

Queen's Law Virtual Symposium
Session 5: Advancing Reflective Practices & Methods: Part I – June 23, 2026

(Sharry Aiken) Welcome, everyone. Welcome back to Session 5. We'll get started in just a minute. I'm just waiting for everyone to be shifted from the waiting room into the main room. Just get underway in a second. Okay. I think I see an empty waiting room. Welcome back. Or welcome to those of you who are just joining, whether it be morning, afternoon or evening, depending on your time zone.

I'm Sharry Aiken, and it's my pleasure to be moderating this session on advancing reflective practices and methods. And it's the first part of a two-part series on methods in particular. The panel is going to present not quite as it was presented in the final programme, because we are unfortunately missing two panelists. Bernadette McDonald, from Liverpool, England, sent her regrets, and Ripal Gupta from Gujarat, India, we are actually expecting, but she hasn't shown up yet. So, if she joins us we'll fit her into the panel.

But to get us started, we're going to hear from Deborah Burand, who is Professor Emerita at the New York University School of Law. And she's going to be presenting on "*Walking in Circles to New Insights: Conducting Reflective Meditations One Step at a Time*," as is indicated on the title of her slide. So over to you, Deborah.

1:44 (Deborah Burand) (Editor's note - please note that Deborah was offered another recording due to the technical difficulties in this one that were beyond her control. We have edited out some of the dialogue in this transcript around the technical difficulties. A new recording and transcript of her presentation can be found on the Series website under her name on the Abstracts tab.)

Thank you very much. And I apologise for not being on the video, but apparently this helps the audio. So, if you're having trouble hearing me, or if I freeze, just give me a signal. So, this is the first time I've ever written about this topic, and I really want to thank Michele for giving me the courage to tune in to this. It's been fun. Sometimes when you give a talk and write an article, you find out that you've been thinking about things that you didn't realise. So, you're going to get a chance to hear some of my fresh impressions.

So, one of my very favourite quotes in the world. You may be very familiar with it. It has been somewhat of my mantra through life, which is this idea that we can live our lives in widening circles that reach out into the world. But I've been starting to think about it in the context of what does this mean for our profession? As a person, by saying, we practise law in circles that reach out across the world. And one of the widening circles that I use.

(Sharry Aiken) Deborah, you're cutting out. I think we've got some technical difficulties. I also noticed that we've been joined by Ripal Gupta, which is wonderful, but I am going to suggest that we maybe continue with Derrick Alexander Pope's presentation, if that's okay, Derrick, because I think we're having some fairly insurmountable problems with Deborah's audio. So, while you're just getting set up, I will mention that you're a lawyer, public citizen, and professor at Georgia State University College of Law in the United States. And as noted on the title of your slide, your paper is titled "*Purple Reign: How the Artistry of Prince Helps Law Students, and the Professors that Teach Them, Explore Professional Identity*." So, we're looking forward to hearing from you.

4:47 (Derrick Alexander Pope)

Thank you, Sharry. Thank you, Michele, for such an incredible conference. If I could get this mouse to go from one screen to the next one, I could actually share this. Here we go. It finally did work. Again, thank you so much for an incredible conference. I'm especially overjoyed to be a part of it. And apologies for the multiple screens. I don't know how to get that off, but I think we can get through it.

It's highly unlikely that any of us ever would have imagined that we'd hear the words Prince, reflective legal practice, and professional identity formation all in the same sentence. But over the next few moments, that's exactly what we're going to do. And by the time that we're finished, I have the impression that we're not going to be able to hear one of those terms without thinking of the other.

Recently, the American Bar Association, which is the accrediting entity for American law schools, made it a requirement that law students have a substantial opportunity for professional identity development. And it suggests

that professional identity development involves an intentional exploration of professional values, and that the reflection and growth takes place over time.

I teach a course called *The Reflective Lawyer*, which, as the name suggests, is all about getting students to understand why they've chosen the vocation of law to spend their lives in. We start this course by asking three very important questions. What will you bring to the profession? Who will you be in the profession? And the most important question of all is, what good will come from you being in the profession?

