

LAW STUDENT WELLBEING: BENEFITS OF PROMOTING PSYCHOLOGICAL LITERACY AND SELF-AWARENESS USING MINDFULNESS, STRENGTHS THEORY AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

COLIN JAMES

ABSTRACT

This article examines research on improving law students' levels of psychological literacy in order to reduce prejudicial stigma and to improve students' propensity to practice mindfulness. It argues that reducing discriminatory prejudice against mental health issues will improve the willingness of students who experience mental health problems such as anxiety and depression to seek help. It also argues that mindfulness will improve cognitive performance and self-awareness, which can be developed further using applied strengths theory and emotional intelligence. Strengths theory can help students to better understand how to apply their own unique mix of capacities and qualities to their legal education and subsequent legal practice. Understanding emotional intelligence can help improve students' awareness of their own internal states, which contribute to their values, attitudes, motivations and behaviour, and insights into the likely motivations of others. Taken at large, the research indicates that improved self-awareness is related to the survival and wellbeing of students both during law school and in their transition to legal practice.