



**RELAX, I  
GOT THIS !**

**(no you don't)**  
Where to find help  
when the load of  
judging gets too  
heavy

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# What's on your docket today?

- Stories of people who are victimized physically, sexually, emotionally, and economically
- Children in distress and in need of protection
- Dysfunctional families
- People marginalized by poverty, addiction, mental illness

HOW DOES THIS AFFECT ME?

# SELF-SCAN (How am I doing, really?)

## 1. Physical symptoms:

- Can't sleep, replaying the worst of the day in my head at night, nightmares
- Eating disorder: nervous eating, loss of appetite
- Energy loss
- Needing a drink (or ten) to relax and unwind
- Addictive behaviour (smoking, gambling)

# How am I Doing, Really?

## 2. Cognitive symptoms

- increasing self-doubt
- trouble concentrating
- loss of confidence (how can I keep up with this workload?)
- racing thoughts
- loss of interest in previously enjoyed activity
- perfectionism
- repeated imagining of traumatic imagery

# How am I Doing, Really?

## 3. Emotional symptoms

- feelings of powerlessness
- guilt
- oversensitivity
- emotional unpredictability
- fear
- anxiety
- loss of empathy,

# How am I Doing, Really?

## 4. Social symptoms:

- withdrawal
- isolation
- loneliness
- mistrust of others
- decrease in intimacy
- changes in parenting style

# How am I Doing, Really?

## 5. Judgeitis

“A ridiculous inflation of self-importance with increased intolerance, a fatal tendency to suck up to juries, to interfere with cross-examination by defending counsel and doing your best to find all the customers in the dock guilty!”

-Horace Rumpole, “Rumpole and the Reign of Terror” by John Mortimer







## Two Important Take-aways

1. You are not  
alone

2. You don't have  
to go it alone

# Sources of Help

## 1. Judges and Lawyers Assistance Programs

- CONFIDENTIAL

- Initial consultation is usually free (but if a referral is made to a counsellor, fee structure may apply)

- Objectivity

- Not accountable to disciplinary bodies

# Sources of Help

Directory of these agencies in your state or province can be found here (Co-LAP):

[https://www.americanbar.org/groups/lawyer\\_assistance/resources/lap\\_programs\\_by\\_state.html](https://www.americanbar.org/groups/lawyer_assistance/resources/lap_programs_by_state.html)

In Canada: The Judges Counselling Program

[www.jcp.ca](http://www.jcp.ca) or call **1-866-872-6336**



Judges  
Counselling  
Program

Confidential  
assistance for  
judges and  
their families

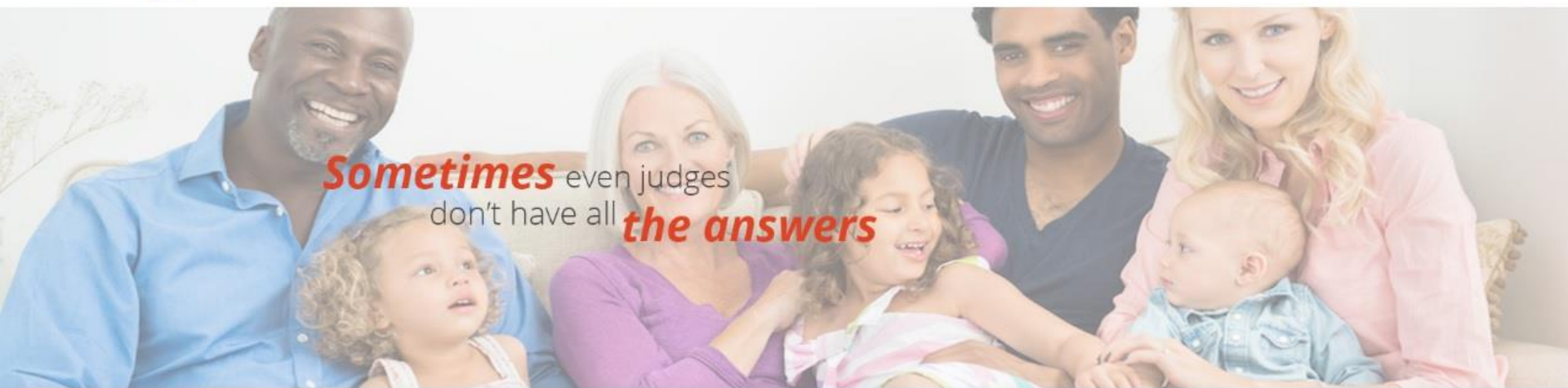
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**Sometimes** even judges  
don't have all **the answers**

Try it now, in full confidence

Call **1-866-872-6336**

Get a FREE consultation here [+](#)

# Other Sources of Help

2. Peer support committees on your court (if your court doesn't have one, you should start one.)

- Judges turn to colleagues with a background and/or interest in wellness for support, experience, understanding and objectivity
- Peer support members are LISTENERS first and offer advice only if requester
- Peer support committee can be PRO-ACTIVE, reaching out to colleagues in distress

# Other Sources of Help

3. Judicial Wellness Committee of the AJA
  - Membership from all Districts and regions
  - A “peer support committee” for AJA members
  - Compassionate colleagues who respect confidentiality, know their limitations and boundaries
  - Non disciplinary and non-judgemental

# Other Sources of Help

4. Find an understanding and trustworthy colleague. Set up regular meetings (weekly) for frank and honest check-in with one another to discuss.

- Offer one another a kindly but honest assessment of any concerns you have
- “FINE” is NOT an acceptable answer to “How are you?” Be transparent and specific

# Judge Russ MacKay (1955-2015)





Closing  
Being a  
judge is  
what I do,  
not who  
I am.