And to make this topic engaging, when I started teaching it, I thought that I needed to create my own materials, and to play on that thought process of an intentional exploration. I created what I call some dynamic areas of exploration, four of them: the territory of inspiration, the zone of preparation, the domain of realisation, and finally the dimension of elevation. And like any expedition, any adventure, any journey you might be familiar with, there might be some familiar landmarks and some unfamiliar land mines. These land mines can be disorienting moments that come when we are called to do something that's uncomfortable for most of us: come face to face with ourselves. And so, I thought, in that particular aspect, when the land mines show up, the disorienting moments, we need to have a confidant, a credible and confident partner that can guide us through that particular aspect. And music does that as well as anything. And when we got to one of the more critical areas, the third area, the domain of realisation, I turn to one of my favourite, if not my favourite, musician, Prince Rogers Nelson from Minnesota, to help move us through that.

Well, everything, as you see, begins in the territory of inspiration, and it is exactly what it says. We all have that moment, that spark of curiosity that relocated us to that point where we were inspired to pursue law as a particular way of being, a life, a career, a calling. And there was usually, in that moment of the territory of inspiration, a set of personal values that we saw in ourselves that reflected in the vocation of law itself. We discovered, without even knowing, that we had reached an agreement with ourselves. And I tell the students that that agreement, the terms and conditions of that agreement, is found in their personal statement.

It is the very first time that they've had the opportunity to take a look at themselves, and look at the law, and see what the match was, and write it down in a statement that would convince the admissions committee of a variety of law schools to say, yes, you need to study that discipline, and you need to study it here. That personal statement, I let the students know, is a useful reference to integrate into the profession later on. As you become doubtful about certain things, you can always go back and reference your personal statement. And I love to call that a personal retrieval system. In the moments that you're thinking that maybe a choice you made was not exactly what you thought it was going to be, your personal statement, and being reacquainted and reminded of your territory of inspiration, helps.

Well, then, of course, we move on to the zone of preparation, and it's just what it says.

We get to law school, and there's this inculcation of professional values, and we bring to the law student these dosages of temporary anaesthesia, so that we can set aside for just a few moments the personal, so that we can bring to these students' attention these professional values. We do this temporary anaesthesia, all for the purpose of getting everyone to think like a lawyer. Well, it's at this particular moment in the zone of preparation, not too far into that zone, law students begin to perceive that there's some kind of conflict, a tension between the personal and the professional, what they thought about the law and later what was taught about the law. The American Bar Association Model Rules of Professional Conduct actually predict that that will happen, not only to law students but legal practitioners as well. And they said that we're supposed to resolve that conflict and deal with that tension by exercising what they call the sensitive professional and moral judgement. Great sounding term. Quite nebulous. No one knows what it means or how to access it.

The ABA Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being also suggests that essential to lawyer well-being, one of the six aspects, is a sense of spirituality or greater purpose in life. It is at this particular moment that we called on Prince, the Purple Yoda from Minnesota, to assist us in determining how we might be able to bring some access and some connection between the personal and the professional. And he does that by inviting us to enter into a special relationship that he calls the greatest romance ever sold. Now, we all know that Prince was probably talking about diamonds, perhaps one of the most beautiful girls in the world, to whom he was romantically linked. But for our

purposes, let's think that the lyrics to the song are actually giving us the opportunity to explore a more meaningful side of our vocation, the choices that we have made.

A decision to become a lawyer gives us the opportunity to embrace an animating dynamic that could take us from just the letter of the law to the spirit of the law. It allows us to have a more spiritual connection to our choice. And he has lyrics in this song that, I say, allow us to see and enter into a special intimacy with the just and moral imperative that is part of the calling of the law. And so, the lyrics are very simple, that sit right there. It's, so what do you know? You and me finally face to face. This is when we're coming face to face with the fact that there's a perceived tension between the personal and the professional. As he says, checking each other up and down in all of the obvious places, all the places where we can think that tension would arise. We're checking each other up and down.

But Prince asks a very important question. Was there ever a reason for us, the personal and the professional, the just and the moral, to be separate, to be apart? No, he says. At this particular moment, the air, the dynamic, the spirit, the energy, the intensity, the vibrancy, the vitality that is entering this space, where we're looking at it as a conflict, we now get to see it more as a complement of values. And he then tells us, so this is where you and I begin the greatest romance that's ever been sold. He goes on, in the second verse, to say, now that we've got your mind thinking about the possibility that it's not a conflict that you're having to resolve, but a complement of values that you live out, he goes on to give us some wisdom when he tells us that your body was designed to respond to mine, in spite of your desire to mould me.

