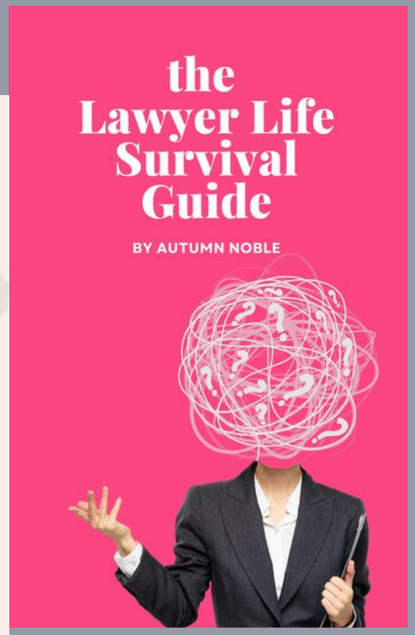
THE LAWYER LIFE COLLECTIVE & LEXVID

BOUNDARIES & WORKLOAD DESIGN IN THE LEGAL PROFESSION

THELAWYERLIFECOLLECTIVE.COM









AUTUMN NOBLE

THE LAWYER LIFE COLLECTIVE

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OBJECTIVES

KEY POINTS

- Causes of Overload & Burnout
- Cognitive Performance & Ethics
- Reactive vs Proactive Working
- Common Barriers
- Strategies
- Application

THE REALITY

(AS IF WE DIDN’T ALREADY KNOW)

- High demand
- Long hours
- Constant availability

This is systemic—not personal



THE HIDDEN WORKLOAD

WHAT LAWYERS ARE UP AGAINST



BILLABLE ≠ TOTAL WORK



ADMIN +
COMMUNICATION LOAD



INVISIBLE LABOR



TASK SWITCHING

THE COST

COGNITIVE & ETHICAL

- Burnout
  - 43% of depression; 39% for anxiety
- Errors
  - Burnout leads to inattention, inefficiency, and errors
  - 30% report burnout contributing to mistakes
- Attrition
  - Leaving doesn’t fix it



REFRAMING BOUNDARIES

AN ESSENTIAL PROFESSIONAL SKILL

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BOUNDARIES PROTECT FOCUS

Constant interruption degrades deep thinking, increasing errors and rework.

BOUNDARIES PROTECT ENERGY

Cognitive energy is finite. When it’s depleted, even simple tasks take longer and feel harder.

BOUNDARIES PROTECT CLIENT SERVICE QUALITY

Burned-out lawyers are more reactive, less present, and more prone to oversight.

WHY BOUNDARIES FAIL

- “Always on” client expectations
- Fear of reputational damage
- Billable hour incentives
- Lack of clear prioritization from leadership
- Internalized identity (“good lawyers say yes”)



WHAT IS A BOUNDARY (REALLY)?

Not:

- Saying no to everything
- Being unavailable
- Doing less work

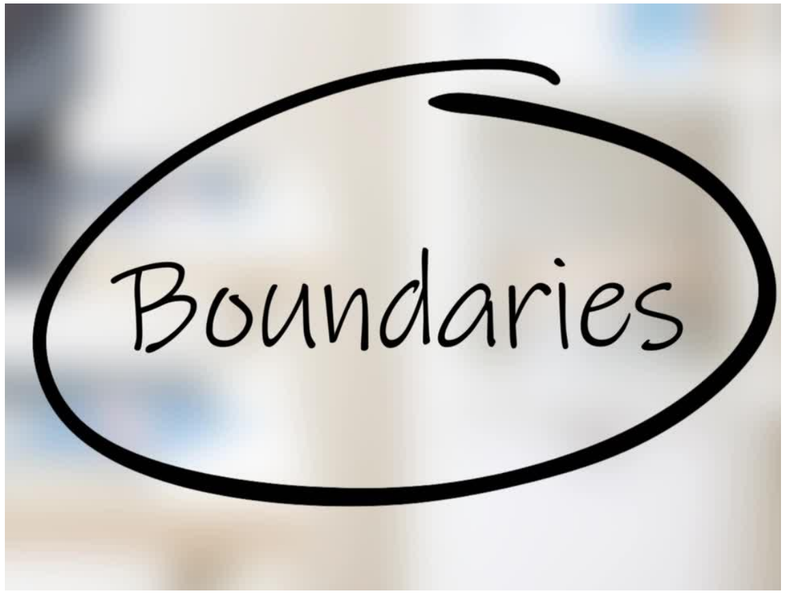
But:

- Clarifying expectations
- Protecting cognitive capacity
- Creating intentional availability



TYPES OF BOUNDARIES

- Time Boundaries
- Task Boundaries
- Communication Boundaries
- Cognitive Boundaries



SETTING A BOUNDARY

SHORT. NEUTRAL. CONSISTENT.

