

LAWYERING FROM THE INSIDE OUT

Law is a varied, powerful, and highly rewarding profession. Studies show, however, that lawyers have higher rates of alcoholism, divorce, and even suicide than the general population. Stress creates these poor outcomes, including the stress of dealing with other people's problems all day, the stress of spending excessive amounts of time at work, and the stress of being disconnected to what is most meaningful in life. Through mindfulness and emotional intelligence training, lawyers can improve focus, get more work done in less time, improve their interpersonal skills, and seek and find work that will make their lives most meaningful. This book is designed to help law students and lawyers of all experience levels find a sustainable and meaningful life in the field of law. This book includes journaling and other interactive exercises that can help lawyers find peace, focus, meaning, and happiness over a lifetime of practicing law.

Nathalie Martin is the Frederick M. Hart Chair in Consumer and Clinical Law at University of New Mexico School of Law, where she teaches commercial and consumer law, as well as mindfulness and professional development. As a long-time yoga and meditation practitioner and teacher, Nathalie is part of a growing movement to teach mindfulness and emotional intelligence in the law school classroom. This movement makes explicit that the interpersonal side of lawyering is critical and that many lawyers need help finding purpose or meaning in their work. Nathalie is the author of dozens of books and articles, including *Yoga for Lawyers: Mind-Body Techniques to Feel Better All the Time* (2015, with Hallie Love).

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Nathalie Martin
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Lawyering from the Inside Out

LEARNING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH
MINDFULNESS AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

NATHALIE MARTIN

University of New Mexico School of Law

With

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Illustrations by

PAMELA “ZEN” MILLER



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*To my parents for deeply enriching my life and demonstrating
how short and precious life can be, and to Hyime Paley and Saul Kent. I am
grateful for both of you.*

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Foreword

I am astonished how effortlessly Nathalie Martin names, clarifies, and explores the perplexing, disorienting legal – yet deeply human – dilemmas we encounter, in such clear and simple language. Obviously an excellent teacher, her classroom acumen naturally carries over into an easy elegance throughout her writing, which makes this an eminently readable book.

She speaks with fierce wisdom and a refreshing depth of understanding. She examines those places where, following a legal calling, one invariably finds our most noble, universally accepted truths – justice, fairness, guaranteed access to “one’s day in court,” a fundamental equality before the law – directly clashing, at times violently, with the sloppy, uncooperative “facts” of “real life.” These painful realizations can disrupt, challenge, and even ridicule our more hopeful expectations that *anything* we are called upon to defend equitably or represent as true will ever be an “easy” case.

Still – she honors the pain and confusion of being a lawyer in a world of exponential complexity, and fearlessly, yet mercifully, attends to this ever-changing rule of law in the world, as it intersects with the more personal, intimately tender gifts and challenges we encounter in our own inner and outer lives.

Can the arc of our inner life bend toward justice?

Martin does not shrink from addressing this question. As the world increasingly demands we function as part of an efficient legal machine – churning out more opinions, convictions, closed cases – what if our humanity (especially those irrational, intuitive, quiet knowings of the heart; things that both slow us down and invaluable aid in our *discerning more accurately* what is authentic, right, and true) ultimately helps us build a more just and honorable world? What if these emotional, sensitive, invisible knowings, our “human inefficiencies,” are demonstrably the most valuable tools in our toolbox? How can we honor the spirit, rather than merely the letter, of the law, if we lose our ability to hear those still, small voices of our own spirit, speaking clearly and reliably within us in every moment?

Nathalie Martin makes a compelling case that to be of service to the law, to justice, to right action, we need more information – readily available to us all – that we are sadly taught to ignore, silence, and disregard, in service of increasing the

speed and efficiency of the legal machine. She and her colleagues refuse to shrink from the very real, however subtle, implications of accepting this call, of following this vocation, of practicing the law, as a fully awake and accountable human being.

If anyone ever wonders, “How do I improve my skills as a lawyer? Where can I find good company to examine these deeper personal and collective challenges I face every day? How do I feel more comfortable, more assured, more gently easy, as I listen carefully for the next, right thing in each moment?” I cannot imagine a more comprehensive, more elegant, more beautifully thoughtful place to begin that inner pilgrimage than in these pages.

Lawyering from the Inside Out is a rich, reliable companion. Nathalie Martin has offered us all a most exquisite gift.

Wayne Muller

Author of many books and founder of Bread for the Journey; The Center for Living Sabbath; *In Common – A Refuge for Telling the Truth*; and *Learning through Difficult Conversations*

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