

# LCL-CT: A Strong Connection in

By Amy F. Goodusky

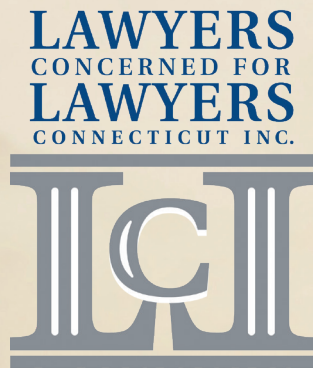
**T**he law is a profession rife with stress. The COVID-19 virus has brought panic, uncertainty, and disarray into courts, law offices and prisons. Routines are disrupted, scheduling orders blown to bits, incomes decimated, clients and employees distraught. The negative vagaries of working in this industry have increased by a factor of ten.

What of the legal professionals struggling with issues compounding the difficulty of practicing even before the pandemic hit: mental health problems, debt, addiction, dementia, suspension, disbarment? Where do they go? What do they do now?

They are being ably administered to by the offices of Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers (LCL).

The executive director of LCL has worked continuously to keep these attorneys, who are at grave risk, connected to sources of support. The office is staffed, and the phone lines remain open. The office is closed for in-person visits, but this is the only service affected by statewide provisos to stem the infection. Unless she is taking her beagle for a walk, a live, welcoming, knowledgeable, and sympathetic voice continues to answer. If you leave a message, she will call back.

Daily e-mail communications go out to those who depended on gathering at weekly support groups statewide, providing lists of online support meetings and instructions on how to connect via Zoom and other platforms. Anonymity is a priority; instructions for preserving it are emphasized. Contact lists for lawyers to connect to one another have been circulated daily, with more



information added. LCL has drawn from its extensive list of volunteers and coordinated deliveries of food and other necessities to lawyers who are ailing or who cannot leave their homes. One volunteer provided a list of 50 virtual recovery meetings accessible via computer, tablet, or iPhone which has been forwarded to the contact list and is available to anyone who needs it. Persons who are ill or have a medical emergency are given appropriate instruction to call 911.

LCL's sister programs in other states have provided helpful links and methods of providing assistance to those in need, which have, in turn, been adapted and utilized to help those coping with problems other than the pandemic in Connecticut.

While the mental health needs of afflicted lawyers have been seamlessly addressed, LCL has increasingly seen another type of crisis. These are solo practitioners dragged in the undertow before the infection hit; without insurance, membership in professional organizations, recourse, or any idea when the siege will be over, they are appealing to the organization, which is ill-equipped to help them. There is no money for this in the plan that funds LCL. It cannot lobby on their behalf. These lawyers are worst affected by the present exigencies. They have nowhere to turn.

The volume of calls and e-mails seeking help from LCL has increased commensurate with the level of distress in the legal community. These calls have been answered with compassion and patience, as they have always been. The shelves are full here. There is no interruption in the flow. Help is available.

**If you are a legal professional or law student coping with mental illness, substance use disorder or dependency, money issues, depression, anxiety, or stress related to practice, you can reach LCL at: 1(800)497-1422 or (860)563-4900 or via e-mail at either of these addresses: [beth@lclct.org](mailto:beth@lclct.org) or [info@lclct.org](mailto:info@lclct.org).**

Image credit: metamorworks /Stock/Getty Images

# Uncertain Times

A photograph of two hands, one from a person in a dark suit and white shirt, and another from a person in a grey suit and white shirt, reaching towards each other. The background is a sunset over a city skyline with several skyscrapers. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and blue.

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*Amy F. Goodusky, a long-time member of the LCL-CT Board of Directors, former paralegal, rock 'n' roll singer, practicing attorney, and Connecticut Law Tribune regular contributor who comes out of semi-retirement to share her thoughts about the LCL-CT program in these challenging times.*

Lawyers Concerned for Lawyers hosts a weekly 12-step lawyer only meeting for members of the Connecticut legal community dealing with any form of substance use disorder or process disorder. The meetings are held every Wednesday at 6:15 p.m. In response to the current COVID-19 crisis the weekly 12-step lawyer only meeting is now being held online. For more information, call (800)497-1422 or (860)563-4900 or e-mail [beth@lclct.org](mailto:beth@lclct.org).

The Advocates' Connection is a non-12 step lawyer-only meeting that provides CT attorneys with a private forum to discuss concerns and issues relating to stress, anxiety, depression and other emotional or mental health topics impacting their personal and professional lives. The meeting is facilitated by a mental health professional but no individual or group psychotherapy is provided. During the current COVID-19 crisis the Advocates' Connection meeting will be held online and on a more frequent schedule. For more information, call (800)497-1422 or (860)563-4900 or e-mail [beth@lclct.org](mailto:beth@lclct.org).