February 2014

TLOMA *Today*

A publication of The Law Office Management Association

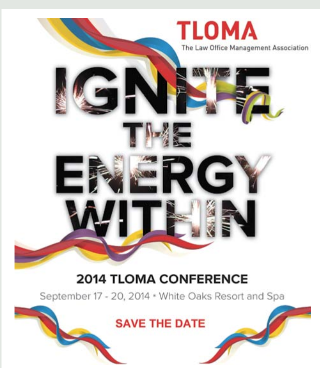
TLOMA
1968 45th Anniversary 2013
The Law Office Management Association

UPCOMING EVENTS

Mark Your Calendars

Click on each event for more details

- **2014 TLOMA Conference**
  September 17 to 20, 2014



- **CASL**
  Thursday, March 20, 2014
- **New Member Breakfast**
  Wednesday, April 2, 2014
- **June Networking Event**
  Friday, June 6, 2014
- **Employment Law II**
  Tuesday, June 17, 2014
- **December Networking Event**
  Friday, December 5, 2014

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A Hymn to Her

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TLOMA *Today*

Editor: Janet Baker
Advertising: Liz Barrington

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By: Karen Schrempf

A new year! New beginnings! As incoming President I am acutely aware of the amazing two individuals that have served before me so enthusiastically and competently. Leaving big shoes to fill are Janice Rooney, now in the position of Past President who I will be grateful to for continued support and guidance. Stepping down from the Past President position is Karen Gerhardt who has served her three year term with excellence. Not to mention all of the inspirational and effective leaders who have served as President, or as a member of the Board over the past 45 years, who have contributed expertise and valuable time, and whose leadership has helped sculpt this fabulous Association.

TLOMA now welcomes its new Board and the official baton is passed to the 2014 Board in mid-February. As a member of TLOMA for nearly 20 years, I have developed many precious friendships, shared knowledge and have learned much from colleagues and speakers that, quite frankly, can make all the difference in whether you have a good day or a great day as you tackle your challenges and projects in your firms.

It's now my opportunity to contribute back to the Association and its members from whom I've gained so much. It's a little bit intimidating, well perhaps a lot intimidating!, to be embarking on this journey and I look forward to your support as your Board continues the excellence of the work delivered by the teams that have come before us. It is my honour to serve with your 2014 Board members:

Paul Page, Vice President
Janice Rooney, Past President
Janet Baker, Secretary and Newsletter Editor
Cathy Byrnes, Treasurer and Finance Special Interest Group (SIG) leader
Dina Brennan, Facilities SIG leader
Nancy Shaw, Human Resources SIG leader
Alison Janzen, Marketing SIG leader
Edward Asmar, Technology SIG leader

and of course our Director of Administration, Liz Barrington.

In addition to the Board, TLOMA is also served by a number of committees. Our committees are also working on advancing their initiatives.

The Conference Committee, chaired by Deborah Davids, is busy at work in their planning for our annual conference, *Ignite the Energy Within* being held September 17-20 at White Oaks Resort & Spa in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Stay tuned for information and registration details coming your way soon!

The Website Committee is chaired by Karen Hervias, and this group continues the enhancement of our new site launched more than a year ago. Watch for "did you know" tips so you can maximize the value of the site.

The Compensation Committee is chaired by Stephanie Crane and planning for the 2014 survey is well under way after the massive redevelopment of the survey undertaken in 2013 under Cheryl Brass' leadership.

Our Volunteer Coordinator, Louise McNeely, welcomes you to help out in any way. Whether covering a registration table or helping at a networking event or PD session, we appreciate everyone's assistance. Many hands make light work and go a long way to ease the burden on Liz, Paul as your VP, and our SIG leaders. For sure you'll meet new people and have fun!

We welcomed 33 new members to TLOMA in 2013 bringing our membership total to 429. We look forward to an exciting 2014 for all of our members in terms of personal and professional development, continued networking and relationship building with colleagues, and learning from the SIG and professional development educational sessions.

