

TRIBUTE TO CHIEF JUSTICE JANICE HOLDER

In 1986, a well-known Memphis attorney died of suicide. At his wake some of his friends were lamenting the fact that no one was aware that he was so deeply depressed that he would contemplate such a desperate act.

One of those friends was attorney Janice Holder. She decided (as is her custom) to take action rather than simply talk about it. She went to work and convinced several lawyers and judges to form the Lawyers Helping Lawyers Committee of the Memphis Bar Association. She continued to be an active leader and participant with the committee after she became a Circuit Court Judge in 1990.

When Chief Justice Holder was appointed to the Tennessee Supreme Court in 1996, she saw an opportunity to establish a meaningful state-wide program to assist

lawyers, judges and law students with substance abuse, mental health and other issues. She asked a Texas lawyer, Michael Crowley, a former Chair of the ABA Commission on Lawyers



Chief Justice Janice M. Holder
Tennessee Supreme Court

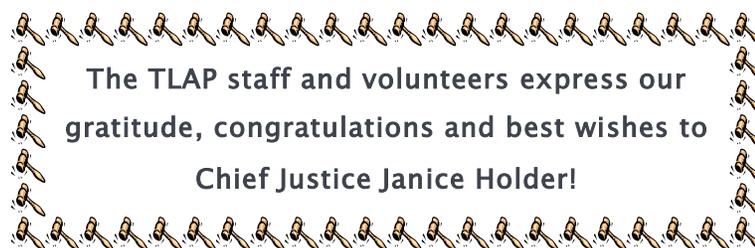
Assistance Programs to come to Tennessee to talk to the Supreme Court about a court rule creating the Tennessee Lawyers Assistance Program. As a result, the Court enacted Supreme Court Rule 33 creating TLAP in 1999.

Justice Holder has been the Supreme Court liaison to

TLAP from its inception until she was recently selected by her colleagues to serve as Chief Justice. She has been a steady, guiding force for TLAP through the Commission's formative years. Chief Justice Holder was the driving force behind TLAP's creation.

Lawyers, judges and law students across the state owe Chief Justice Holder a debt of gratitude for her vision, hard work and dedication for creating a system that not only helps those who are affected by these issues, but that also helps to protect the public by providing education, early intervention and treatment, to reduce the incidence of malpractice and ethical violations that might otherwise occur.

Honorable Robert L. Childers, 30th Judicial District, ABA Commission on Lawyer Assistance Programs Chair, TLAP Commissioner



The TLAP staff and volunteers express our gratitude, congratulations and best wishes to

Chief Justice Janice Holder!

A New Year

12 months, 52 weeks, 365 days, 8,760 hours, 525,600 minutes-a time to consider directions, goals, and actions. I must make some plans to live a normal life, but also I must live emotionally within a twenty-four-hour frame, for if I do, I don't have to make New Year's resolutions! I can make every day a New Year's day!

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AM I AT RISK FOR RELAPSE?

Relapse rarely occurs the moment one reuses alcohol or drugs. Rather it is a process that occurs long before the actual act of “picking up”. Following are signs of impending relapse:

Experiencing Post Acute Withdrawal: I start having problems with one or more of the following: thinking difficulties, emotional overreaction problems, sleep disturbances, memory difficulties, becoming accident prone, and/or starting to experience a serious sensitivity to stress.

Return To Denial: I stop telling others what I’m thinking/feeling and start trying to convince myself or others that everything is all right, when in fact it is not.

Avoidance And Defensive Behavior: I start avoiding people who will give me honest feedback and/or I start becoming irritable and angry with them.

Starting To Crisis Build: I start to notice that ordinary everyday problems become overwhelming and no matter how hard I try, I can’t solve my problems.

Feeling Immobilized (Stuck): I start believing that there is nowhere to turn and no way to solve my problems. I feel trapped and start to use magical thinking.

Becoming Depressed: I start feeling down-in-the dumps and have very low energy. I may even become so depressed that I start thinking of suicide.

Compulsive And Impulsive Behaviors (Loss Of Control): I start using one or more of the following: food, sex, caffeine, nicotine, work, gambling, etc. often in an out of control fashion. I may react without thinking of the consequences of my behavior on myself and others.



Urges And Cravings (Thinking About Drinking/Using): I begin to think that alcohol/drug use is the only way to feel better. I start thinking about justifications to drink/use and convince myself that using is the logical thing to do.

Chemical Loss Of Control (Drinking/Using): I find myself drinking/using again to solve my problems. I start to believe that “it’s all over ‘till I hit bottom, so I may as well enjoy this relapse while it’s good.” My problems continue to get worse.

