorneys spend less time pursuing other endeavors that might be more meaningful, including socializing with friends and family, enjoying recreational activities, volunteering, or pursuing other personal or work endeavors. For example, one participant, referring to his inability to help lower income clients by providing his services pro bono (i.e., doing work for the good or for free), stated: "Another thing I found that causes stress with the billable requirement is that you have to turn things away that you might otherwise want to do" (FG2: Male G). Another attorney agreed:

Actually, I would echo that. . . . Especially dealing with people who have smaller problems that frankly can't afford me, but I can help them out anyway, and you know you have to be very pragmatic in those cases because frankly it's not worth spending a whole lot of time and effort on but you want to get a result for them,

and if you're doing it for free, giving them free advice, you become very careful with what you're doing and very strategic. (FG2: Male C)

One participant acknowledged the toll of working long hours on a family: "If you talk to [our] community across the board, you're going to see a high sacrifice within their social commitments, their marriage[s] and children and such" (FG1: Female G).

To counter the negative effects of the billable hour requirement, participants from both focus groups suggested alternative billing mechanisms (e.g., flat fees and contingency fees) that could be utilized to ease the stress, although there was varying sentiment regarding how these alternatives might be implemented:

In my practice, I don't bill hourly. I bill little fixed fees based on task. So, each task costs whatever and my clients know that and that's how we do it. . . . Well, I think it's difficult to determine the value in almost anything that human beings do. You know, some things seem extremely valuable. Other things seem kind of stupid. I think that's always a difficult issue, but it ought to be an easier issue how you pay people for working for you for so many hours a week. (FG1: Female H)

I came from the independent contracting world and so I've done time and materials. I've done billable hours. I've done contracting with the federal government under every conceivable scheme, and what I liked to do best was fixed-price contracts because, even though I might end up with a hundred hours a week, it was under my control to produce a good product at whatever level I personally felt was worth it, but I knew that the client was getting something that was the right value for them. (FG1: Female D)

We have a blended practice where we bill certain clients by the hour and other work we do on a contingent basis, so that has its ups and downs as well, but it makes the billable requirement at my office, really we don't have one. (FG 2: Male G)

Our firm only has . . . a 1600-hour minimum [per patent application]. (FG1: Female C)

Not all of the participants found the billable hour requirement or work expectations stressful but some participants instead acknowledged that although billing

by the hour creates some frustration, they have adjusted to and accepted it as a regular part of their job duties:

I think there are two sides. . . . I've been doing, keeping track of my time in 6-minute intervals for 31 years, and it happens to have been good for me that I was one of those very punctual people even as a kid. So it wasn't all that hard, but I know it can be hard for others. [I've been] doing it so long that it's just second nature. But there are two sides to it. Nobody likes billable hours. Okay? We can pretty much agree across the board. But, you know what? People like money. . . . It's really a means to an end to some extent. (FG2: Male A)

Participants in one focus group discussed the reasons that some attorneys may work to excess and noted that in many work environments, long hours are rewarded financially and with praise. One participant stated,

The really sad part of it . . . is that people learn to work long hours. So, if you go into my firm on a Saturday, which I'm going to point out, I don't do, but if I ever did and very few times when perhaps I snuck in there, the offices are often full. . . . People . . . don't have real lives . . . and . . . it's primarily men. . . . They're there all day Saturday and half of Sunday and it's . . . like bragging rights or something. (FG1: Female H)

In sum, most attorneys feel pressured to meet billable-hour requirements and work excessively long hours. The stress associated with these work expectations is pervasive across the profession and is a primary cause of stress. Further, the participants noted that: (a) billable hour requirements have a detrimental impact on attorney well-being; (b) working long hours may have a detrimental impact on other aspects of attorneys' lives; and (c) alternative billing options should be explored as a means to reduce stress and improve attorney well-being.

Client interactions within the attorney-client relationship. Participants from both focus groups commented on attorneys' frustrations and challenges that create stress within the attorney-client relationship. Much of the discussion centered on the stress that results from interactions with clients and were associated with three primary issues: (1)

working with demanding clients; (2) repeatedly dealing with client problems; and (3) managing personal relationships with clients.

Unreasonable expectations and time demands. Clients who demand certain results expect attorneys to be available all of the time, or who are not easily satisfied even if there is a victory, create frustration and stress for lawyers. One participant stated simply, “I think clients can be very demanding” (FG 1: Female H) and another noted,

People become dependent upon you. You know, certain clients. . . . now because I have my cell phone, they’ll call me on my cell phone at all hours. And so, you have to have some, you know, kind of boundaries there. (FG1: Female C)

Other participants, from both focus groups, commented further on how they manage demanding clients:

Besides always trying to be a good businessman and stay on top of that, I found that the best way for me to decrease my stress is by recognizing realistically and telling myself, “You know that that client’s going to cause you problems. You know that client’s going to stress you out. Just walk away.” And so, even though I know because I’ve had that same type of client many times before, I know that . . . it’s going to cause me a lot of stress. I’m constantly having that push-pull with myself of, I want to help this person, yeah, but you know that it’s going to cause you stress. (FG1: Male F)

Managing the expectations, I think, is also really, really important and something that is really hard to do until you have a certain amount of legal experience under your belt. . . . Because it is very hard to tell a potential new client especially that you know, you’re in a crappy position. Yeah, you’ve been sued, and frankly I would have sued you too. . . . Yeah, this is an uphill battle. But I think that you learn over time how to break bad news to people and not only that but not to set expectations too high. (FG2: Male C)

Emotional clients. A family law practitioner noted that she had difficulty dealing with clients who were emotionally demanding:

For me, it’s the fact that they’re emotionally volatile and I am, my background is in philosophy and political science are my majors. I’m ill-equipped for what happened this morning which is, you know, a complete mental breakdown in my office. . . . So dealing with the high emotional context is difficult with clients . . . and I become an emotional sounding board to these people. (FG2: Female B)

Some participants acknowledged that working with demanding clients has caused them to have problems sleeping, develop stomach pains, and become grumpy and more cynical (FG 1: Female G, Male F).

I sort of subscribe to the, you know, promise-less-deliver-more philosophy that people are much more happy with you when you do better than you lead them to believe that you would do and I see attorneys making the opposite mistake all the time. (FG2: Male C)

The only way I feel I can deal with the stress that's inherent in that situation is to try to screen clients as well as I can and turn down clients who I know are having unreal expectations and no matter how good a result I, or my colleagues might think I get for them, the client is still going to be unhappy. And, those kind of people, it's just not worth earning whatever money you're going to earn on their case to justify the additional stress you're going to be subject to. (FG1: Male A)

We have an intake process that's taken us 25 years to develop and only those that fit the criteria of the type of client we want can now get through that gauntlet that they have to run to even get me. And the final gauntlet before getting to me is my paralegal, and he's the one that will send them away if his gut says, "Nope, this doesn't work" because I'm the same way you are, and I will say "yes" when I know I shouldn't. (FG1: Female G)

To minimize the stress and better cope with client demands, several participants offered suggestions including: (a) learning what to avoid; (b) screening for and declining to represent clients who are known to be difficult; (c) charging clients a premium (\$500 per hour) to talk on the cell phone at any time; (d) developing and maintaining boundaries; (e) helping clients set realistic expectations; and (f) developing a comprehensive intake process to select more ideal clients (FG1: Female C, Female G, Male F; FG2: Male G).

Managing and resolving client problems. Participants from both focus groups acknowledged that lawyers have, as one of their primary roles, the responsibility to help clients with their problems. One participant acknowledged that lawyers must find solutions for their clients: "Whether it's litigation, whether it's transactional work, you're

starting with a problem and you're coming up with a solution" (FG1: Female D).

Participants from both focus groups noted that attorneys are responsible for managing client problems, which can be stressful and require creative solutions to everyday problems:

When you have problems to solve, if you want to solve them, you know, you become of necessity, the kind of creativity that looks for solutions, or ways to manage a difficult situation, because a lot of what we do is managing difficult solutions. . . . Stress comes along with the challenges. I mean, what we do can be very challenging and sometimes it's not just the other side. It's trying to solve a very, very difficult problem for a client. Whether that problem arises out of some government activity, or a change in the statute, or just whatever, just life. (FG1: Female H)

You think there's an easy solution to this and we just never can seem to get to it. Now I know when I have a client and I'm managing a litigation matter, I do go home with knots in my stomach. (FG2: Male A)

Listening to clients' problems and traumatic stories. To listen to client stories about their problems is stressful and takes a personal toll on lawyers. One participant, an immigration lawyer, acknowledged that her listening to clients' stories of their personal problems had created stress in her life and caused her to remove herself from her work:

Immigration law requires that you spend a lot of time with very, very personal intimate problems and stories that will keep you awake at night. You know, from things that your clients have gone through. And I find now I don't have the same ability to survive that as much, and so I work three days a week with a great team. I have a great group at the firm, and I turn over more and more to them so that I can get away from some of those issues that will haunt you when you're younger. They really will absorb your whole life. (FG1: Female H).

Another participant admitted he also had been stressed by his client's problems until he was able to distinguish between himself and his client: "That lasted about two years, I think, for me when I was taking my client's problems, you know, home with me and stressed out about them losing their house, or getting their wages garnished" (FG1: Male A).

