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LAB

# ENHANCING BAR EXAM SUCCESS: THE ROLE OF MINDSETS AND WELL-BEING

Kris Evans - CA Bar Exam Committee



## BACKGROUND

- Father
- Stanford grad - athlete - PhD candidate
- Coach
- Yogi
- Professional poker



- 1 | Challenges
- 2 | Potential solutions
- 3 | Impact and future

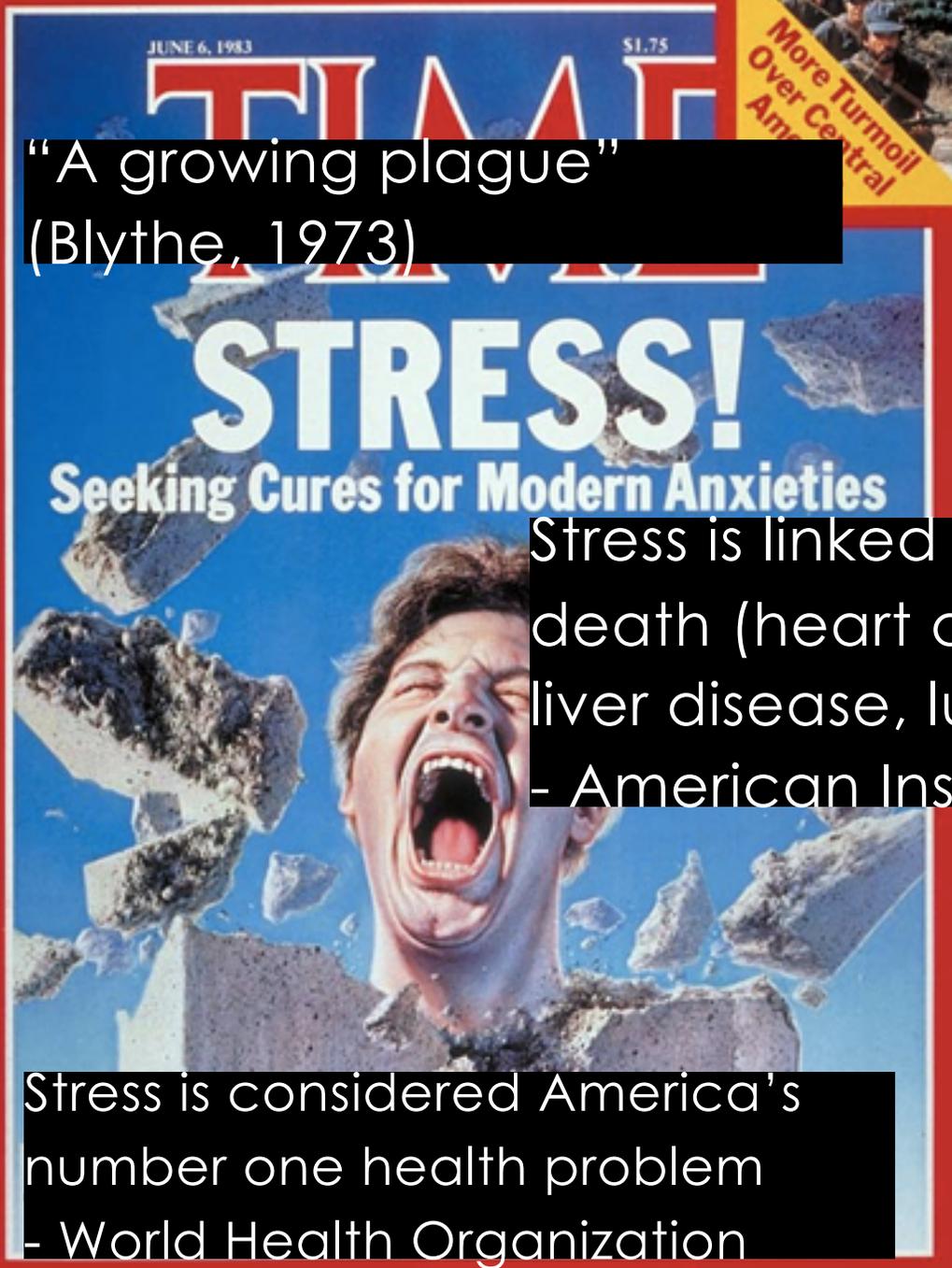


# Stress



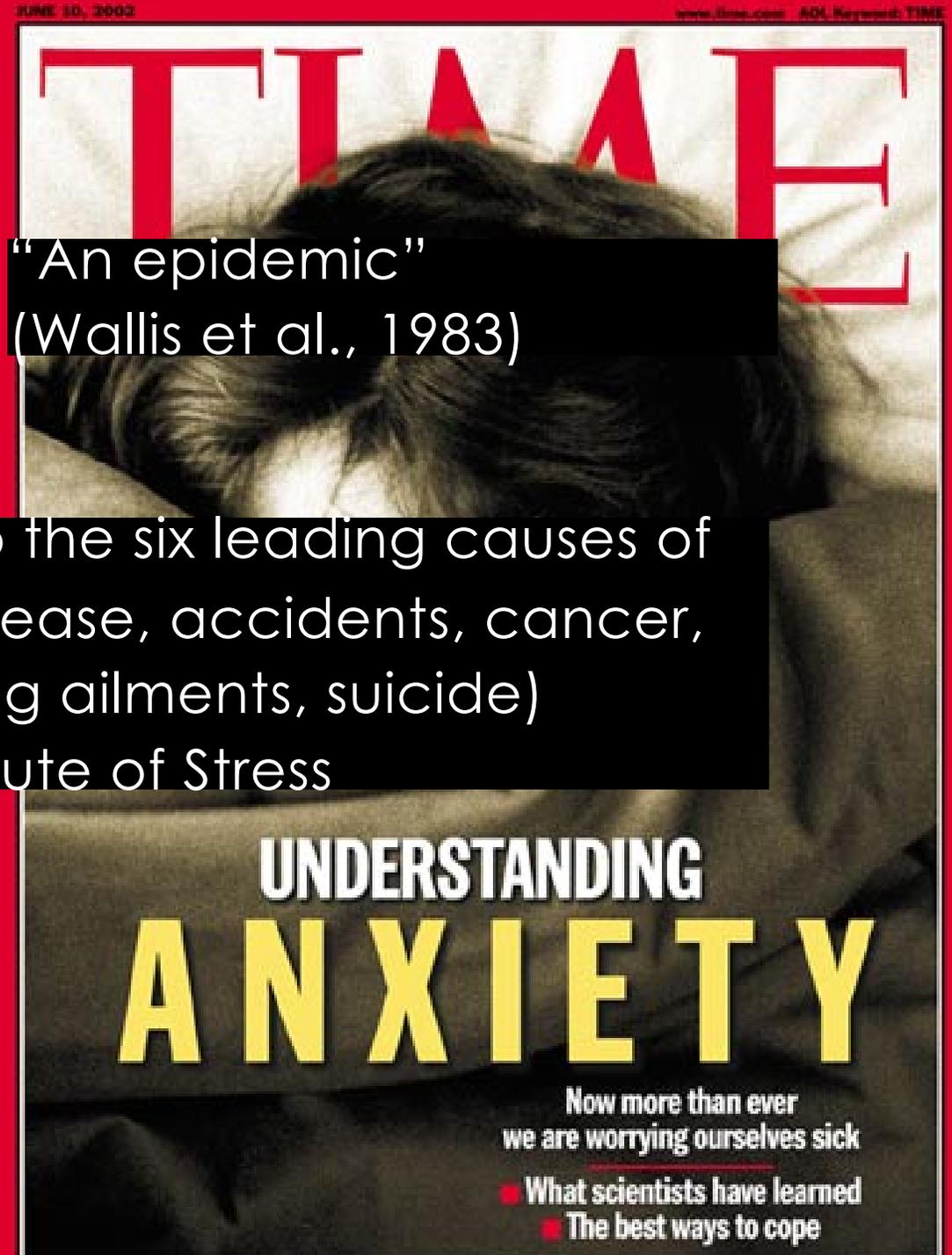
# LAW SCHOOL, THE BAR EXAM AND THE PROFESSION

- Stress
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Loneliness
- Substance Abuse
- Unhealthy behaviors
- Lower well-being



“A growing plague”  
(Blythe, 1973)