Thank you to Liz Barrington for all that you do for the entire membership and our Board!

I sign off with a thought provoking statement from the notorious Babe Ruth:

"Every strike brings me closer to the next home run."

Keep swinging your proverbial bat as you embark on your goals in the coming year.

Wishing everyone all the best personally and professionally in 2014! On behalf of your Board, we look forward to an exciting year and thank you for your support. Please know you are welcome to contact me, Liz, or any member of the Board should you have any comments or suggestions.
We are listening!

Karen Schrempf
2014 TLOMA President

TLOMA
The Law Office Management Association

IGNITE THE ENERGY WITHIN

2014 TLOMA CONFERENCE September 17 - 20, 2014 * White Oaks Resort and Spa

Opening Keynote Speaker

General Rick Hillier

Former Chief of the Defence Staff for Canadian Forces

General Rick Hillier's views on leadership evolved over his three decades as a soldier, first by watching many of his superiors make bad decisions, then by learning from the school of hard knocks as the head of major emergency rescue operations in Canada and international task forces in Eastern Europe and Afghanistan.

For Hillier, leadership is all about people, embracing those in your charge and winning over those you need to work with -- not about risk aversion or management fads. Leaders think long, and have a vision. Their actions speak, not their words, and they make their own luck. But leaders also act out of moral courage, accept failure, take advantage of crisis and are perpetually optimistic.

Don't miss out on this opportunity to hear how Gen Rick Hillier will challenge the way you run your business, start a project or take that next step in life.

Save the Date

September
17, 18, 19, 20
2014

By: Margaret McCaffery

ARE TRADE SHOWS GOOD MARKETING TOOLS FOR LAW FIRMS?

As I write this, annual conference season is in full swing. Lawyers, hastily arranging their speaking notes, are wondering how they got involved in the first place. Marketing departments are finding out at the last minute that the conference hosts need the firm's logo, the lawyer needs a PowerPoint presentation, and the booth at the accompanying trade show needs staffing. Wait, what booth? Trade show? Nobody told us….

Yes, that's how it usually goes down. It shouldn't be any surprise, therefore, that both lawyers and marketers feel cynical about the value of trade shows in the marketing mix. Like everything else in the helter-skelter world of law firm marketing, it doesn't have to be this way. Proactive choice trumps reactive scurrying every time. If there's a must-attend conference/trade show in your major client industry, make your participation part of your annual marketing plan and use every opportunity it offers to connect with clients, prospects and referral sources.

Should some practice areas NEVER take part in trade shows? Well, let's think. Litigation? There's always a forensic conference/show attended by professionals who are in an ideal position to refer work to litigators. Personal injury? There are plenty of conferences put on by patient groups and health care professionals who advise patients. Insurance defence? The insurance industry loves conferences and trade shows. No matter what the practice area, there's a relevant conference. The important thing is to choose the right one.

Choice of Conference/Show

Organizers of annual conferences can be very persuasive: "Our conference is at Florida's best golf resort in February!" But reacting to a sales pitch is the worst way to choose any marketing initiative. Instead, know who gives you work and go where those people are. Make a careful, proactive choice among options that will put you with the most relevant people for your practice area.

If you have a marketing department, tell them what you want to achieve and let them research options. Also, let them negotiate the trade show package: as I said in my column about sponsorships, you wouldn't dream of letting your marketing folks draft a factum, so you shouldn't try to negotiate trade show space.

In an ideal world (far from the world of most law firm marketing!) a law firm, practice group or sole practitioner should have an annual marketing plan that includes speaking, writing, and attending conferences, all aimed at developing reputation and referrals. At the apex of this ideal, all of those options get rolled into one: you obtain a speaking opportunity at an annual conference where the organizers will publish your presentation after the event and where you get exhibit space at the accompanying trade show, attended by industry participants. Oh yes, and you're the only law firm in attendance. (OK, that's not likely, so gauge the competition: will you be conspicuous by your absence or lost in the shuffle?)