Personal attachments and friendships. Participants from one focus group discussed the challenges and stress associated with the development of personal attachment and relationships with their clients. A family law attorney stated,

Sometimes I have to be careful and I have to remember to draw the line between client and friendship because I hear bits and pieces of their lives and a lot of it you can absolutely relate to and sympathize with. And so, because my cases are much shorter-lived than most of civil litigation is, you know, we can be done in as little as 60 days, and so I guess I kind of get used to this revolving door of friendships. But sometimes clients want to hang on and can we go out for drinks and I'm like, I have to draw the line because that line is just, it gets fuzzy. (FG2: Female B)

A real estate lawyer also commented on the emotional connections and friendships he developed while working with employees of a corporation he represented and the difficulty he experienced as a result:

They went from say 800 people in their office down to about 80 and the dislocation and the loss of jobs. These are friends, colleagues, acquaintances, what have you. And there was a time there in 2009, '08, '09, '10, where you'd make a phone call and if the person didn't answer the phone, oh, my God, did they lose their job? Can't keep in touch with them. How can I help? But that really has been one of the really hard things. It's not so much the business issues but it's the personal issues because you do become, I don't know, invested is the right word, but you develop relationships with your clients and you care about them as people. And as far as I was concerned, these were very, very qualified people who lost their jobs for things completely outside of their control in the time of their lives where it was very hard to get re-employed. I just feel horrible about those situations. So I don't know if that's being invested in your client but being invested in the individuals who comprise your client. (FG2: Male A).

Although it was noted that attorneys experience stress as a result of the dynamics that occur within the attorney-client relationship, participants in both focus groups offered suggestions to attorneys who regularly listen to client problems: "Don't take it personally . . . and try . . . to insulate [yourself] to the extent possible from dealing with situations that are emotionally draining" (FG1: Male A) and "Draw the line between

client and friendship" (FG2: Female B). Two advised others not to make the client's problems their own (FG1: Females C and F).

Experience significantly impacts well-being. The participants highlighted specific areas in which experience, or the lack thereof, can impact well-being and agreed that legal work is more stressful for younger lawyers. The most significant factor discussed by members of both focus groups related to how young, inexperienced, attorneys cause much of the contentiousness and animus in law practice:

The younger lawyers are more contentious. I talk to people who do family law and they say everybody's contentious. And then, I talk to people in criminal defense and they're similar to us [litigation lawyers]. (FG1: Male J)

I was dealing, as I said, as someone with 20-plus years of experience before I set foot in law school, dealing with people who'd never held jobs before, thought they were entitled to 6-figure salaries. And then, when you would meet for anything, it was all one-upmanship. It was, who can impress who? I mean, here's me. This is how I would prefer to dress as a lawyer, but I had to go back into the tech field to get back to my nice comfy clothes. It was everything from . . . whether they could win cases, whether or not they should. (FG1: Female D).

What I find is that the more experienced, older lawyers are much easier to deal with. Not always, but as a general rule. Young lawyers who don't really know what he or she is doing, or what's important are more difficult because I guess they're unsure of themselves, or maybe they feel they need to prove something, or something. I don't know exactly. (FG1: Male E)

I think when I was a younger attorney, I felt completely inept. I knew nothing. I honestly remember graduating from law school and thinking I was ill-trained for the actual practice of law. I remember, I mean now we accept the fact that, wow, I don't know the answer. I'm going to go look that up. But I think back then, it was, oh, my God, why don't I know the answer? (FG2: Female B)

I just feel a lot more comfortable in my skin today both as a lawyer, as a person, as a parent, as a husband or wife, or whatever, that you know you come out of law school and you don't think you know anything. Well, most people that come out of law school think they do know everything but they don't. But eventually, they learn pretty quickly they don't and that is a very uncomfortable thing. . . . You're asked to do something and you're not sure you can get it done right or you may or may not have a good mentor who is positive and maybe you have somebody who's negative the way they mentor you or don't have someone to mentor you. But as you get more senior, you get more comfortable with yourself as a person.

You get mature. You get more comfortable with yourself as an attorney and what you know and what you don't know....So you're just more in control. You can take the day off. You can go see your kid's baseball game or what have you. When you're a young associate, you don't feel you can do that. You don't feel like you can say no. At least I didn't feel like I could say no...So I think it's just the amount of control you have over your personal life and your professional life. (FG2: Male A)

One participant distinguished between young lawyers and new lawyers, suggesting that new lawyers who are older are easier to work with because they have other work experience: "I'd like to distinguish between being young and new because . . . I found that very difficult with what I'm going to call the young lawyers as opposed to new lawyers" (FG1: Female D). Noting that law school does not adequately prepare young lawyers for law practice, some participants discussed the perils of allowing inexperienced young lawyers to practice law without any guidance. For example, one attorney with more than 20 years of experience noted that inexperienced young attorneys may be more susceptible to malpractice lawsuits:

These kids that I call "walking malpractice cases" for the first five years of their practice are hanging their own shingles and have no mentoring, and they don't perceive of having a place to ask questions because, of course, law school taught them how to be lawyers. It didn't, but they think it did. (FG1: Female H)

Experience, or the lack thereof, was also mentioned as impacting well-being, as the participants noted that low self-confidence detracts lawyers from feeling good about themselves, the work they do, and the clients they serve. The participants also discussed that confidence and know-how builds over time as one develops proficiency with the many facets of law practice (e.g., policies and procedures, client management, skill development, billable hours, development of creative solutions):

I think I've gotten better over the years at disconnecting because I get that a lot. How in the world do you do this all day long and then go home? It's taken a lot of years to learn how to, what I call "turn off the office" when I get home and put aside all of their problems and issues and not think about it all the time. So I've

gotten better at it. I will say when I was younger, it was much harder. I internalized everything. Oh, I think when I was a younger attorney, I felt completely inept. I knew nothing. (FG2: Female B)

You have to have the experience to learn what to avoid. You had to have had the bad clients for a while. And they're not bad, bad. They're just not compatible with you. (FG1: Female C)

I would share those same kind of comments considering we kind of do the same thing. For me, it's . . . in being creative, it's finding the solutions, one, not only the solutions that you know will work for the client, but also, that the client can accomplish. Because I've been practicing for so long, I sometimes have more experience and knowledge and being able to come up with something, but it might be a little bit too complicated for the client to be able to accomplish. So then, I have to figure out something that's within their capability. (FG1: Male F)

One participant acknowledged that as he gained experience during his career, he also gained more control or freedom: "I have more control than a lot of my friends, particularly younger attorneys working into partnership or working their way up through a partnership" (FG2: Male G). Other participants offered solutions to help inexperienced attorneys gain more experience:

Personally, I think that it would be a lot more helpful to the profession if we did have some requirement that you have some other experience. Some other life experience, or work experience before going to law school because I think it does give a little bit of perspective. . . . My experience has been that it's a lot easier to deal with attorneys in any area of the law . . . if the law was a second career for them because they have a different perspective besides just that I've got to bill. (FG1: Male F)

Throughout both focus group discussions, participants frequently talked negatively about younger, inexperienced lawyers and acknowledged the importance of more experienced attorneys serving as mentors and providing guidance to help develop the skills and competence needed by their less-seasoned colleagues:

I started out as an associate in a big law firm, and I had that feeling that I was pretty much incompetent and that was regularly reinforced by the partners. And to the extent that I ever felt like that wasn't true, they made sure that I did feel that way. And I left after a couple of years and went to work in a smaller shop. And I work for some guys who said, "You know, we don't expect you to know

everything. We expect you never to make the same mistake twice," but my mentor there said, "There's about 10,000 ways to mess up a case. Just don't make the same one twice. Try 10,000 cases, you'll be perfect." And I don't know if that's actually true. But for me, I think it is reality. Law school doesn't train you to practice law. It trains you to think about law. But having people around you who let you know that it is okay is a big component of my satisfaction. (FG2: Male G)

So, we have an ongoing mentoring, whether it's e-mail, or whether it's in person, and we take people that are two minutes out of law school and want to do bankruptcy, or they're 200 years out of law school and are still doing bankruptcy. . . So, you know, I can say that reaching out to your community and saying to the young ones coming in that might be scared, therefore, might be rather aggressive in their attitude. And say, "Here, we're here to help you learn, but you've got to give back if we're going to teach you." It makes a difference. (FG1: Female G).

Participants from both focus groups noted that there are other benefits to mentorship, including support from colleagues, efficiency in not having to recreate the wheel, and being able to discuss and bounce ideas off of others:

I think what saved me is I had some wonderful mentors and one of the reasons I love being in a big law firm is all of the support and not having to re-invent the wheel every time or do all of my own discovery. I can email somebody and say, now I think 1 out of the 5 of you has probably worked on this issue before. Help me because given all the cutbacks, we have to be really efficient. So I like that support system. (FG2: Female D)

I think that a couple of things contribute to that. One is, I think there are several years lawyers did not get jobs in the normal course of business. There's invariably at least a dozen people that are practicing by themselves . . . who never worked in a law firm. And so, they don't have any older lawyer to go talk to. When they get a bad idea, it's the only idea they got and there's nobody there to tell them that's a bad idea. . . I hear some of the questions they ask. . . You have to go talk to them because really, some of their ideas are like, "No, you can't do that, or you don't want to do that." (FG1: Male J)

Lawyering is satisfying and meaningful. Participants in both focus groups discussed various factors that influence well-being and contribute to their sense of satisfaction with work and life. Together, 87.5% of both focus group participants indicated they were satisfied with their lives and careers (Table 12). In discussing their

sense of satisfaction and well-being, participants generally mentioned a plethora of contributing factors: helping people achieve their goals and making a difference, solving problems, having a sense of freedom (control) over work, good health, amicable colleagues, engagement in volunteer work, intellectually stimulating work/careers, positive relations with others, participation in recreational activities (e.g., travel), spiritual and religious beliefs (e.g., the Golden Rule) and practices, making a good living, and using their creativity (e.g., as a form of problem-solving, artistic pursuits).