Stress is considered America's  
number one health problem  
- World Health Organization



“An epidemic”  
(Wallis et al., 1983)

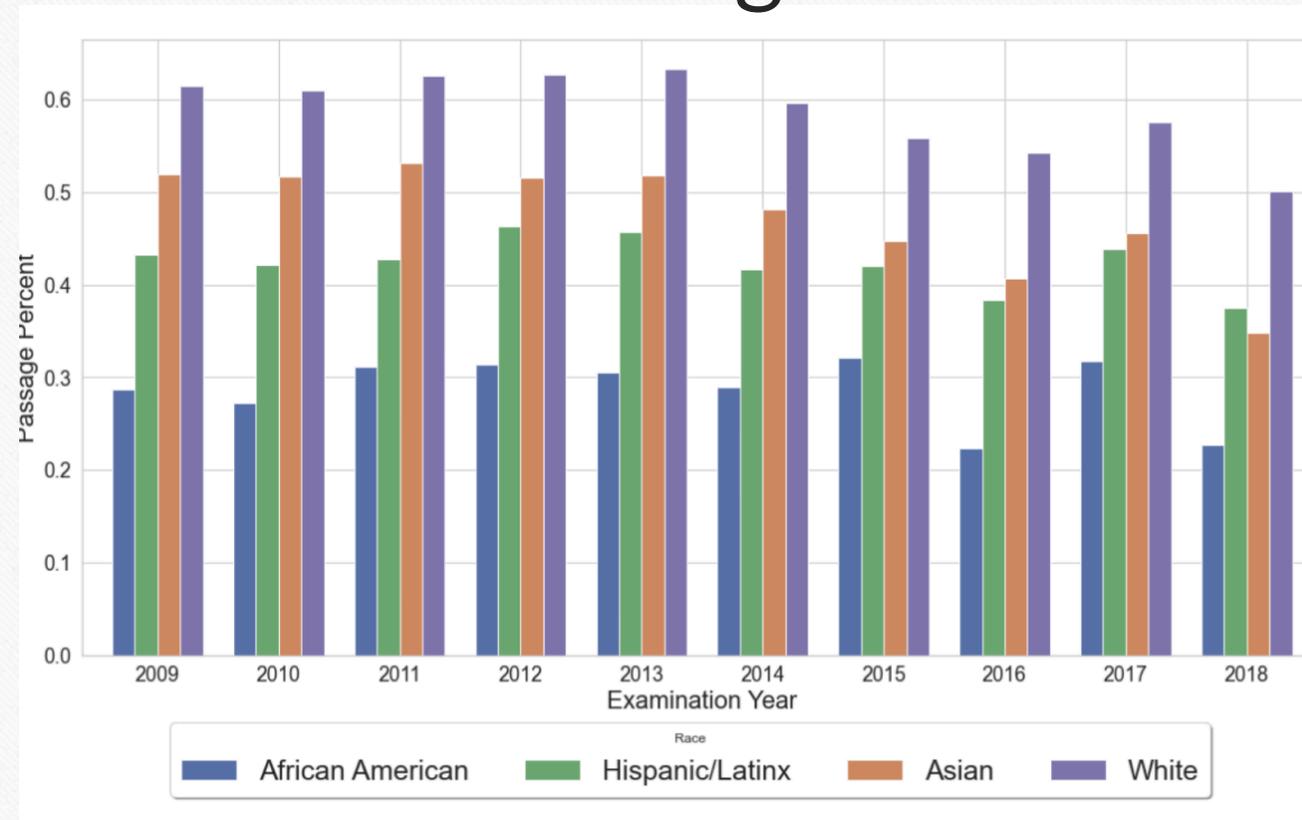
Stress is linked to the six leading causes of  
death (heart disease, accidents, cancer,  
liver disease, lung ailments, suicide)  
- American Institute of Stress

