



An Attorney's Biggest Foe is Not Opposing Counsel:

UNDERSTANDING SECONDARY TRAUMA

Presented by:

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Secondary or Vicarious Trauma

Secondary Traumatic
Stress (STS) –

A genuine disorder that affects individuals who did not witness the traumatic event first-hand but were exposed to it in other ways.

Crisis Fatigue

Chronic stress created by life quakes or life disruptors, which overtime can lead to intense emotions such as:

- Fear
- Anxiety
- Anger

This unrelenting stress can leave people feeling emotionally numb and tired.

Symptoms of Crisis Fatigue

Divorce

Job Change

Suicide

Hyperarousal or High
Anxiety (easy to spot)

Withdrawing or
Isolation (harder to spot)

**Major
Problems
for
Attorneys:**

Stress / Anxiety

Depression

Burnout / Secondary Trauma

Alcohol / Substance Overuse

Cognitive Impairment

Suicide

Gambling and other process addictions

Kinds of Traumas Lawyers Experience

Direct:

- threats from criminal defendants
- being confronted by a client
- being devastated by a result
- attorney or judge conflict

Secondary:

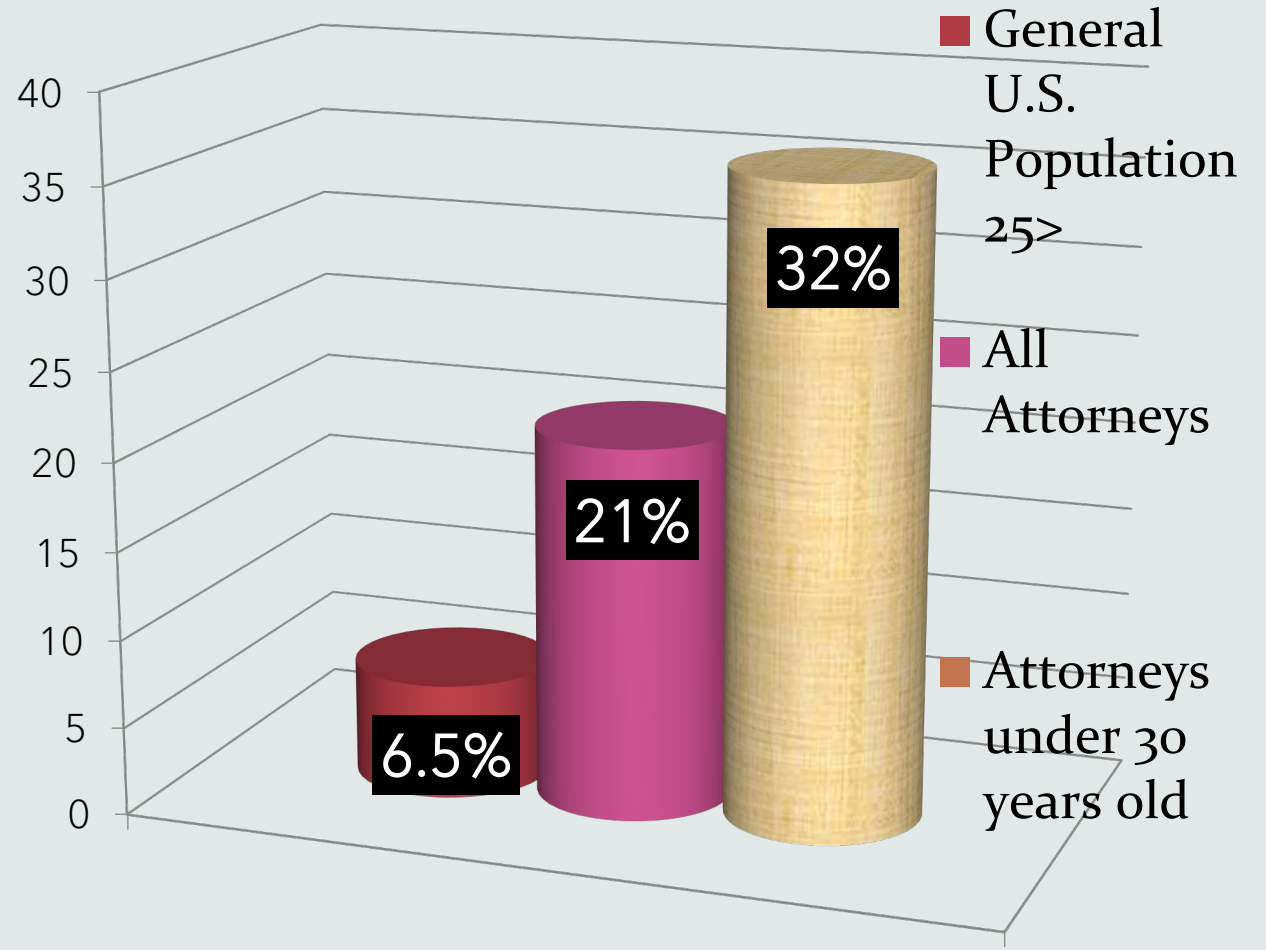
- seeing a client lose a custody matter
 - listening to client's trauma
 - seeing a client go to prison
 - viewing accident or crime scene photos/videos
-