Several participants noted that, despite the stressful nature of law practice, they found ways to balance their stress with other satisfying aspects of their work and developed a sense of well-being by: (a) making a difference; (b) helping others achieve their goals, (c) solving problems, and (d) experiencing freedom (control) over their work:

I would not change anything I have in my life right now. I would just continue doing what I do because I'm in control. I'm doing what I want to do, when I want to do it, and how I want to do it. (FG1: Female G)

The thing that I like about it is that . . . I do get to help people that actually need help and I . . . represent debtors and creditors inside and outside of bankruptcy. So, I kind of do both sides all the time, which I like, which gives me balance. So, I like the fact that I'm providing information to people who don't have it and really don't know how to get it. (FG1: Male F)

I mainly see myself as someone who, my goal is to . . . help clients achieve their goals, whatever they are. . . . I like the fact that it's intellectually diverse. Although I hate it sometimes, like whenever the phone rings, I always feel like it's a problem coming in. Sometimes that's okay because sometimes you can solve that problem right away. (FG1: Female C)

I think it's a satisfying way of life because you do, to a large extent, at least I feel like I have control over what's going on. And although you can certainly never guarantee what's going on, you can attempt to influence it as best you can to help the person you're helping. (FG1: Male J)

I own my own law firm. I do a lot of litigation work. I have a couple of partners but that allows me a lot of self-determination, which I think is for a lot of lawyers, a real problem. I say self-determination, but that's not really true. You don't

control your witnesses, your clients, your judges, your schedule, but I feel like, maybe I'm kidding myself, but I feel like I have more control than a lot of my friends, particularly younger attorneys working into partnership or working their way up through a partnership because I'm responsible to my bank account and my mortgage company. (FG2: Male G).

"The thing that I like about it [being a lawyer] is that one, I'm never bored, which is important to me" (FG1: Male F).

To maintain positive relations with others was very important to nearly all of the participants in both focus groups, as was health and participation in recreational activities (e.g., travel, tennis):

I'm very fortunate. I have a wonderful wife and two very wonderful kids. So, on the happiness scale, I would be completely satisfied. I mean, you couldn't imagine being married to a better person and your kids are, oh, they're both challenging in their own ways. . . . I wouldn't change them for anything. (FG 1: Male J)

I've been married, happily, most of the time, for 54 years. Same woman and we've got a solid marriage. We have two sons, four grandchildren. (FG1: Male B)

Most people at my firm would tell you I'm probably . . . the most balanced out of all of them. I'm kind of a work-hard, play-hard kind of girl. So, I very much enjoy that and so, I take a lot of vacation. (FG1: Female C)

I'm fit. I'm healthy. I get to do a lot of volunteer work because I work in public service so I'm not working 80 to a hundred hours a week like I used to. So, I have weekends and evenings free for volunteer work and . . . that makes me very happy. (FG1: Female D)

But my child is wonderful. I have a great family and friends and an interesting job most days, not every day. But I don't expect a job to be great every day. And healthy. I think being healthy and physically active is also really critical. (FG2: Female D)

My health is great and my wife's health is great and so, we can do anything we want. And my family, both sons, have great health. I've been fortunate to have really good cases and good clients and things have worked out really well. So, right now, I'm at a very good place. (FG1: Male E)

I've been able to travel the world, everywhere from Russia to Egypt to Australia and to me, that's one of the most satisfying things personally. (FG2: Male F)

Fifty percent of the participants acknowledged that religion, spiritual beliefs, and a commitment to live by the Golden Rule (do unto others what you would have them do unto you) contributed to their well-being:

I'm a religious person, and I spend a long time praying for faith, unwavering faith, and I feel like I'm finally getting some place with that, so that to me, underlies everything else. (FG1: Female D)

I have always made decisions based on how I would want to be treated or, better yet, the more important question, how would I want my mother, my grandmother, whatever. (FG1: Female G)

I'll just say that I agree . . . in a general sense of the Golden Rule and I think that one could do that without being particularly religious or spiritual. (FG1: Male A)

I try to bring [spirituality] into my practice as well. I'm on the phone and I'm being berated by either a client or opposing counsel and the red-headed part of me wants to just tear into them. No. No. No. No. No. Don't do it. Rise above it. This isn't how you're supposed to behave. . . . I found that going to services and staying involved with the church probably brings me back and centers me to do a better job for my clients. (FG2: Female B)

A few participants admitted that money was a priority; however, participants in both focus groups discussed their desire to balance the need for money with other quality-of-life considerations and acknowledged that often stress (associated with working more hours) accompanies greater earnings and reduces well-being and satisfaction with work:

I love what I do, enjoy my clients, enjoy my work. I work pretty hard and I make a lot of money. So I'm good. (FG2: Male A)

I don't know if it's just the billable hours that's evil, or billing per document. I just think it's inherent in wanting to make all of this money. I know I can make a lot more money. I could make seven figures if I was a partner at a law firm in New York or DC. I don't want that life. I've made choices about what I want as an income and so forth. But, you know, my friends used to tell me when they were an associate, like I would get like a \$5000 bonus and they would get like a \$50,000.00 bonus and I'm like, "Yeah, but they have a piece of you for that \$50,000.00." But people are willing to make that sacrifice. I don't think it's sustainable, you know. (FG1: Female C)

We're not doing it just for the money. We're doing it for the laughs and the companionship and I don't know. The joy of those moments in your practice that give you joy and you just have to keep that in mind. (FG1: Female F)

But not having those money pressures, I think it really lends itself to overall life satisfaction in terms of well-being in one's life and career. (FG2: Male F)

Throughout both focus-group discussions, participants noted that creativity, which is commonly seen as an artistic form, is used by lawyers to tell a client's story, plan a case strategy, negotiate and settle cases, develop legal arguments, present cases in court, and develop unique solutions to solve problems. Furthermore, participants noted that creativity was an integral part of the participants' personal as well as professional lives. Participants also acknowledged that they engaged in personal, creative endeavors, including cooking and taking creative writing classes. One participant noted,

I think my job has a huge upside for creativity. . . . So I think whether you're a prosecutor or a civil trial attorney, you have the same outlet and every case presents an opportunity to use that, at least sort of, storytelling side of creativity. (FG2: Male C)

Usually clients in my field . . . come to you with a very early version of what their invention is and, you know, sometimes it's not ready for clinical trials yet, or is not ready for commercialization. But you have to think about how that technology is going to be, you know, used in 10 or even 20 years and put that information in the application. So, I think my job requires a lot of creativity and that's why I like it. (FG1: Female C)

Suggestions to Improve Attorney Well-Being and Satisfaction

Finally, suggestions were offered to improve attorney well-being and satisfaction in the practice of law:

- Help attorneys learn how to achieve work-life balance and incorporate other meaningful aspects of life (e.g., health, travel, family).
- Develop mentoring programs to help build skills among young lawyers and create cooperative legal process and practice areas.
- Require new attorneys to have other relevant work experience before they can practice law.

- Assist attorneys, particularly by providing training to young lawyers, to minimize bickering or combative behavior.
- Assist young lawyers to develop self-confidence and skill.
- Provide training to help lawyers learn how to manage demanding/difficult clients, understand and cope with unique stressors, and manage excessive work demands.

This results chapter presented the findings of both the survey and focus group discussions separately. Next, the discussion chapter presents the major findings of this research and demonstrates how the survey and focus group discussions complemented or differed from one another.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this chapter is to present a summary of the research findings related to the central and secondary research questions, provide comparisons between the survey and focus group findings, contemplate the findings in light of the literature, and examine the limitations and delimitations of the study. Recommendations for future research, as well as implications of the study, and summary and conclusions are also provided.

Summary of the Findings

This self-selection, mixed-methods study resulted in 691 survey responses (4.7% response rate) and two focus group discussions with 9 and 7 participants respectively. Although females comprise roughly one-third of the Bar's membership (34%), they made up nearly half (46%) of the survey respondents. One possible explanation for the larger number of female survey participants may be that they saw that a female was facilitating the survey and wanted to be helpful with the research; or, they may have found the topic of more interest.

The following central research question was explored: *What is the perception of well-being among members of the Arizona Bar?* Several secondary questions further examined attorney beliefs, attitudes and perceptions concerning: (1) well-being, generally; (2) the legal culture; (3) factors that contribute to or detract from satisfaction at work; (4) the impact of listening to client problems and traumatic stories; (5) whether spirituality influences well-being; (6) how creativity is used at work; (7) how attorneys

cope with adversity, stress, or change at work; and (8) suggestions for improving attorney well-being.

Arizona Attorneys' Experience of Well-Being

Feedback from both the survey and the focus groups contributed some understanding of attorney well-being. For example, the major findings of this research indicate that Arizona attorneys experience well-being. This is consistent with national surveys in which Americans have reported a positive level of well-being (Diener & Diener, 1996) as well as my pilot study results (Ramos, 2010). Additionally, there were several key distinctions related to attorney well-being. Notably, the survey results show Arizona attorneys had higher levels of autonomy than members of the normative group and lower levels in the self-acceptance, purpose in life, and environmental mastery dimensions. A higher autonomy score suggests that attorneys may be: (a) more self-determining, independent, and able to resist social pressure; (b) better able to regulate and evaluate themselves by internal forces; and (c) more likely to judge themselves based on personal standards, which aligns with Ryff's autonomy dimension (Ryff & Keyes; 1995; Ryff & Singer, 2006). These findings are consistent with the focus group analysis wherein the participants acknowledged having a sense of freedom and control in their daily activities. Additionally, several of the focus group participants either worked for themselves, as sole-practitioners, or in positions that afforded independence in how they carried out their duties. The ability to design their work requirements and standards not only highlights the uniqueness of each lawyer but the self-determining, independent aspect of autonomy experienced by the participants.