Now more than ever  
we are worrying ourselves sick

- What scientists have learned
- The best ways to cope



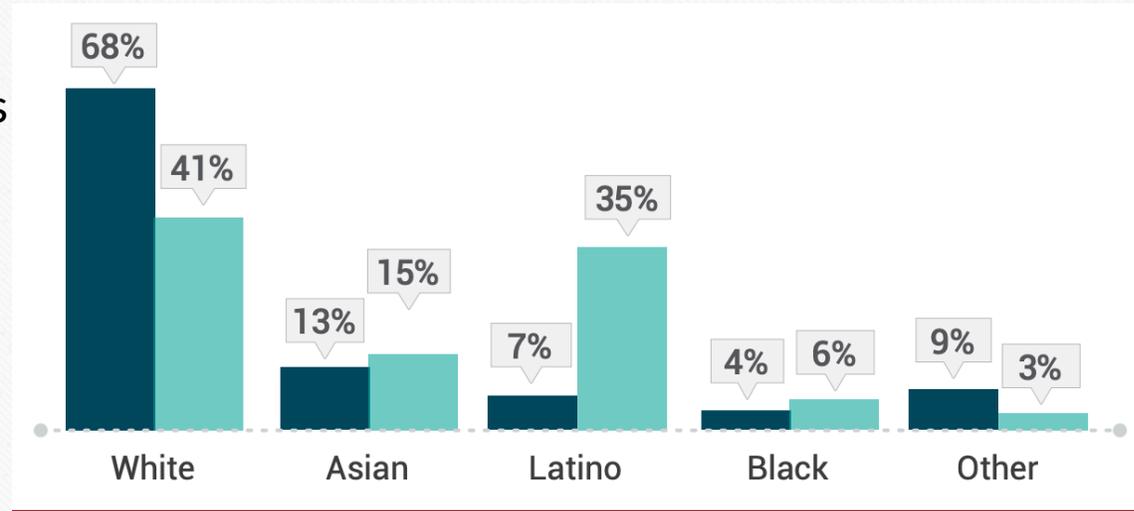
# Group-based Disparities in Bar Passage