What that really means for the lawyer is to understand that our body of laws, our constitutions, our statutes, our executive orders, our administrative regulations, our judicial decisions, our commentaries, our treatises, our scholarly articles, are all designed to respond to the body of what is just and what is moral. Not having what is just and moral respond to our body of laws. And Prince goes on to tell us, in the middle of all of that recognition, we embrace and we develop an intimate connection with one another, and we fall just like rain into the greatest romance ever sold.

There are so many Prince songs that we used over the course of the semester, but that's the one that stood out to me.

I told one of my students I was doing this presentation, and when I was thinking about the dimension of elevation, she suggested to me, and of course that's spelled incorrectly, as I'm seeing that now, so we know that should be e-l-e-v-a-t-i-o-n. But one of the students mentioned to me that I should read from the actual materials, the textbook that I wrote for the course, to get over the thought process of the dimension of elevation. And so, following that student's recommendation: the effects of the temporary anaesthesia are wearing off. The common sense and the prior views of social policy and justice that were knocked out by learning to think like a lawyer are now resurfacing with a vibrancy and a specificity unknown before. A steadiness is being regained. And a joining of values is emerging in this landing spot. The lawyer-thinking metaphorical metamorphosis is nearing completion. What could only have been a mere legal machine has now been cleared to make way for a wondrously syncretic being. At long last, the means and reasons of merging the personal and the professional into a vibrant, working whole is conceivable, and the real, if not readily apparent, goal of securing a professional identity is slowly making itself known. Its aim lies within having asked, and daring to answer, the last of the three inquiries that prompted the intentional exploration.

What professional identity development is ultimately after is indissolubly and inexorably bound to what good will come from your having been in the profession. What the would-be lawyer, law student, brings to the profession, and what the lawyer will be in the profession, hinges entirely upon the impression that their bringing and being produces. To be sure, it is the effect, the feeling, and the image retained by the client, preserved in the community, upheld in the culture, and recalled in the citizenry as a result of the experience with the lawyer. That is professional identity. That is a reflection worth seeing. Thank you. I appreciate it, and I hope you enjoyed it.

17:40 (Sharry Aiken) Thank you very much, Derrick. Great taste. Well, hasn't it ever been so. Awesome. All right. Well, a few housekeeping notes. Our missing panelists, at least a few of them, have returned. So, we're going to go back to Ripal Gupta, who is Assistant Professor with the School of Forensic Justice and Policy Studies at the National Forensic Sciences University in Gujarat, India. Ripal, I'm inviting you to share your screen if you have a PowerPoint deck. I'm not sure if you do.

18:23 (Ripal Gupta) Yes. I'm trying to share it.

(Sharry Aiken) Okay, perfect. And while you're doing that, I'll mention that the title of your paper is "*Pro Bono and Legal Aid Clinic as Stimulants: Cultivate Professional Identity and Ethical Resilience Through Reflective Legal Aid Practice*." And just before handing it over to you to begin, I wanted to remind all the panelists, as well as attendees, that we have the chat open. If anybody wants to share comments, reflections, resources, and so on, you can reach the chat through the "More" button at the bottom of your screen. And for attendees in particular, the Q&A box is open, and if you've got questions for particular panelists, we encourage you to put them there, and we will return to the Q&A box at the end of the panel to stimulate a bit of conversation back and forth with all of you. So do put your questions in there. And the Padlet board link is in the chat and available for everyone to share reflections. So, with that, I'd like to hand things over to Ripal, and I will put my hands up like this when you've got two minutes left and interject with my voice when you run out of time. So over to you.

19:43 (Ripal Gupta) Is my screen visible?

19:49 (Sharry Aiken) It's sharing, but it's not in slideshow view. So, we're seeing the slides along the left hand side. If you can click on slideshow, you should be able to play from start. And that should do it.

20:01 (Ripal Gupta) I think I'm unable to, because if I'm sharing, is it workable if I'm doing this?

20:10 (Sharry Aiken) No. Can you click on "from the beginning"?

20:16 (Ripal Gupta) No. It's not doing it.

20:18 (Sharry Aiken) Well, I would suggest not to worry about it, because we are seeing the slides, and it's fine if we see them.