Conversely, lower self-acceptance, purpose in life, and environmental mastery survey results were noted. Lower self-acceptance results suggest that attorneys may feel a sense of self-dissatisfaction, may be disappointed with what has occurred in their lives, and may be troubled by certain personal qualities, or would like to be different from who they are (Ryff & Keyes, 1995). A lower purpose in life survey result suggests that attorneys may lack direction and a sense of meaning in life; they may have fewer goals or aims, and may not see purpose in how they live their lives (Ryff & Keyes, 1995). Further, lower environmental mastery survey results suggest that attorneys may have difficulty managing their everyday affairs and they may feel as though they are unable to change their environment, which aligns with Ryff & Keyes' (1995) environmental mastery dimension. Lower environmental mastery survey results are consistent with the focus group results wherein the participants discussed: (a) the stressful nature of law practice; (b) the dynamics that occur within each practice area that significantly influences well-being; (c) negative interactions with clients and other lawyers; and (d) how the work setting impacts (e.g., sole practitioner, law-firm) well-being. Focus group participants expressed widespread frustration regarding a myriad of environmental factors (e.g., court maneuvering and deadlines, adversarial nature of law practice, expectation to work long hours, client interactions) that were beyond their control.

Finally, females had significantly higher scores than males for 4 of the 7 well-being scores (See Table 7a/b). However, although the correlations were statistically significant, all correlations were considered weak based on the Cohen (1988) criteria. Similarly, the respondents' ethnic group was compared against the seven scale scores

using point-biserial correlations, and ethnic background was not significantly related to any of the seven scale scores.

Life and career satisfaction is an indicator of well-being. The survey results also demonstrate that a significant positive relationship exists between total psychological well-being scores and (a) the self-reported level of life and career satisfaction; (b) those who answered “yes” to whether they enjoyed their practice area as well as those working in the areas of alternative dispute resolution, medical malpractice, and public law; and (c) environmental mastery. What seems most important for lawyers is whether they enjoy their life, career and practice area. A majority of the survey participants (73.8%, Table 4) reported that they were somewhat satisfied (30.2%), very satisfied (36.5%) or completely satisfied (7.1%) with their lives and career. Analogously, 87.5% of the focus group participants (Table 12) acknowledged that they felt satisfied with their life and career. These findings are in agreement with other studies that have found that life satisfaction is an indicator of well-being (Lyubomirsky, King, et al., 2005; Mak, Ng, & Wong, 2011; Staw & Barsade, 1993) and that evaluations of happiness or well-being are based on personal perception and the degree to which people judge the overall quality of their lives (Ehrhardt, et al., 2000).

Experience (age) and psychological well-being. The survey results demonstrate there is a positive correlation between the length of time attorneys spend practicing law and psychological well-being. Essentially, attorneys who have practiced law longer have higher well-being scores. Interestingly, lawyers who were 55 years or older had higher well-being scores on the survey than their younger counterparts. One possible explanation for this pattern might be that with more years of experience, attorneys learn

to cope with work-related stressors and find ways to mitigate their anxiety. Consequently, as time goes by, lawyers increase their skill and proficiency. Furthermore, the focus group analysis provides insight regarding this issue. Most of the focus-group participants agreed that younger, less-experienced attorneys are more difficult to work with because they may feel the need to prove themselves when they begin their careers. As attorneys develop their practice experience and expertise, they develop confidence in their skills and abilities, which helps to improve their well-being.

These findings are consistent with the human development and resilience perspective presented by Benard (1995) who suggested that human growth and development evolves naturally within the environment which aids people in developing social competence, problem-solving skills, autonomy, critical awareness, and a sense of purpose. This perspective was also supported by the focus group discussions and was central to developing the second major focus group theme: Experience significantly impacts well-being. Focus group participants overwhelmingly acknowledged ways in which experience, or the lack thereof, impacts well-being. For example, they concluded that much of the contentiousness and animus in law practice is caused by new, young lawyers who lack skill and proficiency in carrying out their duties. By attempting to zealously advocate for their clients, many inexperienced attorneys go overboard in order to prove their value and worth, or they may not have the type of training, guidance, or mentoring they need in order to develop professional competence.

Additionally, according to the survey results, there is a significant positive relationship between attorneys' levels of environmental mastery and their psychological well-being ($r = .86$, $p < .001$, no table shown) and between years practicing law and

autonomy ($r = .18$, $p < .001$, Table 7a). This is consistent with psychological well-being research which seeks to measure all aspects of well-being including those with connecting aspects of positive psychological functioning (Kafka & Kozma, 2002; Ryff, 1989). The survey results are consistent with the focus group analysis, and a third major theme, which suggests that a multitude of factors influence well-being and despite the stressful nature of practicing law, law practice is satisfying and meaningful.

Focus group participants noted various meaningful aspects of legal work, that many seasoned attorneys with years of legal experience encounter, namely: (a) greater autonomy (e.g., the attorney is self-determining and independent, able to resist social pressures to think and act in certain ways, and regulates behavior from within (Ryff & Keyes, 1995); (b) higher levels of environmental mastery (e.g., the attorney has a sense of mastery and competence in managing the environment; controls a complex array of external activities; and is able to choose or create contexts suitable to personal needs and values (Ryff & Keyes, 1995); and (c) an ability to balance stress with other satisfying aspects of their work. For these reasons, it seems logical that this study found a relationship between attorneys' levels of environmental mastery and their psychological well-being and between years practicing law and autonomy.

Legal Culture and Well-Being

This study shows that culture, particularly the sub-culture within each legal practice area, plays a significant role in influencing attorney well-being. This finding is analogous to the assertions made by Gardiner and Kosmitzki (2005) that "cultural beliefs and values influence how individuals come to judge their efforts and accomplishments" (p. 211). Results from the survey indicated that attorneys had significantly higher

psychological well-being if they worked in alternative dispute resolution, medical malpractice, or as public lawyers. One possible explanation for this pattern might be that these practice areas are less adversarial in nature and may result in more negotiation or mediation. Another explanation, particularly related to public lawyers, is the nature of the work itself. Public lawyers often serve indigent clients, people who are underserved and underrepresented. As such, public lawyers may derive more pleasure or have higher levels of well-being based on their being able to help clients who, without their assistance, would not be able to defend or assert their rights. Moreover, these lawyers often do not have the same pressure to meet billable hour requirements as other lawyers, which may contribute to a higher level of well-being. Regardless of the reason, the survey findings suggest that attorneys within certain practice areas share similar perspectives and have higher well-being scores.

Additionally, the focus group analysis suggests that lawyers share certain predominant values (e.g., honesty, fiduciary obligation, putting client's interests first), ethical guidelines, and cultural norms as members of the legal profession. Moreover, the participants admitted they are primarily influenced by the dynamics that take place within the subculture of their practice areas where unique stressors and stronger relationships with other lawyers are more pronounced. The need for mentoring relationships, within each practice area, between new and more experienced attorneys was suggested as a way to develop the legal subculture. Mentoring was offered as a means by which to share the experiences of older lawyers with inexperienced lawyers where new lawyers could gain valuable knowledge and proficiency by spending time with and obtaining advice from their more experienced counterparts.

Factors that Affect Satisfaction and Well-Being

Attorney well-being is affected by a plethora of internal and external factors. The survey and focus group results contributed some understanding of what types of internal factors influence attorney well-being. Autonomy, self-acceptance, and purpose in life are important (Ryff & Keyes, 1995). As was previously noted, the survey results demonstrated Arizona attorneys had higher autonomy scores than the normative group; however, they are less likely to feel satisfied with themselves (self-acceptance) and their lives have less meaning (purpose in life) which is consistent with Ryff & Keyes' (1995) self-acceptance and purpose in life dimensions. Further, the focus group participants acknowledged several internal factors that contributed to the experience of well-being and satisfaction with their work including a desire to help people achieve their goals, making a difference, solving problems, having a sense of freedom (control) over work, spiritual beliefs, and good health.

Conversely, the survey results demonstrate the influence of external factors that influence attorney well-being, which supports Ryff & Keyes' (1995) environmental mastery dimension. This finding is also consistent with the focus group discussion wherein the participants offered numerous examples of environmental factors that affect attorney perceptions of well-being. For example, the focus groups analysis highlights external dynamics that occur within each subculture of law practice related to: (a) unique stressors experienced by different attorneys (e.g., sole practitioners must be good businesspeople, family lawyers must cope with emotional clients); (b) the adversarial nature of law practice; (c) billable hours and the expectation that lawyers should work long hours; (d) client interactions within the attorney-client relationship including

working with demanding clients and constantly dealing with client problems; (e) public perception; (f) positive relations with others (e.g., family, colleagues); (g) engagement in volunteer work; (h) participation in recreational activities (e.g., travel, exercise); (i) participation in spiritual and religious services (e.g., attendance at church) and practices (e.g., treat others based on the Golden Rule); and (j) making a good living.

Creativity, spirituality, and well-being. Many people do not believe they are creative in any sense, particularly since creativity is viewed largely as pertaining to the arts or sciences (Richards, 2010). As such, they refrain from accepting their creative abilities as normal (Richards, 1990, 1996). Everyday creativity, or the ability that every human being has to manifest creativity in day-to-day tasks, includes almost anything one creates with originality in the everyday context (Richards, 2010). Although this research did not specifically measure whether or to what degree attorneys are creative or use their creative abilities, the focus group participants acknowledged they did not initially view themselves as being creative because they did not create works of art. Upon further investigation, several participants acknowledged they use creativity in non-traditional ways. For example, lawyers act as storytellers to persuade judges and juries to reach verdicts for their clients, they craft inventive written legal arguments to tell their client's story, and they offer original and sometimes lively and demonstrative court presentations to resolve client problems. Other focus group participants noted how they personally use creativity when they prepare meals and engage in creative writing exercises.