Winick, Quintanilla, Erman, Chong-Nakatsuchi, & Frisby, 2020

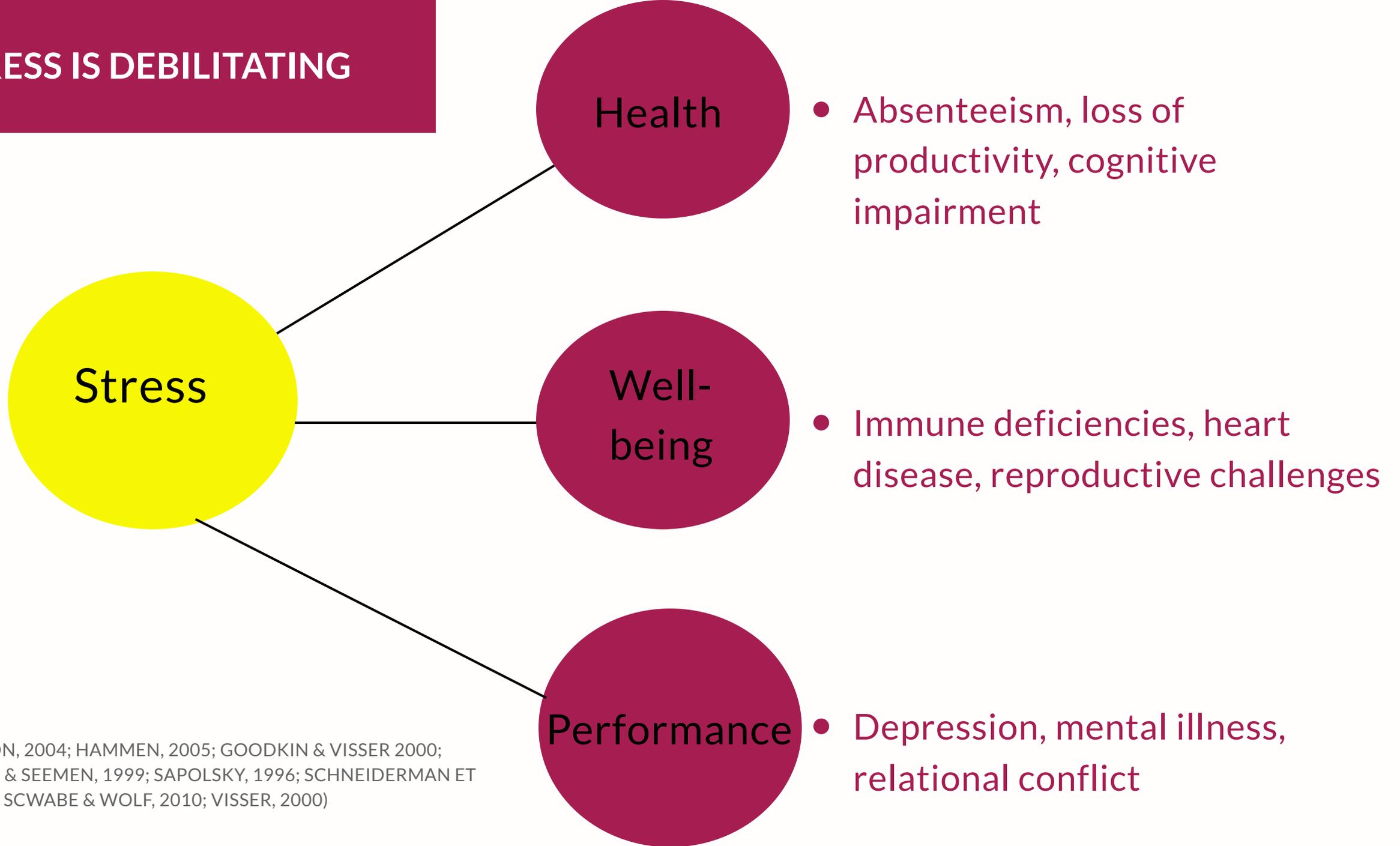
# Disparities in the Legal Profession

- California attorneys
- California's adult population



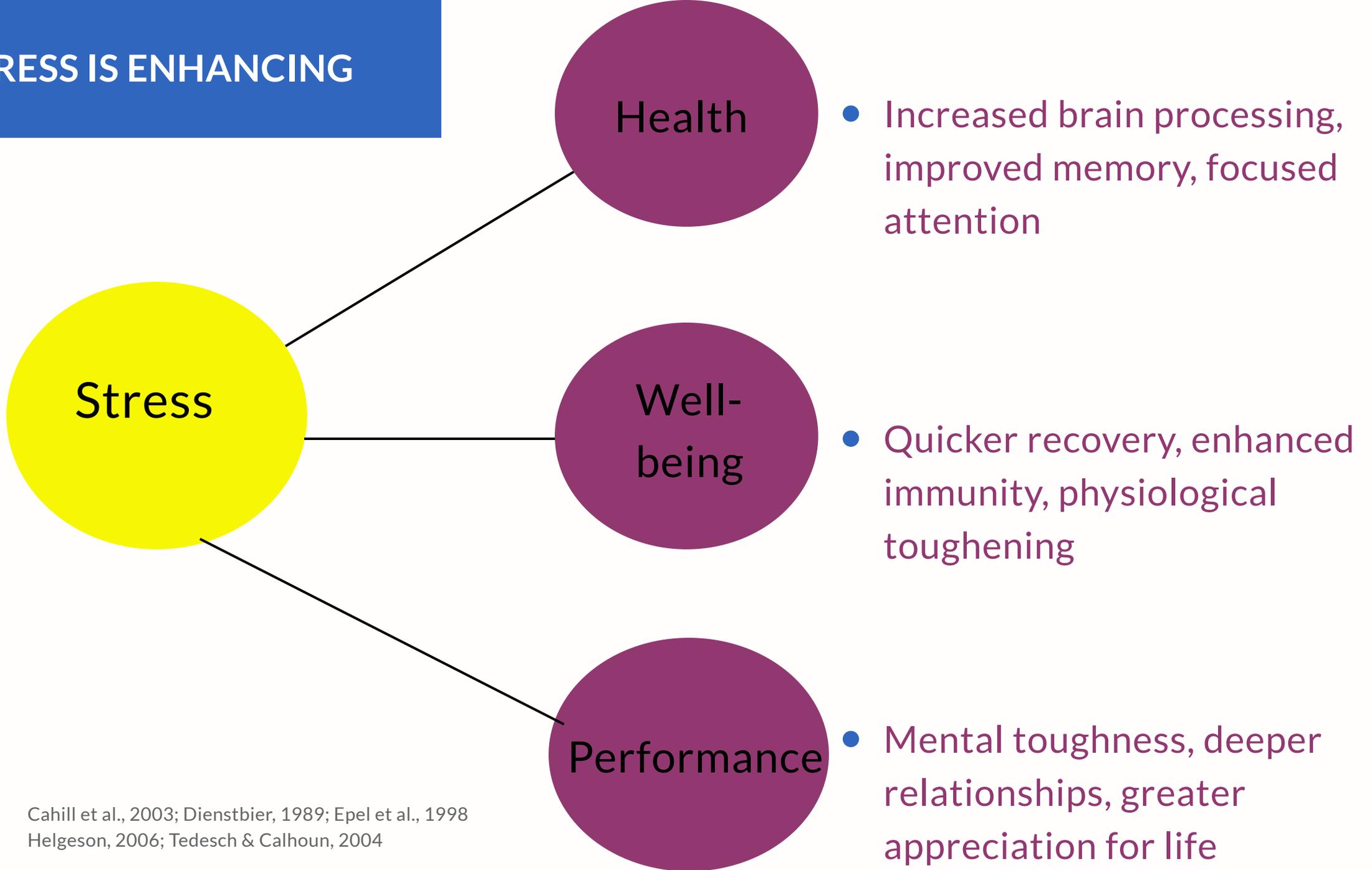
California's legal profession remains approximately two-thirds white, while the state's population is nearly 60 percent people of color. Latinos in particular are underrepresented among attorneys.