20:28 (Ripal Gupta) Okay, so may I start? Good evening, everyone. And so, the topic is pro bono and legal clinic. And I have taken the base of legal studies in India. Pro bono and legal clinic are a very core part of legal education, and legal clinics are mandatory to have in any law school in India, just to have enhancement of access to justice. But pro bono is voluntary. As the coordinator of pro bono and the legal clinic for the last seven years, it is my experience that pro bono activities and the legal clinic are a tool to meet the social justice gap, to make students understand social justice. In India, we have a diversity in languages, diversity in culture, and due to that, students are not able to understand social justice and social causes. And pro bono is a kind of tool where they can understand and identify the gap of law with the society.

So, if I give an example, I am from Gandhinagar, and our university students come pan-India. The students join us. They even do not know the language of Gujarat. But we, in the pro bono, teach them the local language of Gujarat and take them to the villages in nearby districts, so that they can understand their problems and identify the problems, to take solutions to the authorities. So that is the whole idea of pro bono, that it cultivates professional ethics and the inclusion of social justice, empathy towards our society, and their main role in society, to these law students.

So, what are the main significances of this activity? First, students are able to understand the legal challenges at the very ground level. We generally remember things first from stories. But if we meet the real stories, of what challenges they are facing. They do not know the law. People who do not know law can never attain their rights, can never avail their rights. So, if students can go and ask them whether you have elderly benefits, whether you have pension benefits, are you able to take government policies, but they are not aware about it. There they can understand the legal challenges. What is the socio-legal challenge in any country? Then after that, what is the problem? So, when they ask people, when they meet authorities, they are able to identify the gap in application of law. The people cannot understand which authorities are there who help the people. And the authorities do not know how to approach the people. So here they can identify the actual gap, why the policy cannot be executed, what they can do for that.

So thirdly, students can go and promote rights to the people, give them awareness about law, available policies for them. And also, we used to visit schools, give them education about good touch, bad touch, cyber awareness, safe

periods. So, these are the things that we do. Third, with this you can also be able to connect communities together. And that makes social justice here. The students can research on law and policy which they do not know, because in Gujarat we have different policies. It depends on the state.

Here, their students from the West or from other parts can understand the policies of the West and understand why they have such policy, because of the culture that they have. And here they actually understand the lawyer's role to give social justice first. So that is the whole part of pro bono, and the significance of pro bono.

So, what can they do here? Through legal education and through pro bono, they can become a bridge to access to justice. Because they meet people, they go towards authority and they identify the law, so they can be a bridge to justice. But the people cannot go to authorities. At least they can bring notice to the authorities. They can connect with local existing machinery, who are the government authorities, who can help them, who can give them pensions, who can identify these people who have elderly people's rights, for example. So, identify the authorities and can bring their cases to the authorities. They can here learn drafting skills. When they want to write an application on behalf of people who are uneducated, they can write it for them. So there is a drafting skill, as an application, or how to file a form for that. They can learn here and identify the legal policies. They are able to understand client counselling technique as well. The people who have some problems and they do not want to tell, they can here identify how to counsel with the people. So client counselling can also be done here. Here they will work on real problems, real life problems, so what actually people face. And lastly, they can provide the mediation training. So we, through the District Legal Services Authority, provide them mediation training, and also teach our students.

Now, what experiential activities can be done through these authorities? Firstly, you can visit local government bodies where you can meet the people, the authorities. You can understand their legal requirements. Then you can disseminate the same to the community. For that you can have, amongst students, parliamentary debate. If there is a problem in law, if there is a problem in execution, what we can do. So, students can have parliamentary debates, they can discuss on the law, on the policy. They can also have a panel discussion amongst them. So, a best result can come from discussion, from research through this activity.

Now, for example, I have drafted one pedagogical aspect here. So how we can use, through pro bono, what we can do in a pedagogy. So first, it should be a credit-based course. Second, expert people should come, like field people, lawyers, judges, or the authorities, to teach students. They can have field visits. They can collect data of the problems in society. They can research on the collected data. They can address their solution to the people and to the authorities. And then, books to practice. So completely, books to practice can come from the activities, for example, visit, bridge, dissemination, and technique of dissemination, so they can learn here. We can do village visits. We can have role play, poster distribution, to get awareness to the people. Here practical understanding can come. They can learn execution of the law.