Go Big or Go Home

Once you're committed to a particular conference/show, negotiate hard but don't skimp on resources. Send as many lawyers as can spare the time away from the office; don't just send the speaker. Have them staff the booth, work the room at functions, and tour the exhibit hall to meet other exhibitors.

Did I say staff the booth? *With lawyers??* Yes, indeed. Here's a comment from Micah Buchdahl, a US attorney-turned-marketing-consultant, about a show he recently attended: "I would never embarrass by name the firms that sent the children to represent them (probably first or second year associates) or the ones that sent office administration instead of attorneys, or the group of lawyers sitting toward the back of the booth chatting with each other."

That rings so true. I once sent two leading lawyers with a delegation from our local business development council to an international conference attended by the crème de la crème of their target market. I had negotiated hard to get the best bang for our marketing buck, created a dynamite marketing piece for the lawyers to hand out, and had briefed them extensively.

ARE TRADE SHOWS GOOD MARKETING TOOLS FOR LAW FIRMS? CONTINUED....

On their return, they were both lukewarm, even though they said they would go again (both took their spouses and tacked on a vacation afterwards). I contacted the delegation's leader at the business development council, who was red-hot: major contacts made, invitations to present to potential clients, existing relationships deepened. Feeling skeptical, I mentioned my lawyers' lukewarm response. There was a long pause, followed by the tactfully phrased suggestion that next time I should send lawyers who are good at engaging people in conversation, rather than chatting with each other at the back of the booth. I should have sent a seasoned veteran rainmaker, teamed with a hungry up-and-comer eager to make contacts.

Having chosen the show, maximize your contact with attendees before the show. Send them your booth location and invite them to drop by. Contact other exhibitors in fields complementary to yours and see if you can do something reciprocal, like joint presentations at each other's booths. Think ahead about follow-up: draft a template follow-up response before the event and customize it as needed afterwards.

Booths and Handouts

The booth has to make it clear that you're a law firm: if your visitors' first question is "ABC LLP? What's that?", your booth has failed the test. The best booths are simple to set up and tear down, have your firm name and practice area(s) as their major graphics, and give you plenty of room to meet people. Booths are costly; keep yours as flexible as possible so you can use it at firm events and student recruitment fairs, to make it earn its keep.

Lawyers will often spend more time discussing what to hand out at a booth than what to discuss with booth visitors. Let's face it, the big guys 'n' gals have enough mugs, pens, and T shirts to open their own store. So how do you engage them? If you're an employment lawyer at an HR conference, hand out a well-branded checklist of things to remember when terminating employees. If you're at the Canadian Franchise Association conference, hand out your list of 10 things to remember about trade-marks. Buy (or get the publishers to donate) a bunch of magazines that the attendees are interested in (nothing to do with law, just slap a 'Compliments of...' sticker on them), stand in the aisle facing oncoming traffic, and hand them out. Or offer your well-branded, generously-sized, reusable bag for all the crap they've collected from everyone else and have them walk around the exhibit hall advertising your firm! Get into conversation with the recipients of your largesse (read their nametags first).

Return on Investment

If you've chosen the conference and resourced your attendees properly, ROI is now up to you. We've all heard the argument "Oh, we went to that a few years ago, spent a bundle and didn't get a single file from it." They forget the guy in the neighbouring booth who introduced them to his client, who introduced them to their supplier, who had a problem, which resulted in a piece of work two years later, which paid for the booth twice over. Oh yes, and Booth Neighbour has since become one of the firm's best referral sources.

These same naysayers are the ones who dump the business cards they collected in a corner of their office, only to throw them out at the end of the year without looking at them!

If you return from a conference/trade show with only a list of 1,000 attendee names and no contact information (and no permission to contact: remember anti-spam legislation), that's nothing. The business cards (with notes) of people you spoke to, now that's something—IF they go into the firm database, and IF someone follows up with those people.

Does all this sound like a lot of work? It is. I've never been as tired as at the end of a good trade show. But I've never been as galvanized either: if you've chosen the right show, it's like attending the equivalent of a dozen well-attended cocktail parties in one day—without the hangover.

