



Moving Towards **BETTER**

“Human beings are never going to be perfect, Roy. The best we can do is to keep asking for help and accepting it when you can. And if you can keep on doing that, you’ll always be moving towards better.” —Leslie Higgins in *Ted Lasso*

I RECEIVED A PHONE CALL FROM A FORMER CLIENT JUST A COUPLE OF MONTHS BEFORE TAKING OFFICE AS PRESIDENT. I finalized a modification for him a few months before, and he was concerned his current wife was filing for divorce. I asked him to call back and make an appointment for the next week so we could talk it through. Instead of doing that, he thought it was a better idea to pick up a gun and kill his wife and himself in front of their child. I am not ashamed to say I know when I need help, and I needed help that day.

It’s no secret that the vicarious trauma we experience as attorneys and judges along with the increasing demands and pressures of our profession have made it critical for lawyers to take care of their mental health to maintain fitness to provide the services their clients need. The Texas Lawyers’ Assistance Program performs life-saving work in this area, and one of my goals as president has been to help our bar offer tools to supplement TLAP’s efforts.

Mental health therapy can be an important means for attorneys to maintain their fitness to practice law. I am excited to report that as of May 1—the start of Mental Health Awareness Month—the State Bar of Texas has partnered with BetterHelp to provide all bar members access to one month of online mental health therapy at no cost to members or to the bar. State Bar members who choose to continue their therapy after the initial free month can then receive a 15% discount on BetterHelp services.¹

The benefit is available to all State Bar members, regardless of whether they are using or have used TLAP services. The State Bar will not know who is receiving counseling through BetterHelp and will not have access to any information that members share with their therapists.

BetterHelp is a well-known online therapy platform that offers over 20,000 licensed therapists to choose from based on your needs and preferences. After being matched with a therapist, State Bar members will receive a free month of therapy, which includes:

- weekly live sessions with the therapist via video or phone;
- the ability to message your therapist at any time;
- participation in group sessions; and
- full use of BetterHelp features such as journaling, worksheets, and guides.

All bar members will receive an email from the State Bar on May 1 with instructions on how to take advantage of the therapy benefit, including a special web address and access code. For more information, go to texasbar.com/betterhelp.

It is my hope that this new member benefit will inspire more Texas lawyers who are just trying to deal with the common mental health difficulties so often impacting lawyers’ ability to serve their clients, such as grief, anxiety, or depression, to seek the help they need to maintain their well-being and their practice. My hope is that this benefit will help attorneys move “towards better.”

CINDY TISDALE

President, 2023-2024
State Bar of Texas

NOTES:

1. Before talking to a therapist, BetterHelp will ask you to submit a valid payment method. You will not be charged if you cancel within one month.