WHAT'S AT STAKE

Identify What You're Protecting

STATE IT CLEARLY

Keep it short. No justification spiral.

OFFER ALTERNATIVES

This keeps collaboration intact.

FOLLOW-THROUGH

Enforce it consistently

TIME

- No same-day response expectation unless marked urgent
- Defined start/stop times for non-emergency work
- Blocking court prep or deep-work time on calendars
- Limiting back-to-back meetings without buffers
- Ending work at a set time on at least some weekdays

CLIENT

- Clear scope of representation — and sticking to it
- Defined turnaround times for responses
- Not providing legal advice outside agreed matters
- Ending meetings that become abusive or unproductive
- Redirecting clients who seek emotional processing rather than legal counsel

COMMUNICATION

- No responding to emotionally charged emails immediately
- Clear expectations around email vs. phone vs. text
- Limiting after-hours communications to true emergencies
- Not engaging in hostile exchanges with opposing counsel in real time
- Drafting responses offline before sending

COGNITIVE & ENERGY

- Limiting number of high-conflict matters handled simultaneously
- Scheduling complex work during peak mental energy hours
- Taking breaks before exhaustion hits
- Saying no to additional work when capacity is reached
- Not working while severely dysregulated or exhausted

WORKLOAD DESIGN

Time Management = reactive

- “Fit more into your day”

Workload Design = strategic

- “Change what’s in your day”