First example, I have taken the example of the Juvenile Justice Act in India. So, if I'm teaching the JJ Act through pro bono, first I will teach them the JJ Act, so the procedure learning to be done by experts. They will teach them what is the Act, how to interpret, and judgements. Then they will visit the field. So that is the JJ Board. So the Juvenile Justice Board is there. There is a court as well. Students visit court, the Juvenile Justice Board. And they also meet the children who are there in the JJ Board. Then here they can bring justice to the people who are there. So, make the people whose children are there in the JJ Board, make them aware. And here the technique of explanation, execute the Act. Whatever we did before, like meeting the people, counselling them, bridging access to the authority, the same techniques will come here, to give them solutions with real authorities. So, when they visit the JJ Board, they identify whether the children who are there in the JJ Board are not able to understand or cannot be rehabilitated properly. The solution can be given by the students. So, what the JJ Board can do can be given by the students through their activity.

So, what is the ultimate goal of it? Firstly, you can apply law directly from books to practice. It is a practical training for the legal field, where the students understand actual social gaps and social justice. Bridge to access justice, from people to government, and they can identify the gap to solution. So, this is how social justice can be done. And we can have this course yearly. So, first year, second year, third year, fourth and fifth year students have a different kind of pro bono course, depending on the experience that they have.

So this is how we can cultivate social justice, and social training for the students, and that they can inculcate the lawyer's role while learning the law. Thank you so much. If there's a question, you can ask.

29:22 (Sharry Aiken) Yes. Thank you. Right now, we're going to hold the questions until the end of the panel. But I'm sure we'll come back to you. Thank you so much. Mentioning that we did get Deborah back, but she reports that her internet connection is probably still a bit unstable. So, she's going to be joining us in the discussion following the formal presentations.

And so, we are going now to Anita Maddali. Anita, hopefully you're ready to share your screen. I'll just mention, while you're getting set up, that you're Visiting Clinical Associate Professor of Law at Northwestern Pritzker School of Law in Chicago. And you're going to be speaking to your paper, *"Insights from Divinity School That May Offer Tools for Teaching Law Students Self-Reflective Practices to Engage in Ethical and Moral Inquiry."* So over to you, Anita.

30:11 (Anita Maddali)

Thank you. Can everyone see the PowerPoint? Great.

So, the focus of my presentation is what I'm terming social justice and transformative change. Let me just fix this. This is a statistic from an LSAC survey that was conducted in 2024, and it sought to figure out what student motivations are for applying to law school. So 49% of LSAT takers said that they wanted to attend law school to help others, and 37% wanted to advocate for social justice. These are American law students who are applying to law school. And what ends up happening is a lot of law students become disillusioned and don't actually end up pursuing this goal. In particular, at elite law schools, they are seduced by competing values such as status, financial success. one of the things that also happens is there isn't much space to engage in discernment about an ethical vision for justice.

So, what does social justice mean? How do we engage in collective care, and which actions best effectuate change? Who should be involved in this work, and to whom are we accountable?

So, I was one of those students who came to law school with that goal, and I did end up pursuing public interest law, working primarily in the field of immigration and civil rights. But I pivoted in 2018 to attend divinity school at the University of Chicago. And during that time, I had the opportunity to engage in questions related to ethics, justice, collective care, and healing. It was a multi-religious setting, and I learned from other students, other religious leaders, that justice and our notions of justice can be quite complicated in a pluralistic society. And I also appreciated the fact that there was an opportunity to engage in ethical and moral inquiry and really felt that this could be a benefit to law students, particularly those going into the public interest field. In addition, in this training, both through the coursework, it's a three-year program, but we also had to do externships within the community. I provided spiritual care in a hospital setting.

There were specific reflective tools that we were required to use that really allowed for not only self-examination, but to do so in community with others. And so I thought about how this might be incorporated into a law school setting. And in 2025, I developed a course called *Law, Religion and Social Justice*.

Now, many people say, what does religion have to do with it? Why include religion in law school courses? And there are a few reasons. One is that it can be an entry point into understanding what our own values, judgements and moral commitments are, whether we call those religious or if they're secular. And we can engage more deeply once we are clear about those. But I'm also looking at a specific time period. What we covered in this course were the religious and international roots of the civil rights movement, that began long before the seminal cases like Brown versus the Board of Education. So, in 1936, the philosopher and theologian Howard Thurman and a number of others travelled to India, and they met with Gandhi. And during that time, Gandhi questioned Howard Thurman about being a Christian. And he said, how can you practise Christianity when it's associated with segregation and colonialism? And this question weighed heavily on Thurman, and in fact, he spent the next ten years thinking about it. And what ended up resulting from that examination of his faith tradition, of his status as an American, as a Christian, as a black American, black Christian, was that he published in 1949 a book called *Jesus and the Disinherited*. And showed Jesus's important relationship with the marginalised under the Roman Empire, drawing

analogies to the struggle for equality among African Americans in the United States. And what's significant about this is he used his moral imagination to reframe his understanding of Christianity, which later became the book that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. carried with him at all times.

