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Bringing the Calm in A Stressful Vocation

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Are you an anxious lawyer? Jeena Cho ’03 may have an answer for you.
Cho is the co-author, with former litigator Karen Gifford, who currently acts as an investor and advisor in the technology industry, of The Anxious Lawyer: An 8-Week Guide to a Joyful and Satisfying Law Practice Through Mindfulness and Meditation. It’s the first book that the American Bar Association has published on the topic of mindfulness and meditation.
Cho, who practices bankruptcy law with the boutique San Francisco firm JC Law Group PC, has made a sideline career of coaching lawyers in techniques to help them find their calm center personally and professionally. “I know firsthand the suffering lawyers experience,” she says. “Practicing mindfulness has helped me be more productive, resilient and live a happier life. It’s possible to gain these benefits with just a few minutes of practice each day.”

Lots of professionals have stressful lives, of course. But Cho says that lawyers bear special burdens. “As lawyers, we are constant witnesses to human suffering,” she says. “Clients come to us with complicated problems that the legal process may be ill-suited to address. The economic pressures on legal practitioners are greater than ever. We are expected to win at all costs. We constantly push ourselves harder, to work more, to bill that extra 0.1 hour. It’s no wonder that lawyers have one of the highest rates of substance abuse and depression of any profession.”

“For her and for a growing number of practitioners interested in mindfulness techniques, the remedy is not medication but meditation. It’s not voodoo, Cho points out: “Meditation and mindfulness are simply tools for training the mind.”

– Jeena Cho ’03

“Meditation and mindfulness are simply tools for training the mind.”

The Anxious Lawyer is the first book that the American Bar Association has published on the topic of mindfulness and meditation.

The Anxious Lawyer is Cho’s second book, following How to Manage Your Law Office (LexisNexis). A contributor to the Huffington Post, she is also a columnist for Forbes, Bloomberg News and Above the Law, where she writes about health, wellness and self-care for lawyers.

The book is available through Amazon and at www.theanxiouslawyer.com.