2015 ABA STUDY
OF ALMOST
13,000
ATTORNEYS

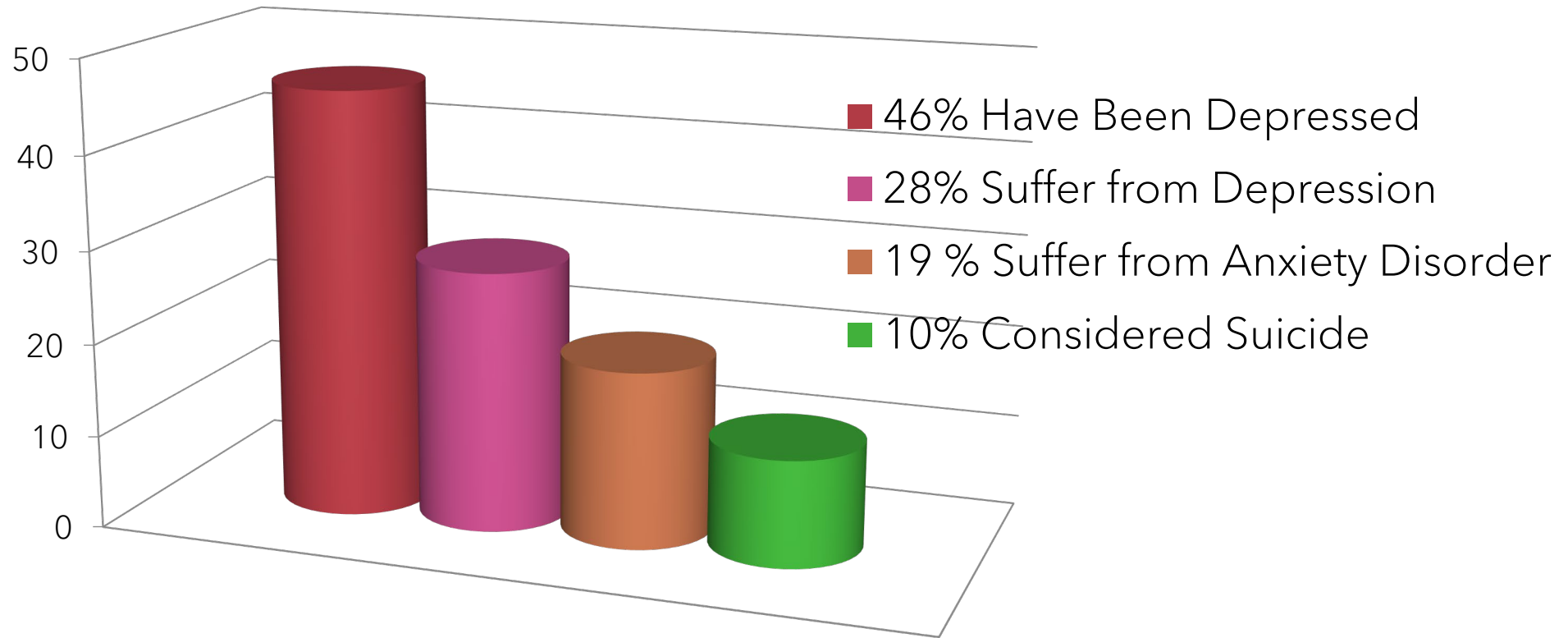


ATTORNEYS
WITH
PROBLEMATIC
ALCOHOL
ISSUES



"Problematic Drinking" = hazardous,
possible dependence

Attorney Mental Health Issues



Anxiety Symptoms

Excessive
Worrying

Feeling
Agitated

Restlessness

Fatigue

Difficulty
Concentrating

Irritability

Tense
Muscles

Panic Attacks

Irrational
Fears

Racing Heart

Sweaty Hands

Depression Symptoms

Constant
Sadness

Irritability

Hopelessness

Trouble
Sleeping

Low Energy
or Fatigue

Feeling
Worthless

Significant
Weight
Change

Difficulty
Concentrating

Indecision

Loss of Interest
in Favorite
Activities

Recurrent
Thoughts of
Death or Suicide



Depression

Psychological
Nausea

Cognitive
Distortion

Thinking
Errors



MENTAL
HEALTH
WEEK

A high-angle photograph of the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, California. The bridge's iconic red-orange towers and suspension cables are prominent against a clear blue sky. The bridge spans across the deep blue waters of the Golden Gate Strait. In the background, the San Francisco city skyline is visible on the left, and rolling hills are on the right. The foreground shows some dry, brownish vegetation on a hillside.

Stop Minding Your Own Business

Warning Signs:

- Talking or making threats about suicide
- Previous suicide attempts
- Statements revealing a desire to die
- Alcohol and drug use
- Anxiety, low mood, withdrawal or hopelessness
- Isolation
- Making final arrangements, giving away possessions

Are You Ok?

Are you
depressed?

Are you
thinking
about hurting
yourself?

Do you have
a plan?

What You Can Do

Recognize the signs of distress

Approach with love not judgment

Do not minimize

Listen Carefully – Let them talk

Assure them they are not alone

Acknowledge the challenges

Encourage them to change their habits

10 x 10 x 10 Rule

Recovery From Depression

Medicine

Cognitive Behavior Therapy

Peer Support

Email

- On average, professionals have more than 200 emails in their inbox and receive 120 new ones each day (Plummer, 2019).

Disconnect



Turn off notifications.



Do not charge your phone beside bed.



Do not keep phone with you during meals, exercise, or social activities.



Read a book or magazine rather than your phone or tablet.



Take healthy breaks from the screen, and don't take the laptop with you on weekends or vacations.