Margaret McCaffery is president of Canterbury Communications, a Toronto marketing/communications agency specialising in professional services firms. An award-winning consultant, she has advised over 20 firms, from very large (350 partners) to very small (sole practices). She has built marketing departments in large firms and provided marketing strategy and services on an outsourced basis to small firms. She can be reached at canterburycommunications@gmail.com. This column first appeared on SLAW, Canada's online legal magazine, December 11, 2013.

Presented by:
Kerry Langford

Author:
Tori Sutton

LEARNING TO COPE

"COPE is the happy medium offering employees the sleek gadgets they desire and administrators the control needed to be secure and successful."

Companies worldwide continue to struggle with device ownership and management. In an age when a job can't be done without a smartphone or tablet, and with employees who continually demand the next big thing, many businesses are still unsure how to best handle technology.

Many have bowed to the pressure and jumped on the bring your own device (BYOD) bandwagon, where workers purchase their device of choice, pick their own plan and then receive a stipend to cover some of the costs. Though BYOD may make sense initially – most expect wireless expenses to be reduced and controlled easily – the scenario can run amok.

Big issues can include employee termination, security, privacy, and support. Instead of making it easier, BYOD can increase workload for IT departments as they attempt to support multiple platforms, devices, and apps. Functionality can be compromised by employees looking to make a buck by purchasing the cheapest phone on unreliable networks.

So when traditional corporate liability – when the business purchases the phone and expects it to be used for professional purposes only – and BYOD don't pan out, what is there left to do? Enter corporate-owned, personally enabled or COPE for short. It's the latest trend in enterprise mobility, one that seems to be keeping both management and employees happy. Its popularity stems from the fact it offers the best of both worlds. COPE allows for a business to purchase and own a device, but gives workers the freedom to use the device for their own purposes. It means the flexibility for an employee to surf Facebook, but also for IT to wipe a stolen or lost device without any resistance.

Employee choice is still paramount in COPE, since many companies offer employees a selection of devices that comply with budget and security guidelines. Instead of having to find a way to secure professional functions on a personal device in a BYOD environment, administrators can partition a fully managed device for personal uses. Overall, it is easier for a company to manage a device under COPE because it has full control and can configure the device for security and app management before it even lands in the hands of an employee.

Cost is another obvious benefit. BYOD often hurts the bottom line – a personally owned device is typically contracted to a retail plan. COPE allows for businesses to cash in on the substantial discounts enjoyed under corporate plans, a move that can trim operating expenses.

For companies considering which way to go, COPE is the happy medium offering employees the sleek gadgets they desire and administrators the control needed to be secure and successful.

Kerry Langford, BA, is a senior sales and marketing professional who is currently a Business Optimization Specialist with Schooley Mitchell. Prior to Schooley Mitchell, Kerry spent many years in various roles at Bell Canada/Yellow Pages. Schooley Mitchell conducts Telecommunications Audits which result in an average reduction in telecom expenses of 28%. They are completely independent of all telecom suppliers. Kerry Langford, BA, Schooley Mitchell Telecom Consultants, 905.547.1380 ext.283, www.schooleymitchell.com/gha, © Schooley Mitchell Telecom Consultants 2013

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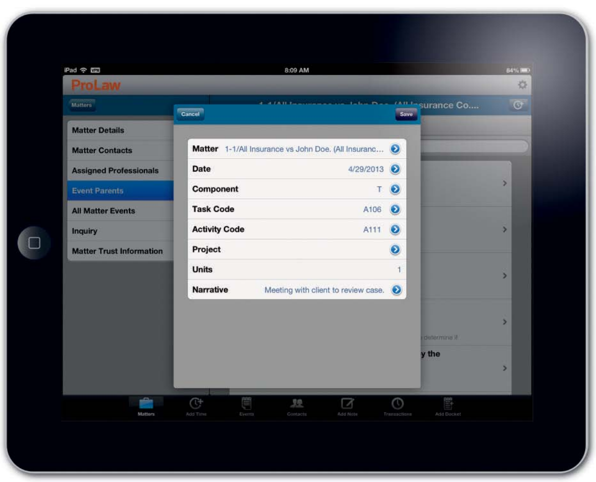

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By: Janet Ellen Raasch

LEARN FROM THE BIG GUYS:

Tested Marketing Tips Work for Law Firms

Each law firm has a brand in the marketplace – whether by intention or by accident. Your brand is what makes a client choose (or not choose) you as legal counsel rather than a competitor.