# STRESS IS DEBILITATING



(ATKINSON, 2004; HAMMEN, 2005; GOODKIN & VISSER 2000; MCEWEN & SEEMEN, 1999; SAPOLSKY, 1996; SCHNEIDERMAN ET AL., 2005; SCWABE & WOLF, 2010; VISSER, 2000)

# STRESS IS ENHANCING



Cahill et al., 2003; Dienstbier, 1989; Epel et al., 1998  
Helgeson, 2006; Tedesch & Calhoun, 2004

WHAT'S THE DISTINGUISHING FACTOR?

Health

Health

Well-being

Well-being

Performance

Performance

Mindset?



## What is a mindset?

- Core belief or framework
- Organize information
- Orient to particular associations, expectations, goals, and actions

# MINDSETS

Carol Dweck



## GROWTH (INTELLIGENCE) MINDSET



Academic Motivation

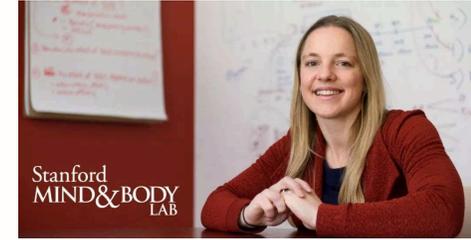


Mastery learning



Academic Performance

Ali Crum



## STRESS MINDSET



Health, Well-being & Performance



Vitality



Teacher turnover

# STRESS MINDSET: A SOLUTION FOR IMPROVED WELL-BEING AND PERFORMANCE

- Greater Bar Exam scores and passing rates





## **CONTROL**

**SURVEYS ONLY**



## **MINDSET**

**STRESS MINDSET INTERVENTION**



## **MINDSET + MIND-BODY TRAINING**

**INTERVENTION PLUS HOLISTIC  
EVIDENCE-BASED TRAINING**

# HOLISTIC MIND-BODY TRAINING

- ↑ Focus
- ↑ Learning and memory
- ↑ Self-regulation
- ↑ Health and Well-Being
- ↑ Cognitive flexibility, processing and performance



