

Mindfulness for the Ethical Practice of Law Presented by Rebecca D. Martin

On February 9, 2018, Rebecca Martin presented a one hour Continuing Legal Education program titled Mindfulness for the Ethical Practice of Law to the Johnson County Bar Association. She has presented similar CLE's to the Kansas Bar Association, Kansas City Metropolitan Bar Association, Association of Women Lawyers and Kansas Women Attorneys Association.

For over a decade, law students, judges, law professors and practicing attorneys have been utilizing meditation and mindfulness to develop concentration, improve emotional well-being, and lessen the stress of legal work. According to Terry Harrell, chair of the ABA's Commission on Lawyer Assistance Programs, "Meditation and mindfulness are not just good for us the way things like fish oil are. They actually affect the quality of legal work. A mindfulness practice makes us better decision-makers, better ethical decision-makers. And that translates into better lawyering."

Her one hour CLE program presented data and research documenting the connection between mindfulness and ethical decision making as well as effective and ethical lawyering. Mindfulness is being taught to attorneys throughout the country to improve and maintain attorney competency as well as improve communication and civility in our profession.

Legal professionals new to the practices of meditation and mindfulness were introduced to effective daily practices and the benefits of such practices, and additional techniques were suggested for those legal professionals already engaging in meditation and mindfulness. Proper breathing techniques to reduce stress and to create gaps between stimulus and response were demonstrated. Multitasking was highly discouraged, and suggestions on how to be a happy attorney as well as a mindful attorney were made.