THE PROBLEM WITH REACTIVITY

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Everything feels urgent

Constant task-switching

No prioritization

WORKLOAD DESIGN PRINCIPLES

FOUR CORE PRINCIPLES



VISIBILITY



ALIGNMENT



PRIORITIZATION



CAPACITY AWARENESS

CAPACITY REALITY

SIMPLE SNAPSHOT

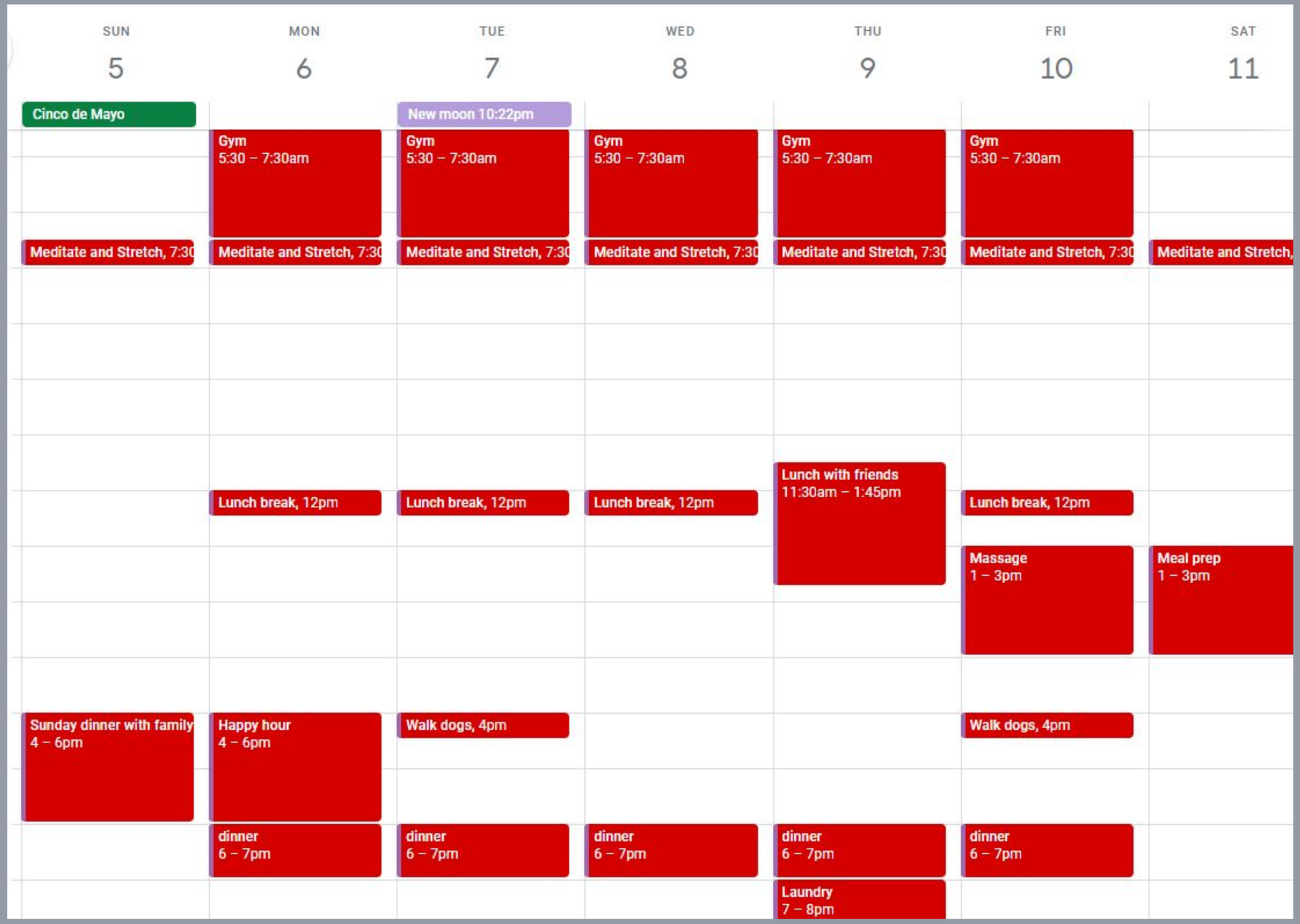
Calendar-ing your life

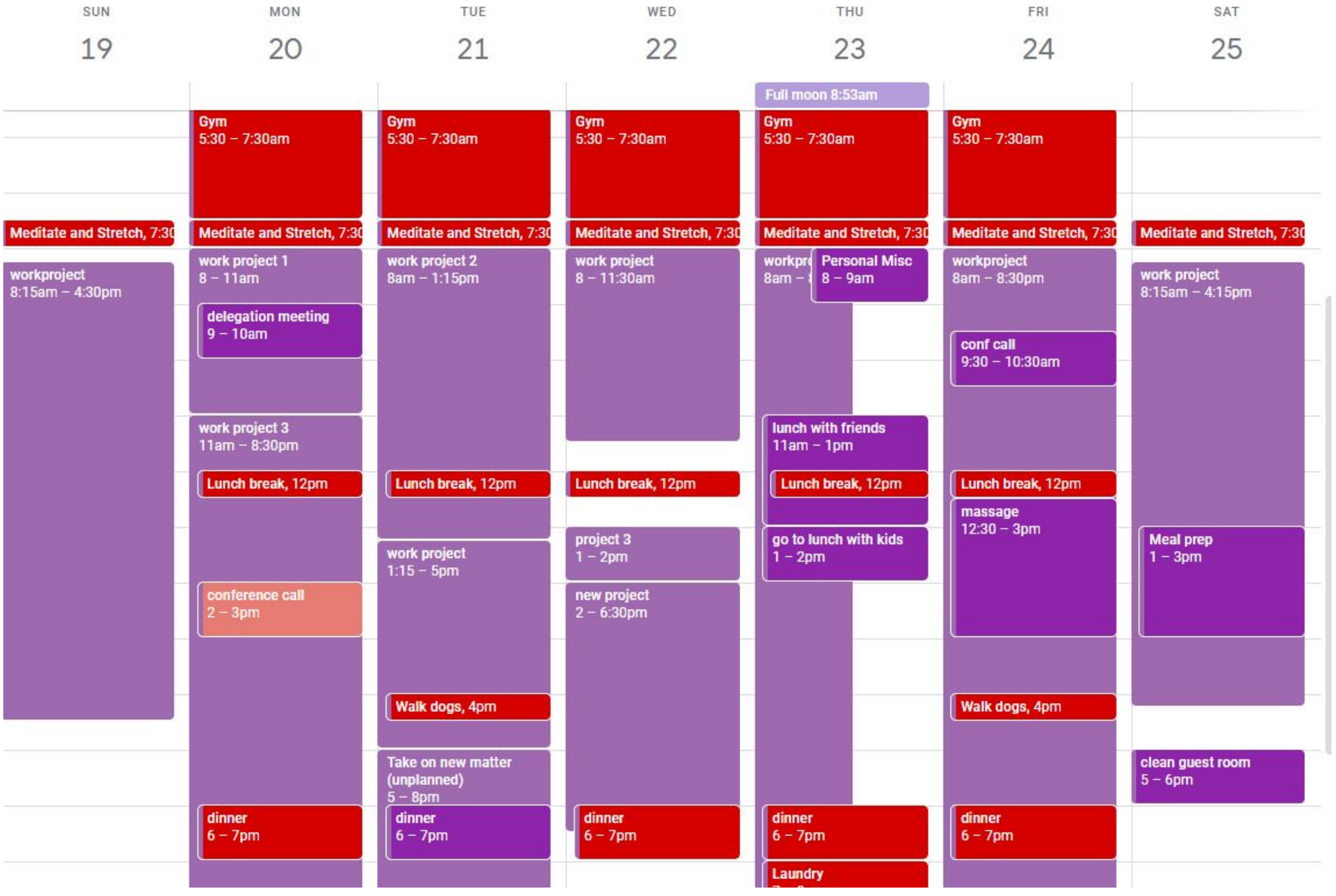
- Personal life
- Goals
- Work projects
- SPACE for life (meals, sleep, breaks, groceries)



Autumn Noble
autumn@theuncomfortabledream.