Your law firm can accept the brand you have and live with it -- but this can be risky in an increasingly competitive marketplace. Alternatively, you can put some thought into creating and managing a brand that works hard for you in the marketplace -- and thrive as a result. The choice is yours.

Large companies understand the value of their brands in setting them apart from the competition, and invest in them accordingly. Most law firms are on much more limited budgets.

However, this doesn't mean that a smaller law firm cannot develop a good brand and take it to market – without breaking the bank. "There are many lessons that a law firm can learn from big businesses," said Gerry O'Brion. "Once learned, these lessons can be applied at little or no cost."

O'Brion addressed the Rocky Mountain Chapter of the Legal Marketing Association on January 14th at Ocean Prime Restaurant in Denver. O'Brion is a professional speaker and founder of What Big Brands Know, a Denver-based consulting firm. He is creator of a program called The Business Blueprint: Simple steps to grow any business like a billion-dollar brand. His practical advice is based on what he learned in the big-company marketing departments of Proctor & Gamble, Coors Brewing, Quiznos and Red Robin.

Know Your Law Firm

The first lesson law firms of any size can learn from big business is to get clear about what makes them different from their competition. The best brands differentiate themselves in a way that is important to their customers or clients.

"Recently, I went to the grocery store to pick up some barbecue sauce," said O'Brion. "When I got there, I was faced with 42 different kinds on the shelf. This quandary is what your clients face when picking a law firm. When making their choices, what do they consider? What sets you apart from the other firms 'on the shelf'?

"Everything has a brand, either by intention or by accident," said O'Brion. "What is the brand of Monday? Boo -- back to work. Of Friday? Yay -- TGIF. Your law firm has a brand in the marketplace. Make it purposeful. Is your brand the all-too-common 'all things to all people'? Or is it something that persuades clients that 'this is the firm for me'?"

Get your partners together to decide what it is that sets you apart. Where do your talents lie? What work do you most enjoy? Which clients do you serve the best? What work is most profitable? Where does most of your work come from? Where would you like it to come from? Focus. Build your brand and marketing message around this differentiation.

O'Brion used the example of an auto repair shop that branded itself as servicing all makes and models of cars, with little success. When the shop realized that much of its work came from servicing Audis and VWs, it changed its message to specialize in these makes of car and business tripled. Customers wanted to go to a shop that specialized in solving their particular problem.

LEARN FROM THE BIG GUYS: TESTED MARKETING TIPS WORK FOR LAW FIRMS CONTINUED....

"Successful branding boils down to just one thing," said Gerry O'Brion. "You must be different from your competition in a way that clients value. Big brands thrive by continually refining their understanding of what their customers value and by consistently delivering their messages in a way that stands out from the competition. Law firms can do the same."

You can be an attorney. You can be an attorney representing all businesses, everywhere. You can be an attorney representing hospitality businesses in Colorado. Or you can be an attorney representing restaurant clients in Denver. If you are a Denver restaurant owner, which lawyer will you choose? The sharper you focus, the better your brand and the more-profitable your business.

Know Your Target Market

The next lesson law firms can learn from big business is to know who your clients are and what they want. "The time you spend understanding your clients sets you up for long-term success," said O'Brion. The businesses that come to your house to remove vermin like bats or raccoons in the attic belong to an organization called the National Wildlife Control Operators Association. "The NWCOA wanted to provide useful marketing advice to its members," said O'Brion. "A study of customers yielded some surprising results," said O'Brion.