Fifty percent of the focus group participants drew upon their spiritual beliefs and religious faith as a resource to help them achieve well-being and cope with life challenges and stressors (Hill & Pargament, 2003). Spirituality was employed by focus group

participants who relied on the Golden Rule to help guide them in their actions when they engaged in the practice of law and in life.

Stress, resilience, and coping skills. According to the results of this study, attorneys find the practice of law stressful and they employ a myriad of coping skills in order to manage stress. It is interesting to note that while 73.8% of the survey participants admitted finding their work satisfying, almost as many (72.9%) simultaneously acknowledged that the practice of law is stressful. This suggests that resilience has a positive effect on well-being (Windle, 2011) and that individuals are able to adapt to life situations and recover from adversity (Bonanno, Galea, Bucciarelli, & Vlahov, 2007). Further, the focus group discussion mirrored the survey results wherein one of the central themes emerged: Law practice is inherently stressful. The focus group analysis suggests each practice area has its own subculture where attorneys experience unique stressors which, depending on the practice area, can foster an environment that develops or mitigates stress. Further, the focus group participants noted that despite the stressful nature of their work, it is still possible to feel a sense of well-being as well as high levels of satisfaction with work.

The survey results suggest there is a relationship between stress and well-being. For example, those who responded “no” to whether they considered their daily work to be stressful (27.1%) had higher psychological well-being. Essentially, attorneys who view their work as stress-free had a greater sense of well-being. Furthermore, the focus-group analysis provides insight regarding this issue. Although the participants acknowledged their work was stressful, they were able to: (a) recognize the factors that contribute to stress; (b) discuss the importance of balancing stress with other, enjoyable

parts of their work and lives; and (c) offer ways to reduce or eliminate stress. This supports the assertions presented earlier by Bernard (1995) that resilience is fostered by a host of factors including the individual, environment, and protective process that can contribute to positive attributes in individuals.

The focus group analysis presented unique stressors associated with each practice area; however, the stressors do not necessarily equate to lower well-being survey scores. The 35 practice areas were compared against the seven well-being scores. Of the resulting 245 correlations, 19 were statistically significant at the $p < .05$ level; however, all were considered weak correlations of the Cohen (1988) absolute value of $r = .30$. What seems most relevant to lawyers is not the practice area, in isolation, but how well attorneys learn to cope with the stressors. Although the focus group participants acknowledged that their work was stressful, they had learned to cope with their stress in order to feel a greater sense of well-being and satisfaction with their work.

The impact of listening to client problems/traumatic stories. The focus group analysis suggests attorney well-being is significantly influenced by client interactions. While this research did not specifically measure whether or to what degree attorneys experience trauma from listening to their client's problems or traumatic stories, it did inquire about the impact of the attorney-client relationship on lawyers. Participants from both focus groups discussed a myriad of frustrations and challenges that create stress within the attorney-client relationship. Much of the discussion centered on attorney interactions with demanding clients that violate boundaries, emotionally volatile clients, repeatedly dealing with client problems, and managing personal relationships with clients. Focus group participants admitted feeling unprepared to deal with the depth and

breadth of the client problems they encounter and, in some cases, the emotional toll the participants have experienced (e.g., sleeping problems, stomach pains, moodiness, cynicism) as a result. Further, the focus group participants noted that lawyers can minimize the negative effects of client interactions by becoming more aware and learning what to avoid, developing and enforcing boundaries, and declining representation of clients who are known to be difficult or emotionally demanding.

Suggestions to Improve Attorney Well-Being

The focus group participants provided many suggestions for improving attorney well-being in the practice of law: (a) help attorneys learn how to achieve work-life balance; (b) encourage lawyers to incorporate purposeful and meaningful activities in their lives (e.g., health, travel, family); (c) develop mentoring programs to aid young lawyers with building skills and creating cooperative legal process and practice areas; (d) require new attorneys to have other relevant work experience before they are permitted to practice law; (e) provide training to young lawyers to minimize bickering or combative behavior; (f) assist young lawyers to develop self-confidence and skill; (g) provide training to help lawyers learn how to manage demanding/difficult clients, understand and cope with unique stressors and manage excessive work demands. These suggestions are similar to those made by other focus group participants in my pilot study who noted the importance of balancing competing internal (e.g., cognitions, behaviors, and attitudes) and external factors (e.g., family, age, success, and socioeconomic status) that influence well-being (Ramos, 2010).

Limitations and Delimitations

Limitations

Several limitations can be identified in this study.

The inquiry involved solicitation of the Bar for potential participants. As a result, attorneys may have felt some bias or pressure to respond in a way that demonstrates a higher level of well-being than what might be accurate; or they may not have felt completely free to express their beliefs or thoughts out of fear of some reprisal from the Bar. This potential bias may negatively impact the generalizability of the findings to the larger lawyer population.

Another potential concern is that the response rate (4.7%): (a) is lower than the Bar's usual response rate of approximately 8%, and (b) may not reflect the opinions of the Bar membership as a whole. Potentially, the sponsorship of this study by the Bar may have proved to be a two-edged sword. On a positive note, a comprehensive database of attorney email addresses was available, only attorneys licensed to practice law in Arizona were contacted with a link to the survey, and the confidentiality of the respondents was ensured. A potential negative factor could have been that an unknown percentage of attorneys declined to participate in the study because of concerns or fears of potential identification.

The study was based on the assumption that the participants would accurately remember the details of their subjective experiences related to well-being, spirituality, creativity, resilience, and the legal culture.

Focus-group participants were selected based on their willingness to volunteer after they responded to an advertisement placed in online magazines. This method of

recruitment may skew the results in that it is not entirely random. Those individuals who have an interest in well-being and happiness and who are disenchanted or pleased with the standard practice of law (e.g., associates who work in a law-firm culture) or their lives may have been more likely to respond.

As an African American, female attorney who has practiced law for more than 15 years, I have drawn upon my experiences in conducting this research. My perspective has given me insight into the experiences described by the participants. However, it also could have allowed me to introduce personal bias in this study. To mitigate this potential, I was careful to analyze the data objectively and used the services of a statistician consultant to provide a secondary review of the data.

Finally, specific comparisons of certain demographic variables between members of the Bar and the study participants could not be analyzed because the Bar did not maintain data that were comparable to what was collected during this research (e.g., annual income, marital status, ethnic origin).

Delimitations

This research was limited to the study of attorneys who practice law in Arizona; however, the study did not examine the perspectives, attitudes, and beliefs of attorneys in other states who may have different cultural and work experiences.

This study provides a beginning understanding of how attorneys experience well-being and includes a review of some factors that may contribute to their sense of happiness and life satisfaction. However, the study was not exhaustive in its review of factors, nor did it delve into whether the participants experienced depression, substance abuse, or anxiety.

The study did not examine the degree to which the participants experienced well-being based on lifespan development (although this would have been an interesting inquiry, particularly as the participants may be at different stages in their personal and professional lives), religious affiliation, spiritual practices, ethnicity, or whether they had experienced secondary traumatic stress or compassion fatigue.

This study provides a beginning understanding of how attorneys experience well-being and what factors contribute to their sense of well-being. The survey received responses from a small group of 691 attorneys. This represents slightly less than 5% (4.7%) of active members of the Arizona Bar.

Future Directions

This research provides a beginning investigation of attorney beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions concerning well-being. Future exploration is needed to develop a further understanding of attorney experiences. Specifically, research may cover several topics. The most apparent is to examine the factors that contribute significantly to attorney career satisfaction, particularly as it pertains to practice areas. There is a lack of literature that addresses this issue, and it appears to be a critical missing element that would aid in understanding attorney well-being. New as well as existing lawyers choose to engage in a particular area of practice for any number of reasons. Regardless of the reasons, the selection of the law as a career and a practice area, specifically, is tied to well-being. It is important for attorneys to like what they do. Lawyers may select their practice areas with the belief that they will enjoy and find satisfaction in their work; however, this is merely an assumption. A follow-up study could be done to ask attorneys about what makes them enjoy and feel satisfied with their work, inquiring specifically into the uniqueness of each

practice area. In an exploratory study, law students and attorneys could also be asked to discuss all of the possible reasons that contributed to the selection of their practice area. Comparison could then be made between work satisfaction and practice areas, particularly to highlight what, if any, correlations exist between practice area and career satisfaction.

Additionally, research is needed to examine cultural and practice area attitudes for potentially negative norms that are perpetuated among lawyers as well as the general population. It also would be relevant to consider what, if any, healthy attitudes exist and to clarify what aspects may contribute to well-being.

Another possible study could involve the investigation of lawyers' experiences of self-acceptance, whether and to what extent they have purpose in their lives, and the influence of work environments on well-being. Because lawyers scored lower in these areas, and because they are encouraged to work long hours and focus on their client's experiences rather than on their own, a study could be done to explore the inner experiences of lawyers including the degree to which they accept themselves and feel a sense of purpose and how their work environments impact their sense of well-being.

Moreover, during the focus-group discussions, the participants commented on how client interactions cause stress and negatively impact well-being. Additional research is needed to examine the extent to which attorneys are impacted by client interactions within the attorney-client relationship. In particular, research should focus on handling client problems and addressing demanding and emotionally volatile clients as well as those who have experienced trauma. Particular emphasis should be given to an exploration of secondary traumatic stress (e.g., compassion fatigue, vicarious

traumatization) and the degree to which attorneys are affected by listening to their clients' stories. It would be helpful if data were collected on whether there is a cumulative impact to lawyers of listening to client stories and whether attorneys in only certain practice areas are affected. It would be useful to draw upon wellness and well-being research conducted on other professions (e.g., doctors, mental health workers) for its applicability to lawyers.