SUN 28	MON 29	TUE 30	WED 1	THU 2	FRI 3	SAT 4
			First Day of Asian Pacific Last quarter 6:27am			
	Gym 5:30 – 7:30am	Gym 5:30 – 7:30am	Gym 5:30 – 7:30am	Gym 5:30 – 7:30am	Gym 5:30 – 7:30am	
	Meditate and Stretch, 7:45	Meditate and Stretch, 7:30	Meditate and Stretch, 7:30	Meditate and Stretch, 7:30	Meditate and Stretch, 7:30	Meditate and Stretch, 7:30
					Calendar work 9 – 10:30am	
						Go for a hike! 10 – 11am
	Lunch break, 12pm	Lunch break, 12pm	Lunch break, 12pm	Lunch break, 12pm	Lunch break, 12pm	
						Meal prep 1 – 3pm
		Walk dogs, 4pm		Laundry 4 – 5pm	Walk dogs, 4pm	


SUN 5
MON 6
TUE 7
WED 8
THU 9
FRI 10
SAT 11
Cinco de Mayo
New moon 10:22pm
Gym 5:30 – 7:30am
Meditate and Stretch, 7:30
Lunch break, 12pm
Lunch with friends 11:30am – 1:45pm
Massage 1 – 3pm
Meal prep 1 – 3pm
Sunday dinner with family 4 – 6pm
Happy hour 4 – 6pm
Walk dogs, 4pm
dinner 6 – 7pm
Laundry 7 – 8pm


SUN
19
MON
20
TUE
21
WED
22
THU
23
FRI
24
SAT
25
Full moon 8:53am
Gym
5:30 – 7:30am
Meditate and Stretch, 7:30
workproject
8:15am – 4:30pm
work project 1
8 – 11am
delegation meeting
9 – 10am
work project 3
11am – 8:30pm
Lunch break, 12pm
conference call
2 – 3pm
dinner
6 – 7pm
work project 2
8am – 1:15pm
work project
1:15 – 5pm
Walk dogs, 4pm
Take on new matter
(unplanned)
5 – 8pm
work project
8 – 11:30am
project 3
1 – 2pm
new project
2 – 6:30pm
workpr
8am –
Personal Misc
8 – 9am
lunch with friends
11am – 1pm
go to lunch with kids
1 – 2pm
Laundry
workproject
8am – 8:30pm
conf call
9:30 – 10:30am
massage
12:30 – 3pm
work project
8:15am – 4:15pm
Meal prep
1 – 3pm
clean guest room
5 – 6pm



THE BUSINESS CASE

RETENTION

RISK MANAGEMENT

PERFORMANCE

ETHICS & COMPETENCE

WHY THIS MATTERS PROFESSIONALLY

- Improved diligence
- Reduced errors
- Stronger client representation



REFLECTION

WHERE THIS SHOWS UP

Boundary Audit

Where am I over-available?

Where am I unclear?

Where am I overextended?

Workload Mapping

Billable work

Non-billable work

Hidden work

Rewrite the Ask



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TAKEAWAYS

KEY POINTS

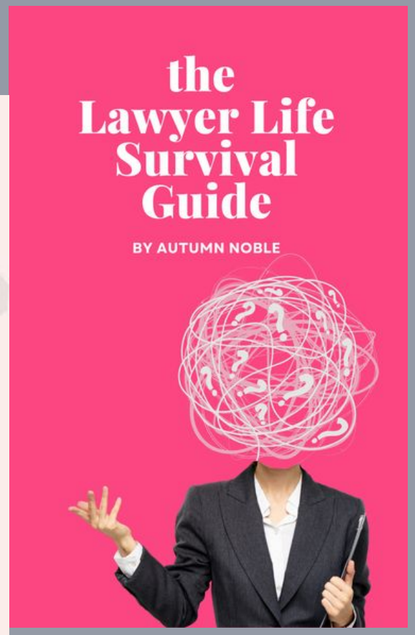
CODE:

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THE lawyer life COLLECTIVE









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CONTACT ME

I WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Free Consultation

The Lawyer Life Podcast

The Lawyer Life Survival Guide

1:1 Coaching

Group Coaching

Speaking Engagements

Seminars

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