"Most pest-control companies are owned and operated by men," said O'Brion. "Interestingly, 80 percent of the time it is a woman who calls about vermin in the house. These women are concerned about much more than just getting rid of the animal. Among other things, they are concerned about ethical treatment, the cleanliness of their houses and preventing future problems. These customer insights helped wildlife control companies better serve their customers and close more sales."

All too often, law firms believe that their brand is what they think it is. Rather, they must understand that their brand is what clients think it is. "Your brand is the culmination of all the experiences a client has with your firm," said O'Brion. "Do some research. Ask your clients, potential clients and referral sources what they truly value in and expect of a legal services provider." Often, these are qualities in addition to the basic expectation of legal expertise – things like quick return of phone calls, a pleasant receptionist or reasonable rates. Work these qualities into your message.

"Every interaction between your firm and a client must reinforce your message," said O'Brion. "Everyone at the firm must be aligned. When answering the phone, for example, the receptionist can say, 'We see problems like this all the time' and 'I am going to pass you along to the very best lawyer who deals with your specific problem.'"

If you are the Denver restaurant attorney, for example, you can join and speak to restaurant groups, decorate your office with restaurant-related art, put restaurant-related materials in your waiting room, and hold events at the venues of clients and potential clients. You can mention this specialty prominently in your electronic and print materials, along with restaurant success stories. Such efforts will help put you top-of-the-list among your target market.

A Coors Light Case Study

At Coors Brewing, O'Brion was brand manager for Coors Light, a $2 billion brand. He illustrated many of his points on successful branding with a Coors Light case study. Research showed that the taste of all beers in the light-beer category was more or less the same. Coors Light was

LEARN FROM THE BIG GUYS: TESTED MARKETING TIPS WORK FOR LAW FIRMS CONTINUED....

ranked fourth and needed to find a way to differentiate in order to promote its brand. Additional research showed that consumers makes their light-beer buying decisions based on eight factors – good taste, value, relaxation, low carbs/calories, socialization, refreshment, coldness and funny ads. Miller Lite had branded itself on good taste and low carbs/calories; Bud Light on socialization and funny ads; and Corona on relaxation.

Coors Light therefore focused on refreshment and—especially -- coldness. They introduced the Frost Brew Liner Can. "This is no different or more effective than any other can liner," said O'Brion. "We simply made it blue and associated it with coldness."

Other new and heavily-advertised Coors Light products included the cold-activated bottle, the cold-activated can, the cooler box (simply a case with a plastic liner that turned it into a cooler) and a Super Cold Draft version of Coors Light. Sales improved significantly and Coors Light passed Miller Lite and Budweiser to become No. 2 in the category, second only to Bud Light.

By following tips that work for the big guys, a law firm with a strong brand will keep and grow current clients, as well as attract desirable new clients. It will be less vulnerable to competitors. Plus, the firm can charge higher rates. Customers (and clients) are always willing to pay a bit more for a product or service that addresses their specific challenges.

Janet Ellen Raasch is a writer, ghostwriter, copyeditor and blogger at Constant Content Blog who works closely with professional services providers – especially lawyers, law firms, legal consultants and legal organizations – to help them achieve name recognition and new business through publication of newsworthy and keyword-rich content for the web and social media sites as well as articles and books for print. She can be reached at (303) 399-5041 or jeraasch@msn.com.