# STANFORD TEAM

EXPERTS IN CLINICAL, HEALTH, PERFORMANCE AND SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY



Kris Evans

Health Psychologist



Ali Crum

Psychology Professor



Carol Dweck

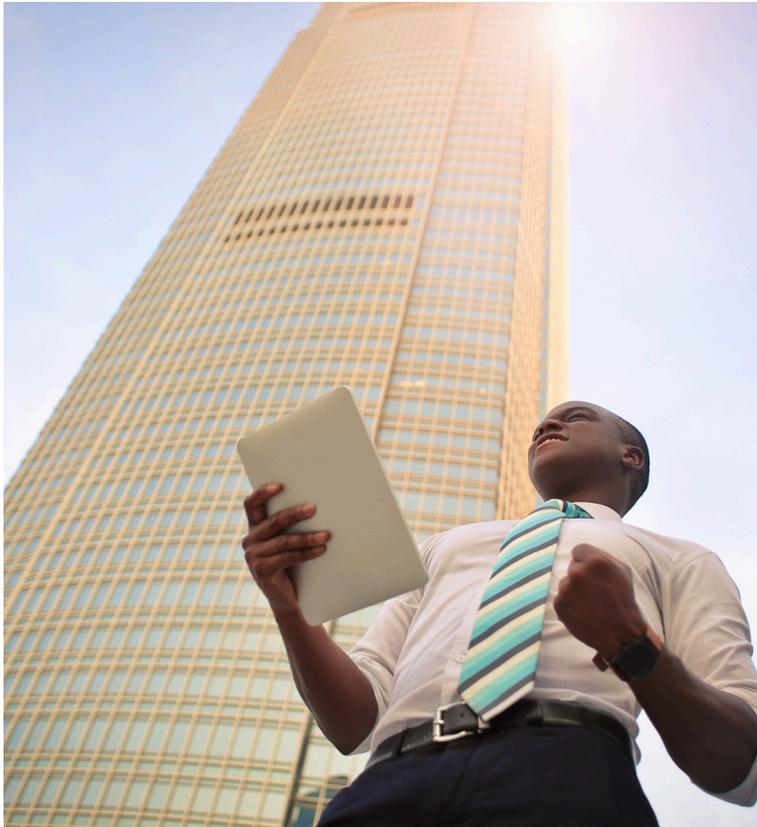
Psychology Professor



Chris Brems

*Psychiatry Professor*

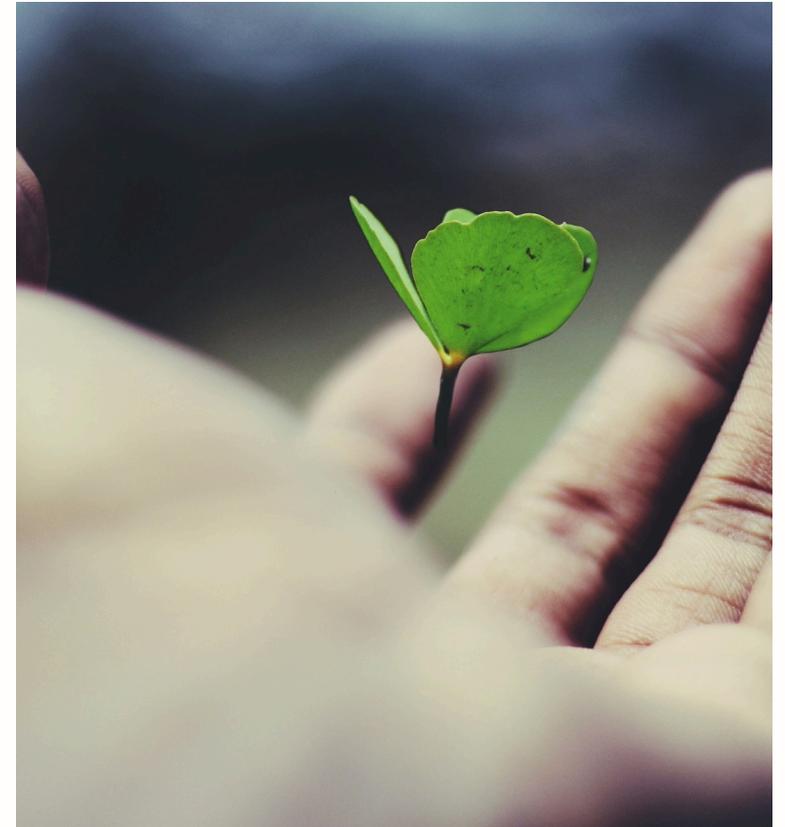
# RESEARCH THAT MATTERS: IMPROVING LIVES THROUGH MINDSET AND WELL-BEING



Close achievement gaps



Foster innovative and meaningful research



Support health, well-being and growth of legal professionals



**TRAINING THE MIND CAN  
TRANSFORM OUTCOMES.**