Finally, future research could involve the investigation of comparisons between areas of practice and positive well-being scores. During the focus group discussion, certain practice areas (e.g., prosecutors, law professors) were identified as being perceived more positively by the public and as less stressful by lawyers, which could contribute to higher well-being scores. It would be helpful if data were collected on whether attorneys from various practice areas experience a greater sense of well-being based on various factors including public perception, unique stressors or the lack of specific stressors for a particular practice area, and other characteristics of the work (e.g., public service, education).

Summary and Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to explore the beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions of attorneys concerning well-being in the practice of law. This study answered the primary research question: *What is the perception of well-being among members of the Arizona Bar?* Additional supplementary questions were explored regarding perceptions about well-being and what can be done to improve well-being among lawyers; the influence of legal culture on well-being; the qualities that make attorneys satisfied/dissatisfied with work; the impact of listening to clients' stores; and the roles of creativity, spirituality, and

resilience on well-being. A mixed-methods design was used. A link to an online survey, the Scale of Psychological Well-Being, was emailed to Arizona attorneys, the list of “active” attorneys maintained by the State Bar of Arizona, along with a 15-item questionnaire that included demographic information (e.g., age, marital status, gender, income, practice area, county of practice) as well as a self-report item concerning work and life satisfaction. There was a total of 691 usable survey responses from a possible 14,494, which yielded a response rate of 4.7%.

The major findings of this research indicate that Arizona attorneys reported an overall experience of well-being. In comparing the current sample of attorneys to the normative sample across the six dimensions of well-being, no significant differences were noted for 2 of the 6 dimensions (personal growth and positive relations with others); however, for 4 of the dimensions, significant differences were noted. Specifically, the current sample of attorneys had significantly higher scores for the autonomy dimension but significantly lower scores for environmental mastery, purpose in life, and self-acceptance. Attorneys who participated in the focus-group discussion also indicated a high sense of well-being.

Additionally, the findings support the hypothesis that there is a significant positive relationship between attorneys’ level of environmental mastery and their total psychological well-being score. The findings also supported the hypothesis that there is a significant positive correlation between years worked as an attorney and autonomy. The following hypotheses were not supported: (1) there is a significant positive relationship between gender and psychological well-being, with women having lower well-being scores than men; (2) there is a significant positive relationship between age and

attorneys' total psychological well-being scores, with middle-aged attorneys having higher scores than older and younger lawyers, although it was determined, using Scheffe post hoc tests, that psychological well-being was greater for attorneys aged more than 55 years; (3) there is a significant difference in well-being based on an attorney's practice areas; however, for three practice areas (alternative dispute resolution, medical malpractice and public law), attorneys had significantly higher psychological well-being scores; and (4) there is a significant difference in well-being based on attorneys' ethnic group.

Regression analysis showed that total well-being was higher when attorneys: (1) had a higher life and career satisfaction rating, (2) did not perceive their daily work to be stressful, (3) worked in the alternative dispute resolution practice area, (4) was female, and (5) enjoyed their current practice area. Additionally, other correlates to well-being were analyzed. This excludes life and career satisfaction, for which it was found that total well-being was greater when the attorneys: (1) enjoyed their current practice area, (2) did not perceive their daily work to be stressful, (3) had higher income, (4) had alternative dispute resolution as a practice area, (5) was female, and (6) worked in the area of public law.

Lawyers reported an overall experience of well-being and satisfaction with their lives and careers despite their acknowledgement that stress was associated with their work. Participants in the focus groups overwhelmingly reported that they were satisfied with their lives and careers. Eighty-seven and a half percent (87.5%) of attorneys indicated that they were satisfied (compared to 73.8% of the survey participants). Work-related stressors, some of which are unique to certain practice areas, are plentiful (e.g.,

the adversarial nature of law practice, billable hour requirements, excessive work demands, attorney client interactions including, demanding clients, dealing with client problems). However, lawyers still seem to enjoy various aspects of their work and their lives. They reported several factors as contributing to their leading satisfying and meaningful lives, including their ability to help others and make a difference, solve problems, have freedom over self/work, maintain good health, engage in volunteer work, work in intellectually stimulating careers, enjoy working with their colleagues, have positive relationships with others (family/friends), participate in recreational activities, make a good living, use their creativity, and rely on their spirituality and religious beliefs.

Experience significantly impacts well-being, as older attorneys have developed self-confidence, freedom, and coping skills to navigate the practice of law. Participants provided suggestions to improve attorney well-being including: help attorneys learn how to achieve work-life balance and incorporate other meaningful aspects of life (e.g., health, travel, family); develop mentoring programs to help build skills among young lawyers and create cooperative legal process and practice areas; require new attorneys to have other relevant work experience before they can practice law; assist law students by providing training to minimize bickering or combative behavior, assist young lawyers to develop self-confidence and skill; and provide training to help lawyers learn how to manage demanding/difficult clients, understand and cope with unique stressors, and manage excessive work demands. It might also be prudent to provide law students and young lawyers with information concerning the unique stressors related to the various practice areas before they select a practice area and begin to represent clients.

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APPENDIX A
ARIZONA ATTORNEY DEMOGRAPHICS

Table A1. Geographic Distribution of Arizona Attorneys

Location	Number of Lawyers Actively Practicing
Apache County	26
Cochise County	111
Coconino County	234
Gila County	49
Graham County	23
Greenlee County	4
La Paz County	24
Maricopa County	10,792
Mohave County	150
Navajo County	57
Pima County	2,339
Pinal County	189
Santa Cruz County	55
Yavapai County	266
Yuma County	175
<i>Arizona</i>	14,494
<i>Out-of-State</i>	2,118
TOTAL	16,612

A lawyer can be licensed in Arizona without actually practicing law on a full-time, or even a part-time, basis. Those who are licensed and engage in practice must be “active” members. Other categories into which lawyers may fall are “inactive,” “judicial,” “over 70 years of age,” and retired. The following chart indicates into which categories Arizona-licensed attorneys fell.

Table A2. Arizona Attorney Categories

Type of Member	Resides in AZ	Resides out of AZ
Active Members		
0- 2 years	995	125
More than 3 years	12,623	1,825
Inactive members	1108	2,471
Judicial members	480	16
Age > 70 years as of 12/31/08	876	168
Retired	411	235
In-house counsel	233	6

*Active includes Active 0-2, Active 3+, and over 70

Male vs. Female Attorneys

Nearly equal numbers of men and women are currently attending law schools. However, almost 65% of all attorneys currently licensed in Arizona are men.

Table A3. Arizona Attorney Gender

Males	13,957
Females	7,376

APPENDIX B

SCALE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING

Questionnaire introduction: “The following set of questions deals with how you feel about yourself and your life. Please remember that there are no right or wrong answers.”

Table B1. Psychological Well-Being Questionnaire

Circle the number that best describes your present agreement or disagreement with each statement.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Disagree Slightly	Agree Slightly	Agree Somewhat	Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Most people see me as loving and affectionate.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. In general, I feel I am in charge of the situation in which I live.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. I am not interested in activities that will expand my horizons.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. When I look at the story of my life, I am pleased with how things have turned out.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. Maintaining close relationships has been difficult and frustrating for me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. I am not afraid to voice my opinions, even when they are in opposition to the opinions of most people.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. The demands of everyday life often get me down.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. I live life one day at a time and don't really think about the future.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. In general, I feel confident and positive about myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. I often feel lonely because I have few close friends with whom to share my concerns.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. My decisions are not usually influenced by what everyone else is doing.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. I do not fit very well with the people and the community around me.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Table B1, Cont'd.

Circle the number that best describes your present agreement or disagreement with each statement.	Strongly Agree	Agree Somewhat	Agree Slightly	Disagree Slightly	Disagree Somewhat	Strongly Disagree	Circle the number that best describes your present agreement or disagreement with each statement.	
							1	2
13. I tend to focus on the present, because the future nearly always brings me problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
14. I feel like many of the people I know have gotten more out of life than I have.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
15. I enjoy personal and mutual conversations with family members or friends.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
16. I tend to worry about what other people think of me.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
17. I am quite good at managing the many responsibilities of my daily life.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
18. I don't want to try new ways of doing things—my life is fine the way it is.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
19. Being happy with myself is more important to me than having others approve of me.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
20. I often feel overwhelmed by my responsibilities.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
21. I think it is important to have new experiences that challenge how you think about yourself and the world.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
22. My daily activities often seem trivial and unimportant to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
23. I like most aspects of my personality.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
24. I don't have many people who want to listen when I need to talk.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
25. I tend to be influenced by people with strong opinions.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
26. When I think about it, I haven't really improved much as a person over the years.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
27. I don't have a good sense of what it is I'm trying to accomplish in life.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
28. I made some mistakes in the past, but I feel that all in all everything has worked out for the best.	1	2	3	4	5	6		

Table B1, Cont'd.

Circle the number that best describes your present agreement or disagreement with each statement.	Strongly Agree	Agree Somewhat	Agree Slightly	Disagree Slightly	Disagree Somewhat	Strongly Disagree	1	
							2	3
29. I generally do a good job of taking care of my personal finances and affairs.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
30. I used to set goals for myself, but that now seems like a waste of time.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
31. In many ways, I feel disappointed about my achievements in life.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
32. It seems to me that most other people have more friends than I do.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
33. I enjoy making plans for the future and working to make them a reality.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
34. People would describe me as a giving person, willing to share my time with others.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
35. I have confidence in my opinions, even if they are contrary to the general consensus.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
36. I am good at juggling my time so that I can fit everything in that needs to be done.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
37. I have a sense that I have developed a lot as a person over time.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
38. I am an active person in carrying out the plans I set for myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
39. I have not experienced many warm and trusting relationships with others.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
40. It's difficult for me to voice my own opinions on controversial matters.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
41. I do not enjoy being in new situations that require me to change my old familiar ways of doing things.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
42. Some people wander aimlessly through life, but I am not one of them.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
43. My attitude about myself is probably not as positive as most people feel about themselves.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
44. I often change my mind about decisions if my friends or family disagree.	1	2	3	4	5	6		

Table B1, Cont'd.