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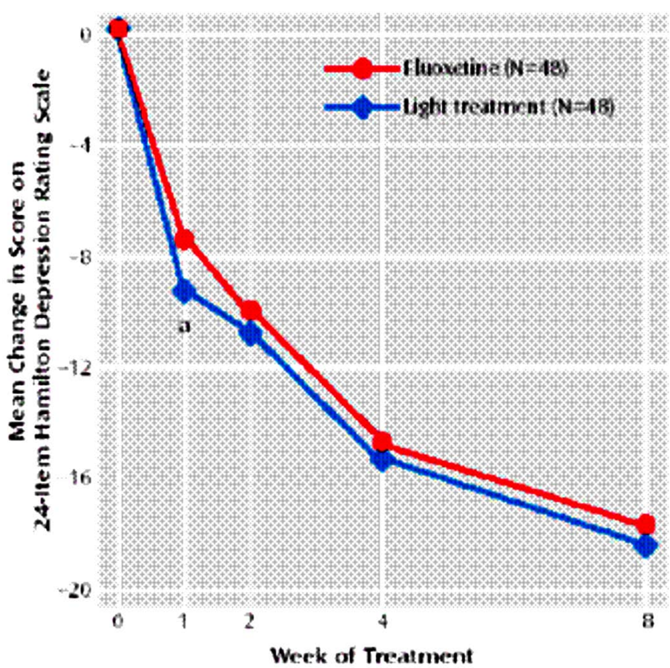
By: Dr. Rahim Kanji, N.D.

OVERCOMING THE WINTER BLUES

With the recent polar vortices, and the ongoing cloudy weather, I'm sure many of you have experienced your share of the dreaded winter blues. I know I have! What some of you may not know is that the winter blues can actually be a serious condition for some individuals. For some people it isn't just a feeling of being "blue", but it progresses to a point of depression. When this feeling of depression significantly affects your quality of life consistently each winter season, and spontaneously resolves when the weather changes, it can be a condition called "Seasonal Affective Disorder" or "S.A.D.". Below are some things that can help you, whether you have S.A.D. or the winter blues:

1. SAD Lamps: Sunlight plays a major role in our mood and the release of hormones in our body (like melatonin). When winter comes around, there's significantly less sunlight, and as a result our mood is affected. SAD Lamps attempt to recreate the effect of sunlight on our bodies by normalizing the abnormal circadian rhythms brought on by the winter season. Research has shown that SAD lamps can be as effective as antidepressants in some individuals if used properly. Always consult a healthcare professional before buying one though - some of those cheaper lamps can damage your eyes, and some are absolutely ineffective unless you place it no more than 2 inches beside you at all times!

Below is a graph taken from a research study showing the decrease in depressive symptoms by SAD lamps (in blue) and fluoxetine (an antidepressant drug) in red. As you can see, the results are similar for both interventions.



OVERCOMING THE WINTER BLUES CONTINUED....

2. Adequate Diet: Optimal intake of certain fish oils (particularly EPA, a kind of omega-3 oil), and a specific type of vitamin D have been shown to help depressed patients in some studies. As well, when you eat a healthy diet you ensure adequate absorption of magnesium, zinc, selenium, vitamin B6, B12, B3 and B9. ALL these vitamins and minerals play crucial roles in the production of “happy molecules” in your brain. In fact, supplementing some of these vitamins, or receiving them through an IV (intravenous) injection can help with depression. Serotonin, dopamine, norepinephrine, and epinephrine are examples of these “happy” molecules - they are neurotransmitters that play a direct role in your overall mood.

3. Exercise: We’ve all heard that exercise is good for your mood, but did you know that one study found that exercise is **as effective** as any established treatment regimen in older adults?? Amazing!! In fact, that same study found that after 16 weeks of treatment, 60-68% of participants who were diagnosed with depression NO LONGER MET THE CRITERIA FOR DEPRESSION!

4. Supplements: There are many supplements that can help with the winter blues or S.A.D., one of them being a herb - St. John’s Wort. St. John’s Wort has been well researched and found to be as effective as antidepressant medication like Prozac, but without some of the nasty side effects. Always consult an ND before going on supplements for mood, as St. John’s Wort can interact with many prescription medications.

I hope this helps you all have a smoother and easier ride for the rest of the winter season. I can’t wait until spring comes our way!