And so in this way, we see in this moment, and I'm not doing justice to it because of the limitations in time, the way in which international dialogue, self-examination collectively with others, created a moral vision of change that actually facilitated legal change that would arise later in the United States.

And so here are some key features of that leadership. They engaged in practices of moral and ethical reflection. This was a multi-religious movement. And so, you saw leaders from all different religious commitments who were devoted to ending legal segregation in the United States. It was also an example of self-transformation and systemic transformation. So yesterday there was conversation about individual care versus collective care. David Wyche wrote a book on the care of self, the care of the other, in which he shows that during the Montgomery boycott, the practices that individuals engaged in for non-violence, protest, walking to work, not taking the bus, was an example of individuals engaging in a self-transformation collectively with others. That led to systemic change, with a Supreme Court decision, in fact ending, or prohibiting, segregation on buses in Montgomery. And so, in addition to that, they imaginatively reframed religious narratives to create a moral and ethical vision for change. As I noted, this work began in the 1930s, so it shows just how slow this was, and how it passed along from generation to generation. And they collaborated with leaders whose religious commitments differed. Additionally, the religious roots of the civil rights movement continue to be alive in black churches today, and in the work that is done, led by churches. And so, it's an example of the importance of collaboration in our efforts to seek change and improvement in society.

And so, these are some of the practices for cultivating, or discerning, ethical change that I think is important for law students to learn. And I want to make sure that I get into some specific reflective practices that are used in the spiritual care context that can be quite beneficial to law students. So, one is sparking the imagination. In law school, we're so focused on the analytical, but that can blind us to certain possibilities that we may not know exist. And so poetry is one really great way to spark the imagination. And there are two specific practices that can be used with law students. One is for students to write their own poem about themselves, which makes them feel very uncomfortable. And then, in a group with their classmates, they read their poem, and then they don't talk after that. And other people in the class respond by saying what they felt when they heard the poem, what they wondered about, what they heard. And that's all. And so, the student who wrote the poem is taking in what their listeners are hearing, which maybe is different from what the student thought about when they were writing that poem. So, it's a good way. Yesterday there was a presentation where the presenter showed a dot with you, and then all of the others. It can be a good way to show that our sense of self and how we perceive ourselves may be different from those around us.

The second thing that you can do with poetry is you can take a poem that maybe is quite complicated. It doesn't seem to make much sense when you read it. But if you go around the classroom and each student is responsible for a word or phrase, they can sort of unpack that word or phrase. And as you go around, you can create meaning. And the act of doing that together is showing something that is inexplicable, not understood in the beginning. If you work together in a group, you may be able to come to a new understanding, new insights. And so, it's the act of co-creating in a group together. And so, once you finish the poem, maybe you walk away thinking, wow, I had no idea; this is what it could possibly mean.

The second tool that can be used for self-awareness is one that is used heavily in spiritual care training, and it's called a verbatim. And, for instance, in a hospital context, if you meet with a patient and a part of the conversation maybe triggers you, makes you uncomfortable, or leaves you thinking about it for a long time, you can take that portion of the conversation and write it out as closely to how you remember it as possible. And so, one column, thank you, one column has the conversation. And then the column to the right allows you to write in the way you were feeling during the conversation. So if a patient, for example, made a statement and your stomach dropped, you would write, my stomach dropped, next to it. And then, when you are in a group with the people you are training with, you go through that verbatim. And the people you're working with can ask you questions about it, and they can share their perspectives about how they perceived maybe the statement by the patient, or your statement, and what they think may have happened. And in this way, it's a good way to challenge your assumptions and better understand how your perspectives may differ from how other people see them. And so, there's a lot of learning that

can happen collectively. So, you're not just reflecting on your own. And then after that verbatim practice, you can write out what you learned from the experience.