Circle the number that best describes your present agreement or disagreement with each statement.	Strongly Agree	Agree Somewhat	Agree Slightly	Disagree Slightly	Disagree Somewhat	Strongly Disagree	1	
							2	3
45. For me, life has been a continuous process of learning, changing, and growth.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
46. I sometimes feel as if I've done all there is to do in life.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
47. I know that I can trust my friends, and they know they can trust me.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
48. The past had its ups and downs, but in general, I wouldn't want to change it.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
49. I have difficulty arranging my life in a way that is satisfying to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
50. I gave up trying to make big improvements or changes in my life a long time ago.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
51. When I compare myself to friends and acquaintances, it makes me feel good about who I am.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
52. I judge myself by what I think is important, not by the values of what others think is important.								
53. I have been able to build a home and a lifestyle for myself that is much to my liking.	1	2	3	4	5	6		
54. There is truth to the saying that you can't teach an old dog new tricks.	1	2	3	4	5	6		

APPENDIX C
QUESTIONNAIRE

DATE _____ / _____ / _____

1. How satisfied are you with your life and career as a lawyer?
 On a scale of 1 to 6, with 1 being completely satisfied and 6 being completely dissatisfied, how would you rate your overall sense of satisfaction with your life and career?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Completely Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Completely Dissatisfied

2. Where did you graduate from law school?:
 -In state (which school) -Out of State -Out of the Country
 *James E. Rogers College of Law-University of Arizona
 *Phoenix School of Law
 *Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law-Arizona State University

3. Where do you currently practice law (check all that apply)?:
 -Apache County -Maricopa County
 -Cochise County -Mohave County
 -Coconino County -Navajo County
 -Gila County -Pima County
 -Graham County -Pinal County
 -Greenlee County -Santa Cruz County
 -La Paz County -Yavapai County
 -Yuma County

4. What is the setting of your practice?

<input type="checkbox"/> Sole Practitioner	<input type="checkbox"/> Commissioner
<input type="checkbox"/> Public	<input type="checkbox"/> Judge
<input type="checkbox"/> Law Firm	<input type="checkbox"/> Justice
<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> In-House Counsel
<input type="checkbox"/> Law School	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Currently Employed
<input type="checkbox"/> Legal Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-law Related
<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Not-for-Profit
	<input type="checkbox"/> Inactive
	<input type="checkbox"/> Retired

5. Was law your first career? Yes No
6. Do you enjoy your current area of practice?: Yes No
7. Do you consider your daily work to be stressful?: Yes No

8. How long have you practiced law?:
 -2 years or less -8 to 10 years -20 or more years
 -3 to 5 years -10 to 15 years
 -6 to 7 years -16 years to 20 years
9. What is your primary area(s) of practice (check all that apply)?:
 -Administrative Law - Indian
 -Alternative Dispute Resolution - Injury & Wrongful Death
 -Antitrust Law - Insurance
 -Appellate Practice - Intellectual Property
 -Banking Law - International
 -Bankruptcy/Receivership - Juvenile
 -Business Law - Labor & Employment
 -Collections - Legal Malpractice
 -Construction Law - Litigation
 -Corporate Counsel - Medical Malpractice
 -Criminal Law - Probate & Trust Law
 -Elder Law - Public Lawyer
 - Environmental & Natural - Real Estate/Property
 - Family/Domestic Relations - School/Education
 - Government - Securities Regulation
 - Health Law - Tax
 - Immigration - Tort
 -Worker's Compensation
10. Gender: Male Female
11. Ethnicity:
 Asian/Pacific Caucasian African American
 Native American Hispanic/Latino(a)-Not Caucasian
 Other (specify) _____
12. Age?:
 -21 to 25 years -36 to 40 years -51 to 55 years -66 to 70 years
 -26 to 30 years -41 to 45 years -56 to 60 years -71 years or older
 -31 to 35 years -46 to 50 years -61 to 65 years
13. Married?: Yes No
14. Children?: Yes No
15. Annual Income Range:
 Below \$50,000 \$150,001-\$200,000
 \$50,001-\$100,000 Above \$200,000
 \$100,001-\$150,000

APPENDIX D

ONLINE SURVEY INFORMED CONSENT

Welcome to the examination of attorney well-being Web page. Before taking part in this study, please read the informed consent form below and click the "I Agree" button at the bottom of the page if you understand the statements and freely consent to participate in the study.

Informed Consent Form

This study involves a Web-based survey that examines attorney well-being. The study is being conducted by Pearlette J. Ramos in partial fulfillment of a doctoral degree at Saybrook University. It has been approved by the Saybrook Institutional Review Board. No deception is involved and the study involves no more than minimal risk to participants (i.e., the level of risk encountered in daily life).

Completion of the survey typically takes approximately 15 minutes and is strictly anonymous.

Participants will respond to a series of questions about their experience of well-being (e.g., happiness and satisfaction with life). These questions are designed to evaluate lawyers' perceptions of well-being. All responses are treated as confidential, and in no case will responses from individual participants be identified. Rather, all data will be pooled and published in summary form only. Participants should be aware, however, that the survey is not being run from a secure https server of the kind typically used to handle credit card transactions; so, a small possibility exists that responses could be viewed by unauthorized third parties (e.g., computer hackers).

Participation is voluntary, participants may withdraw from the study at any time, and they may decline to answer any questions if they experience any discomfort with the questions asked. Participants will not be paid to participate in this research study.

If you have any questions about this study or your rights as a participant, you may contact the Principal Researcher, Pearlette J. Ramos, by email at pearlramos@aol.com, or my Research Supervisor, Steve Pritzker at spritzker@saybrook.edu. Questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant may also be directed to the Director of the Saybrook IRB at SIRB@Saybrook.edu.

If you are 18 years of age or older, understand the statements above, and freely consent to participate in the study, click on the "I Agree" button to begin the survey. If not, thank you for your time.

- I Agree
- I Do Not Agree

Next

Debriefing Statement

Thank you for your participation in my study. The purpose of this study is to examine attorney well-being. The intent of this online study is to look at group data, not that of the individual. Individual identities cannot be determined, and I would like to assure you of your confidentiality and anonymity.

Thank you for your participation.

Pearlette J. Ramos

APPENDIX E

FOCUS GROUP GUIDE

Discussion # _____
Date _____ / _____ / _____

Script

Welcome and thank you for your participation today. My name is Pearlette Ramos and I am a graduate student at Saybrook University conducting my dissertation research in fulfillment of the requirements for a Ph.D. in Psychology. This focus group is expected to be about two hours in length and will include questions regarding your experience of well-being generally and in the practice of law.

I will be recording this discussion so I may accurately document the information you convey. If at any time during the discussion you wish to discontinue participating, please feel free to let me know. All of your responses are confidential. Your responses will remain confidential and will be used to develop a better understanding of how you and other attorneys view life satisfaction and happiness and what might influence it.

The purpose of this research is to identify, describe and analyze the perspectives of lawyers regarding their experience of well-being in their personal and professional lives. I am the principal researcher, specifying your participation in the research project: Well-Being: A Study of Attorney Beliefs, Attitudes and Perceptions.

I may use the terms happiness, life satisfaction and well-being during this interview. When I use these terms, I want you to understand how I am defining them.

- a. Happiness is used to refer to a state of being where one is in harmony and equanimity with the inner self and, consequently, everything around them.
- b. Life-satisfaction may be understood as the cognitive evaluations of well-being.
- c. Well-being is used to describe your subjective evaluation of your life. For the purposes of this study, well-being is used as an umbrella term to encompass both happiness and life-satisfaction.

Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary. If at any time you need to stop, take a break or take a break please let me know. You may also withdraw your participation at any time without consequence. Do you have any questions or concerns before we begin? Then with your permission we will begin the interview.

Introductory Questions

1. What does it mean to you to be a lawyer? What made you decide to become a lawyer?

Well-Being

2. How would you rate your overall (e.g., work, family, health) sense of well-being? On a scale of 1 to 6, with 1 being completely satisfied and 6 being completely dissatisfied, how would you rate your overall sense of well-being?

1 Completely Satisfied	2 Very Satisfied	3 Somewhat Satisfied	4 Somewhat Dissatisfied	5 Very Dissatisfied	6 Completely Dissatisfied
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What makes you rate your overall sense of well-being at that level?

- 3. How would you define well-being? Happiness? Life satisfaction?
 - 4. What are the factors that hinder your sense of happiness/satisfaction with work?
 - 5. What can be done to improve your state of well-being?
 - 6. How would you rate your sense of well-being with the practice of law?
- On a scale of 1 to 6, with 1 being **completely satisfied** and 6 being **completely dissatisfied**, how would you rate your overall sense of well-being?

1 Completely Satisfied	2 Very Satisfied	3 Somewhat Satisfied	4 Somewhat Dissatisfied	5 Very Dissatisfied	6 Completely Dissatisfied
------------------------------	------------------------	----------------------------	-------------------------------	---------------------------	---------------------------------

What makes you rate your satisfaction with practicing law at that level?

7. How would you rate your sense of the following factors? On a scale of 1 to 6, with 1 being **completely satisfied** and 6 being **completely dissatisfied**, how would you rate each of the following?