Dr. Kanji is Naturopathic Doctor practicing in Toronto. He did 3 years of a Bachelors of Science at University of Alberta, before receiving early admission to the 4 year naturopathic medical program at CCNM. Dr. Kanji has seen patients in various settings, from clinics geared towards family medicine, to practicing at the Sherbourne Health Centre where he treated HIV+/AIDs patients. He has a special interest in nutrition and natural anti-aging and cosmetic medicine. Dr. Kanji offers free 15 minute consultations to members of TLOMA. Visit his website at www.rahimkanjind.com

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CARTEL INC.

By: Heather Suttie

A HYMN TO HER

How marketing and business development are different for women lawyers

In the musical *My Fair Lady*, phonetics professor Henry Higgins, who has been providing speech lessons to a cockney flower girl in order to pass her off as a well-born lady, concludes that men—especially himself—are far superior to women. He sings of this in “A Hymn to Him,” which repeatedly asks the question “Why can’t a woman be more like a man?”

The answer is that a woman can’t change her inborn traits to be more like a man. Neither should she try. While changing natural traits may be almost impossible, for most women being flexible is a must-have characteristic. Flexibility, however, is a both a blessing and a curse. While it enables most women to handle numerous things at the same time, it also means they can get are stuck being multi-taskers.

Sick and Tired

For many women, the challenge of juggling work and life is more than a balancing act; it’s about constant prioritization. When priorities get out of whack, daily life can become stressful and tiresome. This is often when women literally get sick and tired of being sick and tired.

One stress often faced by women lawyers is marketing themselves and developing business. One male lawyer I know says he tries to persuade women lawyers to do the things he does to market himself, and is perplexed when they don’t follow his lead. This gentleman’s advice is well-meaning, but the truth is that what works for men may not necessarily work for women.

Please consider the environment before printing this publication.

A HYMN TO HER CONTINUED....

Doing It For Others

Despite what Annie Lennox and Aretha Franklin sang about in their 1985 duet, "Sisters Are Doin' It For Themselves," sometimes women don't do things for themselves, but instead do things for others. While this may seem self-sacrificing, it shows that women tend to be relationship nurturers. By extension, this means that women are wired to excel at business development, which is all about nurturing relationships. They just need to focus on the relationships they want to nurture for business success.

There seems to be a more active interest in this of late. To cite only two examples, I led a University of Toronto Law School business development session in November 2012 where the 30 women lawyers who attended stayed for an extra hour afterward discussing how they develop business. And in April 2013, the Rotman School of Management offered an intensive two-day business leadership course for women lawyers.

Differences Between Sexes

The strategies and tools women use to market themselves and develop business tend to differ from those used by their male counterparts. Being social is one of those strategies, but things can get dicey. In the 1989 movie When Harry Met Sally, Harry Burns makes a claim that "men and women can't be friends because the sex part always gets in the way." This may have been his personal opinion, but women, as natural multi-taskers are perhaps better able to balance relationships in a combined personal-professional context.

The named partners at Toronto-based Dykeman Dewhirst O'Brien LLP have found success doing just that. Having been corporate counsel as well as members of large law firms, they founded their mostly female, seven-lawyer firm in 2009 to focus solely on health law.

For them, good business is about understanding that their clients have lives outside work. "We have great respect for the personal time of both our lawyers and our clients," says Kathy O'Brien. "Our marketing efforts are less focused on after-work and weekend events, and more on providing valuable tools as time savers for our clients." They also recognize their uniqueness as individuals. "Each of us has different skills and comfort levels with marketing and business development," says Mary Jane Dykeman. "So we do what works for us and our personalities."

Their efforts are paying off handsomely with a strong and nicely balanced practice for both themselves and their clients. As Kate Dewhirst explains, marketing is all about image: "Be conscious of how you portray yourself in all of your business and personal encounters. New files and new clients can come from anywhere." She also suggests, "Do what you love. Find an area of legal practice that inspires you with clients you respect."

Sounds like good advice, whether you're a her or a him.

Heather Suttie is a legal marketing consultant. She works with a range of firms: global, national, mid-size, and boutique. Reach her at (416) 964-9607, heather@heathersuttie.ca or www.heathersuttie.ca. This article originally appeared in Lexpert Magazine, February 2013.

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