

# Mental Health Summit for Legal Professionals 2026



CO-CHAIRS: **Beth Beattie**, LSM, Senior Counsel  
*Ministry of the Attorney General*

**Teresa Donnelly**, Emeritus Treasurer, *Law Society of Ontario*

**May 5, 2026**

**9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.**

**Total CPD Hours = 4 h EDI Professionalism **

**Law Society of Ontario**

**SKU CLE26-00502**

## **Agenda**

**9:00 a.m. – 9:05 a.m.**

**Welcome**

Beth Beattie, LSM, Senior Counsel  
*Ministry of the Attorney General*

Teresa Donnelly, Emeritus Treasurer, *Law Society of Ontario*

**9:05 a.m. – 9:25 a.m.**

**Insights and Reflections: Jason Ward on Addiction**

Jason Ward, *Ward Lawyers<sup>PC</sup>*

**Insights and Reflections: Adam Brooks on  
ADHD/Depression/Anxiety**

Adam Brooks, Paralegal, Civil Litigation Co-Ordinator, Ontario  
Ministry of the Solicitor General

**9:25 a.m. – 10:10 a.m.**

**Navigating the client relationship: How do we serve our clients  
while not losing ourselves?**

Practicing law often means working closely with people during some of the most challenging moments of their lives. Lawyers are often asked to manage conflict, heightened emotions, and complex client expectations, all while delivering high-quality legal work. This session explores the complex dynamics at the heart of legal professionals' relationship with their clients, including the challenges of working with difficult clients, understanding the impact of vicarious trauma, and recognizing burnout. The panelists will share reflections and strategies for how legal professionals can serve their clients with care and compassion while also supporting their own mental health.

Alastair Clarke, *Clarke Immigration Law, Winnipeg*

Dimple Dhabalia, Author and Founder, *Roots in the Clouds* (US)

The Honourable Justice Suzan Fraser, *Ontario Superior Court of  
Justice*

Doron Gold, *The Lawyer Therapist*

**10:10 a.m. – 10:25 a.m.**

**Question and Answer Session**

**10:25 a.m. – 10:35 a.m.**

**Break**

**10:35 a.m. – 10:55 a.m.**

**Insights and Reflections: Katherine Cooligan on Grief**

Katherine Cooligan, *Cooligan Yehia LLP*

**Insights and Reflections: Kirsten Marsh on Living with Depression as a young lawyer**

Kirsten Marsh, *McCarthy Tétrault LLP*

**10:55 a.m. – 11:50 a.m.**

**Ways to overcome hierarchy, bullying and isolation in the legal professions**

This discussion brings together leading legal professionals for an honest and solutions-focused conversation on dismantling hierarchy, addressing bullying, and reducing isolation within the legal profession. Through personal insights and practical strategies, panelists will explore how to build healthier workplaces—ones that empower individuals at all levels, foster belonging, and strengthen psychological safety. Attendees will gain actionable approaches to improving team culture, supporting colleagues, and creating more inclusive, respectful legal environments.

Justice Brook J. Greenberg, *Supreme Court of British Columbia*

Lai-King Hum, *Hum Law Firm; Discrimination and Harassment Counsel (DHC)*

Marian Jacko, Assistant Deputy Attorney General, *Ministry of the Attorney General*

Dr. Ningjing (Natalie) Zhang, *BridgePoint Law Professional Corporation, Kingston*

**11:50 a.m. – 12:05 p.m.**

**Question and Answer Session**

**12:05 p.m. – 12:15 p.m.**

**Break**

**12:15 p.m. – 12:45 p.m.**

**Solos and Small Practitioners and Mental Health: Unique Challenges**

Solo and small-firm legal professionals face distinct pressures—balancing client demands, business operations, and personal well-being without the support systems larger firms or government employers provide. This panel explores the mental health challenges unique to these practitioners, including isolation, financial stress, and work-life boundaries. Speakers will share practical strategies, personal experiences, and resources to help sole and small practitioners build resilience and thrive in demanding environments.

Shelina Lalji, Paralegal, *JUSTICEJOLT*©

Tanya Parker Wallace, *Parker Wallace Family Law, Ottawa*

Karen Seeley, *McAuley Law, Dryden ON*

**12:45 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

**Question and Answer Session/Wrap-up**

**1:00 p.m.**

**Program Ends**