1 Completely Satisfied	2 Very Satisfied	3 Somewhat Satisfied	4 Somewhat Dissatisfied	5 Very Dissatisfied	6 Completely Dissatisfied
------------------------------	------------------------	----------------------------	-------------------------------	---------------------------	---------------------------------

- a. *Self-Acceptance*- a positive attitude toward the self and past.
 - b. *Positive Relations with Others*-satisfying and loving relationships.
 - c. *Autonomy*-independence and self determination
 - d. *Environmental Mastery*-competence in managing the environment.
 - e. *Purpose in Life*-Goal-driven outlook and meaning in life.
 - f. *Personal Growth*- Openness to new experiences and personal development.
8. What can be done to improve attorney well-being for lawyers, generally?
9. What do you think would improve your sense of well-being (happiness and life satisfaction) with the practice of law?

Factors that Influence Happiness/Satisfaction

10. What are the most important qualities that make you satisfied at work? At home?
In community?
11. What are the factors that distract from being happy or satisfied at work? At home?
In community?

Legal Culture

12. How would you describe the legal culture, generally?
13. What are the shared beliefs, values or practices within the legal culture that further your experience of well-being?
14. What are the shared beliefs, values, or practices within the legal culture that hinder your experience of well-being?
15. What is the culture in your work environment? How does it impact your well-being?
16. How does billable hours/hour worked affect your sense of well-being?
17. What are the most important qualities that make you happy/satisfied with work?

Attorney-Client Relationship

18. What creates the most stress about working with your clients?
19. How does working with your clients' problems affect your level of well-being?
How does listening to clients' problems/stories (of trauma) affect your level of well-being?

Creativity

20. What is your definition of creativity?
21. How do you express your creativity at work?
22. How do you express your creativity at home?
23. How do you express your creativity in community?
24. Do you think everyone is creative?

Resilience

25. What is your definition of resilience?
26. What causes you stress as a lawyer?
27. How do you cope with adversity, stress or change at work?

Spirituality

28. What is your definition of spirituality?
29. What role does spirituality play in your life/sense of well-being?
30. To what degree do you identify with and participate in a spiritual or religious practice?
31. How do your personal beliefs and/or religious experiences affect your life?

APPENDIX F

ADVERTISEMENT TO ATTORNEYS

Bar Member,

Volunteers are needed to participate in one of two focus groups on attorney well-being. Pearlette J. Ramos, a graduate student at Saybrook University, will facilitate two discussions groups to gauge how attorneys feel about their lives, what it means to be a lawyer, and the impact of the legal culture on well-being.

If you are interested in participating in a focus group, please contact Pearlette J. Ramos via phone (480-213-8339) or email (pearlramos@aol.com) before December 13, 2011.

APPENDIX G

FOCUS GROUP: INFORMED CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Purpose:

The purpose of this research is to examine the experience of Arizona attorneys regarding their overall sense of well-being. This project is being conducted by Pearlette J. Ramos who is a graduate student of Saybrook University as part of a dissertation research requirement: RES 9500.

Principal Researcher:

Pearlette J. Ramos, B.A., J.D.
901 N. 111th Drive
Avondale, AZ 85323
480-213-8339
pearlramos@aol.com

Procedures:

- [1] This study involves the participation in one focus group and the completion of one questionnaire.
- [2] Completion of these procedures will require approximately 120 minutes for both the focus group and questionnaire. The focus group will be conducted using a group-discussion format.
- [3] The short questionnaire (15 questions) procedure involves completing a form which requests background demographic information (e.g., age, gender, ethnic origin, setting of practice, income, education, law practice area(s), year(s) in practice) and a self-report on the participant's satisfaction with life and career.
- [4] The group discussion procedure will include one discussion between the researcher and a small group of participants to fulfill the purpose of the research. The discussions will be digitally recorded and later transcribed for the purpose of data analysis. The discussion will be led by the Principal Researcher and will cover a set of semi-structured questions regarding attorney well-being and happiness to which your opinions and comments are requested.
- [5] Each interview will be conducted at a convenient location that is central to the participants.

Possible Risks and Safeguards:

This study is designed to minimize as much as possible any potential physical, psychological, and social risks to you. Although very unlikely, there are always risks in research, which you are entitled to know in advance of giving your consent, as well as the safeguards to be taken by those who conduct the project to minimize the risks. Those risks include the possible emergence of certain emotions or thoughts when asked personal questions during the interview.

I understand that:

- [1] My participation shall in no way have any bearing on my status within the State Bar of Arizona ("Bar"), or alter or deprive me of any or all services presently received by the Bar.
- [2] Although my identity shall be known to the Principal Researcher, the person to whom I communicated my interest in participating in this study, no one else shall be provided with any identifying information about me.
- [3] My responses to the questionnaire will not be identified with my name as all identifiers, such as names, addresses, employers, and related information that might be used to identify me, will be given a pseudonym.
- [4] This informed consent form will be kept separate from the data I provide, in a safety deposit box for five years, known only to the Principal Researcher after which it too will be destroyed.
- [5] All interaction(s) with the researcher may include some form of data gathering. The data collected in their raw and transcribed forms are to be kept anonymous, stored in a locked container accessible only to the Principal Researcher for five years, after which it shall be destroyed.
- [6] Transcribed data, in the form of an anonymous electronic file maintained on a flash drive, will be kept indefinitely for future research.
- [7] All the information I give will be kept confidential to the extent required by law. The information obtained from me will be examined in terms of group findings, and will be reported anonymously.
- [8] There is to be no individual feedback regarding my test scores or interpretations of my responses. Only general findings will be presented in a Summary Report of which I am entitled a copy, and my individual responses are to remain anonymous.
- [9] None of the personal information I provide associated with my identity will be released to any other party without my explicit written permission.
- [10] If quotes of my responses are used in the research report for the dissertation, as well as any and all future publications of these quotations, my identity shall remain anonymous, and at most make use of a fictitious name.
- [11] I have the right to refuse to answer any question asked of me.
- [12] I have the right to refuse at any time to engage in any procedure requested of me.
- [13] I have the right to withdraw from participation at any time for any reason without stating my reason.
- [14] I have the right to participate without prejudice on the part of the Principal Researcher and other persons assisting the Principal Researcher.
- [15] It is possible that the procedures may bring to my mind thoughts of an emotional nature that may upset me. In the unlikely event that I should experience emotional distress from my participation, the Principal Researcher present shall be available to me. She shall make every effort to minimize such an occurrence. However, should an upset occur and become sufficiently serious to warrant professional attention, as a

condition of my participation in this study, I understand that a licensed mental health professional will be made available to me. If I do not have such a person, the Principal Researcher will refer me and reasonable costs up to the first two visits will be paid by the Principal Researcher.

- [16] By my consent, I understand I am required to notify the Principal Researcher at the time of any serious emotional upset that may cause me to seek therapy and compensation for this upset.
- [17] I will receive a copy of this signed consent form for my records.

Regarding any concern and serious upset, you may contact the Principal Researcher at: (480) 213-8339. You may also contact the Research Supervisor of the project, Dr. Steven Pritzker at SPritzker@saybrook.edu. Should you have any concerns regarding the conduct and procedures of this research project that are not addressed to your satisfaction by the Principal Researcher and his or her Research Supervisor, you may report and discuss them with Dr. M. Willson Williams (SIRB@Saybrook.edu), the Chair of the Saybrook Institutional Review Board.

Possible Benefits:

I understand that my participation in this study may have possible and potential benefits, including but not limited to:

- [1] I may obtain a greater personal awareness, knowledge, and understanding of well-being and happiness, generally, and within the practice of the law.
- [2] Through future communications and possible applications of the findings of the research, indirectly my participation may bring future benefits to others who have the same experiences as attorneys within the practice of law.
- [3] My participation may enable the Principal Researcher and others working in the topic area to contribute to knowledge and theory related to attorney well-being and happiness.

Summary Report:

Upon conclusion of this study, a summary report of the general findings will become available. If you would like a copy of the report, please check the box below and provide the address to which you would like it sent (your email or postal address):

I would like to receive a copy of the Summary Report

Postal or Email Address:

Consent of Principal Researcher

I have explained the above procedures and conditions of this study, provided an opportunity for the research participant to ask questions, and have attempted to provide satisfactory answers to all questions that have been asked in the course of this explanation.

Principal Researcher Signature

Date

Principal Researcher name

Consent of the Participant

If you have any questions of the Principal Researchers at this point, please take this opportunity to have them answered before granting your consent. If you are ready to provide your consent, read the statement below, then sign, and print your name and date on the line below.

I have read the above information, have had an opportunity to ask questions about any and all aspects of this study, and give my voluntary consent to participate.

Participant Signature

Date

Participant Name

APPENDIX H

TRANSCRIPTIONIST CONFIDENTIALITY FORM

Confidentiality Agreement for Transcription Services

I, _____, transcriptionist, agree to maintain full confidentiality in regards to any and all audiotapes, videotapes, and other documentation received from Pearlette J. Ramos related to her study on "Well-Being: A Study of Attorney Beliefs, Attitudes and Perceptions." Furthermore, I agree:

1. To hold in strictest confidence the identification of any individual that may be inadvertently revealed during the transcription of audio- or videotaped interviews, or in any associated documents;
2. To not make copies of any audio- or videotapes or computerized files of the transcribed interview texts, unless specifically requested to do so by [your name];
3. To store all study-related audio- or videotapes and materials in a safe, secure location as long as they are in my possession;
4. To return all audio- and videotapes and study-related documents to [your name] in a complete and timely manner.
5. To delete all electronic files containing study-related documents from my computer hard drive and any backup devices.

I am aware that I can be held legally liable for any breach of this confidentiality agreement, and for any harm incurred by individuals if I disclose identifiable information contained in the audio- or videotapes and/or files to which I will have access.

Transcriber Signature

Date

Transcriber name

Date