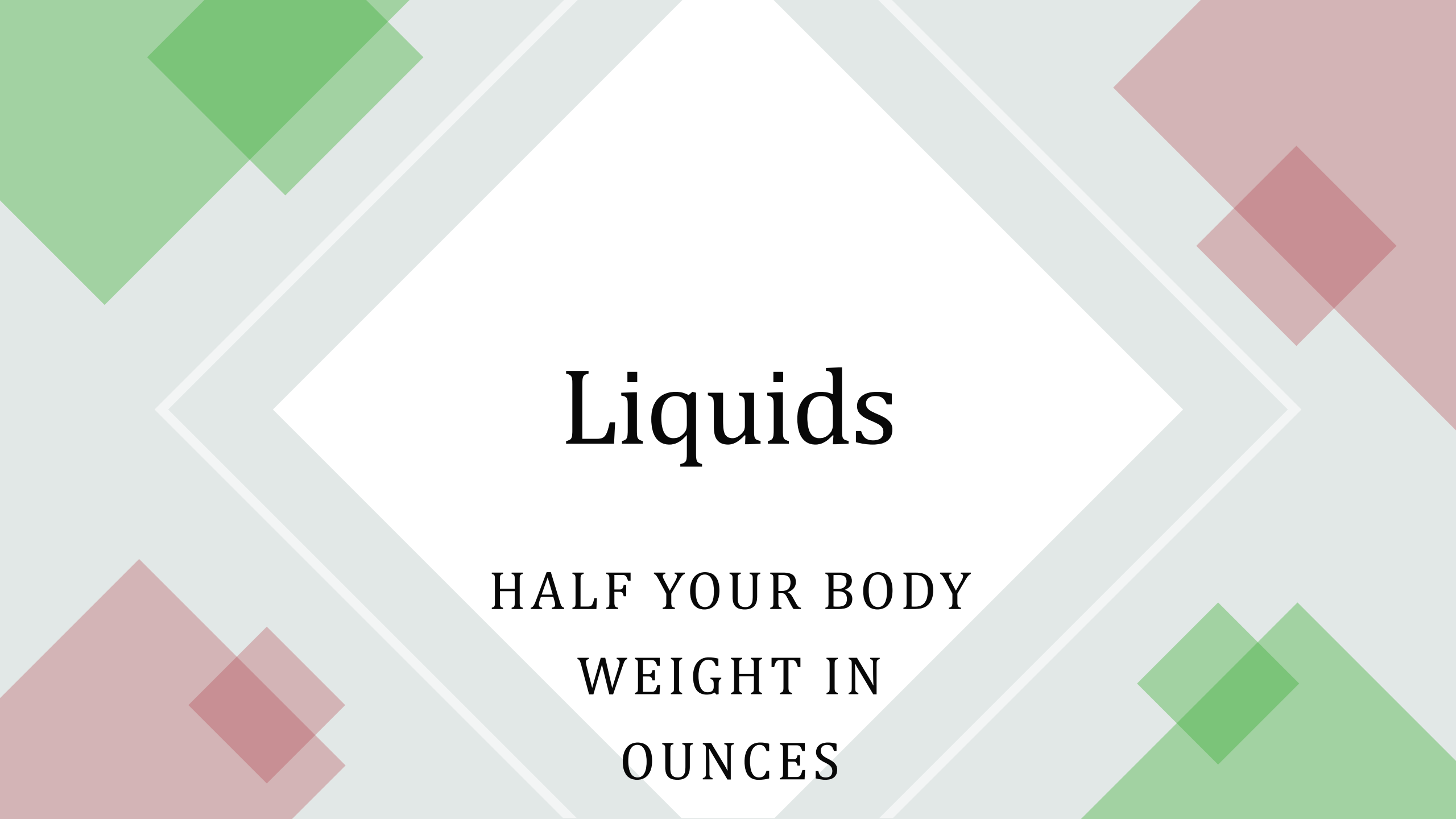
Sleep

8-9 HOURS



Exercise

150 MINUTES A
WEEK



Liquids

HALF YOUR BODY
WEIGHT IN
OUNCES



Light

SEASONAL
AFFECTIVE
DISORDER



Mindfulness

FULLY
PRESENT



Gratitude

TLAP PROVIDES

Confidential support

Referrals to licensed professionals with the experience or expertise you need

Information about local group support and resources

One-to-one local peer support

Self-care information

CLE / Education on Wellness

Access to funding for care

Service opportunities



Texas Lawyers' Assistance Program

TLAPhelps.org

1-800-343-TLAP(8527)





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[#stopmindingyourownbusiness.org](https://www.stopmindingyourownbusiness.org)



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