And then just lastly, there are some resilience practices. We're all familiar with mindfulness practices that you can use in a course with your students, as well as critical thinking. You can ask them to take a contemporary issue and write out various different perspectives that people have and try to understand the values that are underlying their perspectives. And so, you're not putting in your thoughts about the contemporary issue; you're just trying to summarise how other people see it.

And again, that's just a way to take yourself out of the equation a bit, and to better understand how other people view a particular issue. So, hopefully I didn't go over time. Thank you.

45:07 (Sharry Aiken) That's great. Anita, thank you so much. Next, we're going to hear from the trio of Kim Wright, who is a lawyer and affiliated faculty with Quinnipiac University in North Haven, Connecticut, in the United States. And Kim's colleague, Kara McCarthy Perry, who is an integrative lawyer, wellbeing educator, and also adjunct faculty with Quinnipiac University. And Susanne van der Meer, who is a legal trainer, facilitator, visual communications consultant, based out of Trinidad in southern Colorado in the United States. Now, my understanding is each of the three have a separate intervention, but it's going to be woven together. And I believe, Susanne, you are sharing the PowerPoint deck, if memory serves me correctly. So, take it away. Reflective practice playbook. That's good. We can see yours. We can see the deck. Here we go. There you go. Great.

46:34 (Kim Wright)

Well, thank you, Sharry, and thank you, everybody. It is a real pleasure to be here with you all today. And I know my co-presenters and I are very grateful to be part of this important symposium, especially on this panel. I'm just so impressed with these past sessions that we just had, and presentations. And we want to thank Michele in particular for organising it.

Before we jump into the content, and in the spirit of the World Cup that's going on right now, we want to set our game plan for our time together. So first, Kim will provide some background on integrative law. Then I'll explain how we play, sort of the rules of the game, so to speak. And then Susanne will briefly discuss the playbook that will be the subject of our paper, and how we translate play into practice. And finally, we will each invite you to experience play through reflective exercises. So, Susanne, if you're okay.

47:33 (Kim Wright)

So, our lens is that of integrative law. We begin with a reflection of what law is and what it's for. We're looking at law as a tool for societal change. Legal structures provide a framework that's about weaving our relationships together and defining how we set boundaries, our duties and obligations, enforcing accountability, supporting business, and protecting creative expression. We look at law as, in many ways, the DNA, the structure and rulebook upon which a society interacts, and therefore it offers the opportunity for societal change. We often use the metaphor of permaculture in our exploration of law. Permaculture is a holistic design system for sustainable living. The word combines permanent and agriculture. It mimics the patterns, diversity and resilience of natural ecosystems, to produce food, build homes, and create communities, while regenerating the environment and minimising waste. So, several principles guide permaculture, with our most relevant one being the care of people, and of ourselves. So, in integrative law, we believe that the holistic approach to law is a system of sustainable living. Like permaculture, it's important that we develop the soil and enrich it.

Now, this is one of our favourite illustrations for what is integrative law? You see it's a garden. But look at all the activity going on down in the soil. This is part of permaculture, the importance of really digging in and creating a very deep soil that can support what comes out above it. You'll notice we have DNA strands here. And then there are a bunch of values. And those values were identified in *Lawyers as Changemakers*, which was originally published by the American Bar Association in 2016. It was my book. Several people who are actually here contributed to that book, including Michele.

So, realising our interconnectedness gives us a view of this holistic approach. And the rich soil allows for creativity, different models and healthier approaches. Now, how does that actually look? Next slide, Susanne.

It shows up in a lot of ways in the legal system. Susanne, next slide. Yeah, it has a delay, but it is. Oh, you have done it. Okay. All right. So, there we are. It shows up in a lot of different ways. The domains of integrative law include models of practice. Many of you may have heard of collaborative law, restorative justice, therapeutic jurisprudence, or just approaching law from a peacemaking, conflict resolution perspective. And so that's one domain. There's also the law firm, legal work culture domain, where we're really looking at wellbeing and shared values and interfacing with conscious business, which is asking for different things from us than people have asked in the past. Here's a systemic change domain, about building new systems and creating new models and organisational change. There's a book called *Reinventing Organisations*. It's about teal organisations, that is relevant there. And then, of course, the reflective and contemplative practices. It's about our worldviews, our consciousness, our personal growth, and spiritual inquiry, as part of the integrative law movement.