Adapted from Terence T. Gorski's Warning Sign Identification Process

Relapse Attitudes

- Sobriety is boring.
- I’ll never drink/use again.
- I can do it myself.
- I’m not as bad as....
- I owe this one to me.
- My problems can’t be solved.
- I wish I was happy.
- I don’t care.
- If nobody else cares, why should I?
- Things have changed.
- I can substitute.
- They don’t know what they are talking about.
- There’s got to be a better way.
- I can’t change the way I think.
- If I move, everything will change.
- I like my old friends.
- I can do things differently.
- Nobody needs to know how I feel.
- I see things my way only.
- I feel hopeless.
- I can handle it.
- I can’t do it.

THE ROLE OF A PEER MONITOR

What Does a Monitor Really Do?

A monitor’s only role is to supervise the monitored lawyer in accordance with the Recovery Monitoring Program and report to TLAP monthly as to whether the monitored client is or is not in compliance. It is *not* the monitor’s role to serve as counselor, sponsor or treatment provider.

What A Monitor MUST Do

- Meet with the monitored lawyer face-to face in accordance with the conditions
- Speak with the monitored lawyer by phone in accordance with the conditions
- Timely file all reports with TLAP
- Report all incidents of non-compliance as required
- Maintain confidentiality

What A Monitor SHOULD Do

- Be clear with the monitored lawyer about the monitor’s expectations
- Be consistent with expectations, consequences, and reporting

What A Monitor SHOULD NOT Do

- Act as the 12-Step Recovery Program sponsor for the monitored lawyer
- Be responsible for the monitored lawyer’s recovery or compliance
- Enable the monitored lawyer to continue in self-defeating behavior
- Represent the monitored lawyer in any capacity
- Profit monetarily from the monitoring relationship



To receive the Daily Ponderables, a daily email compilation of recovery-based reflections and inspirations, contact Stephenson Todd at: ezduzit@chartertn.net

CoLAP
Annual Conference

The 22nd Annual National Conference for Lawyer Assistance Programs will be held at the Arizona Grand Resort in Phoenix, AZ October 6-9, 2009. TLAP’s Executive Director, Laura Gatrell will Co-Chair the event.

For more information, go to:
www.abanet.org/legalservices/colap/conference.html

For hotel reservations, go to:
www.arizonagrandresort.com
 or call 1-877-800-4888.

A CLIENT'S PERSPECTIVE...

My first response in learning of my impairment-based suspension—or any attempt to impose control from the outside—was to *renounce the renouncer*. If the BPR wanted to try and control me, I could handle that by resigning from the practice of law. I didn't like lawyers much anyway; let them argue with each other.

Now I am not saying that the practice of law is for everyone; nor even that it is necessarily for me. But one sure way to avoid responsibility is to keep moving around changing states whenever a warrant is issued for your arrest.

Back in my home state now, and in good standing with the Board, I've had time to witness my progression through several layers of recovery. Now that I attend my local Lawyers in Recovery meeting, I get to see other lawyers—newer to the program—express the same kind of thinking and feeling.

What is telling is not the thoughts themselves; the thinking may be somewhat valid. The complaints against you may be legally imperfect, or lodged by individuals of dubious moral character with unclean hands. But it's the emotion, the non-verbal communication that lawyers who are renouncing the renouncers express that tells the deep background to their oh-so-reasonable sounding withdrawal from the practice. They are, in a word, *angry*. What inspires this kind of anger?

The first difficulty seems to be admitting there may be a problem stemming from the self. Hesitant to take that first, dangerous step of looking at the troubles within, these lawyers cry that it's the whole world that's messed up. The problem is *out there*.

The second difficulty seems to be with the notion that the solution may not

rest entirely within ourselves; we may need some help. On the verge of tears I made similar assertions. Thank goodness someone had the patience to listen to my railings with compassion, all the while knowing that I was very near to giving up the argument that I could fix me.

The process is often termed "denial". It arrives in the company of its brother "anger". What we want to remember is that, if handled gently, it can foreshadow the beginning of freedom; a perhaps reluctant willingness to perceive that others seem to have stood just where we now stand. With this admission a whole new world opens up. It looks like hell at first. But that's a quirk of perception, since the hell we see is nothing more than our goodbye glance at the place we are finally about to leave.

- Anonymous

Tennessee Lawyers Assistance

Program Commissioners:
Appointed by Supreme Court

- Teresa Jones- Chair, Memphis
- Ken Shuttleworth- Vice-Chair, Memphis
- Stephenson Todd- Secretary/Treasurer, Kingsport
- Dr. Howard Burley, Nashville
- Hon. Butch Childers, Memphis
- Chris Hall, Knoxville
- Dr. Kent Cox, Memphis
- Dr. Tim Davis, Chattanooga
- Jackie Dixon, Nashville
- Stafford McNamee, Nashville
- Tom Parsons, Manchester
- Elizabeth Collins, Memphis
- Hon. Ben Hooper, Newport
- Marnie Huff, Nashville
- Frank Pinchak, Chattanooga

Therapeutic Annie 



Annie the TLAP dog is an honorary staff member, enjoyed and appreciated by clients and visitors alike. Annie's warm, welcoming nature has a knack for putting people at ease. Her sweet and calming influence simply cannot be understated.

Annie enjoys a variety of treats, meeting new people, walks in Printers Alley, and destruction of hosiery. She is a miniature Schnauzer and will celebrate her second birthday this year.
Stop by to meet Annie!

"I WANT TO HELP... BUT I'M NOT AN ALCOHOLIC."

Many lawyers and judges have expressed a desire to help but are reticent. The most common reason offered is that they believe if they do not have a personal issue with addiction, mental health, or stress unmanageability that they are not qualified. That is not true.

TLAP participants can benefit from those currently leading healthy lives. Additionally, reaching out enables our legal community to move from the shame-based fear that perpetuates the cycle into the solution of a healthy bar and bench.

TLAP has many volunteer opportunities available. For more information, call 615-741-3238.

You CAN make a difference!



Santa visited the TLAP Office this year! Wait – is Santa actually TLAP Commissioner, Ken Shuttleworth of Memphis? Wonder if the reindeer know!

TLAP NEWS

200 4th Avenue North
Suite 810
Nashville, TN 37219
(615) 741-3238
Call toll free at:
(877) 424-8527



Montgomery Bell State Park

REMINDER—Mark Your Calendars!



CAMP TLAP 2009

Montgomery Bell State Park

March 13-15th

Saturday night speaker:

John "Jack" P. Corderman

For hotel reservations:

(800) 250-8613 or (615) 797-3101

For registration information:

email: mcclendon@tncourts.gov

**We're on the
Web at:**

www.tlap.org

When you call TLAP, you can be sure that **complete confidentiality** will be maintained. The Tennessee Supreme Court has established TLAP as an approved impaired lawyers program pursuant to a Rule 33 of the Rules of The Supreme Court of Tennessee. By virtue of said rule, all communications with TLAP are confidential and members of TLAP are relieved of their duty to report ethical violations discovered as a result of their TLAP work. This means that any misconduct or ethical violation discovered or revealed to a member of TLAP will *not* be reported to any disciplinary board. Additionally, communications with TLAP are confidential and privileged by virtue of T.C.A. Sec. 23-4-101, *et seq.*

Problems are not a sign of failure, but an opportunity for growth.

*Don't wait another minute
— Contact Us Now!*

Would you like to submit an article for the next newsletter? Have a topic suggestion? We are accepting submissions and encourage you to get involved!

Call M.C. McDonough at
615-741-3238.

STRESS TEST: KNOW THYSELF

Are you vulnerable to the effects of stress?

Scale one to five: 1 (almost always)...5 (almost never).

1. I eat at least one hot, balanced meal a day.
2. I get seven to eight hours sleep at least four nights a week.
3. I give and receive affection regularly.
4. I have at least one relative within 50 miles on whom I can rely.
5. I exercise to the point of perspiration at least twice a week.
6. I am the appropriate weight for my height.
7. I have an income adequate to meet regular expenses.
8. I regularly attend club or social activities.
9. I have a network of friends and acquaintances.
10. I have one or more friends in whom to confide about personal matters.
11. I am in good health.
12. I am able to speak openly about my feelings when angry or worried.
13. I do something fun at least once a week.
14. I am able to organize my time effectively.
15. I drink fewer than two cups of coffee (or caffeinated beverages) a day.
16. I take time for myself during the day.

Score over 25 indicates vulnerability, 37-54 is SERIOUSLY vulnerable, over 55 is EXTREMELY vulnerable.

**Upcoming Conference
Room Events**

- WWG Women's Group on the 1st & 3rd Wednesday of every month

Coming Soon:

- Wellness Day
- Dual Diagnoses Group
- Stage II Recovery



HEALTHY BAR PARTY

February 27, 2009, TLAP and the NBA Attorney Health and Wellness Committee will co-host a "Healthy Bar Party" at TLAP. The day will include up to three hours of *free* CLE's and innovative sessions on maintaining a healthy lifestyle.



Look for details in January, 2009. Call Landry Butler at the TBA at 615-383-7421 or Ted Rice, at TLAP at 615-741-3238 for more information.

IN CLOSING...

"Human beings, by changing the inner attitudes of their minds, can change the outer aspects of their lives."

—William James

TLAP 
**TENNESSEE LAWYERS
ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**