We'll go to the next slide now. So that's a lot. We're going to break it down into four: integrative lawyers are reflective, values based, systems oriented and conscious. Or at least we're on our way. And then, to focus on this topic, we are creating fertile soil, deep roots and nourishment, to cultivate a more human centred, regenerative legal profession. And I'm going to pass it to my colleague now.

52:13 (Kara McCarthy Perry)

Okay, great. So, using that metaphor, the garden, play really helps us, as Kim just said, replenish the ecosystem by providing a natural restorative mechanism for nurturing holistic wellbeing, and really creating an environment to cultivate adaptive qualities that we need for sustainable wellbeing. And in the context of our playbook, grounded in integrative law, there are really three rules of play, as we're calling them. Having a growth mindset paired with heart connection. So, we are not just talking about our intellect here, but our whole selves, working in ways that are experiential and multimodal. So, we all learn differently. And reflection, as we know, isn't just cognitive. And approaching exercises in a trauma-informed way, with the understanding that over 70% of adults have reported they've experienced a traumatic event in their lives, and I suspect it's much higher since the pandemic. And recognising, really, that trauma lives in the physical body, not just the mind. And so, it's something that we cannot simply think our way out of, which is why we also integrate and use somatic tools. And then, across practice areas, integrative lawyers and educators are using these multimodal tools, including games, art, movement, storytelling, not just as add ons, but really as the method.

This picture on the left here is an integrative lawyer who used a board game as a visual framework to facilitate a relational, values-based and really collaborative approach to negotiation, called the Conscious Contracts process, which Kim is a co-founder of.

And in my own teaching, both in our Quinnipiac class, which we teach, the integrative law approach to negotiation, and I also am an adjunct at Seton Hall Law School, where I teach a mindfulness and wellness course, I use this reflective ball. It's called a thumb ball. During the first class, to really encourage connection among students through play and movement, and that introduces reflection to the students as they toss the ball to each other and respond to the questions. And so, when we engage the whole person in those different ways, with this element of fun, it helps students and lawyers really integrate reflective insight into practice. And now I'll hand it to Susanne.

54:46 (Susanne van der Meer)

Thank you. So, the three of us have been collaborating on a playbook that combines reflective exercises from our various practices. The exercises are multimodal and interdisciplinary, so they are somatic, visual, creative, verbal, and they include a wide range, from quick debriefs to more in-depth inquiry. Legal educators can use the playbook to integrate reflective approaches that fit with their program, and students will systematically expand their reflective range of motion and harvestable insights. And it is also a great resource for legal practitioners in every phase of their career. And we will publish the playbook as a paper, including the evidence underpinning the relevance and effectiveness to preparing your lawyers to become future integrative lawyers.

55:43 (Kara McCarthy Perry) Thank you, Susanne.

So, before we play, we're going to pause and consider the context of lawyer wellbeing, as the next slide starts to come up. So, as the National Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being explains in its report, *The Path to Lawyer Well-Being*, wellbeing isn't just the absence of illness or mental health challenges.

We're still waiting on the next slide, but it'll be here soon.

Rather, it's a continuous process whereby lawyers seek to thrive in each of the dimensions of wellbeing. So that includes the emotional, intellectual, occupational, physical, spiritual, and social wellbeing.

Are the slides not advancing anymore? What do you see? Right now, I see lawyer wellbeing. Let me move back and forth a little bit. There we go. There it is. Great. The "let's play" one is fun. But before we get to play, we're just going to review this. Thank you.

So, these dimensions really represent the terrain of the sustainable legal career and are components of that healthy ecosystem. With respect to emotional wellbeing, asking us to identify and manage our emotions, to support our mental health and informed decisions. Intellectual being the ongoing learning and cognitive engagement, which is why reflective practices matter so much, to keep us growing. Occupational wellbeing relating to meaningfulness and satisfaction, and financial stability. And then the physical, spiritual and social wellbeing remind us that we are not just brains on a stick, right? We have bodies, we need meaning, and we need each other.

And these reflective practices that we'll do next really help to bring our attention to these dimensions, and support also a collective reflection, by integrating a pause into our curriculum when we use it at the beginning of a class, and also, I'd suggest, into our agendas when we use it at the beginning of a meeting.

And so, we will begin the practice. So, I'm going to invite you right now to just get comfortable, in whatever that means for you. You might want to even give it a shake. You might want to take a look around your space, roll your shoulders back. You might even want to stand, since we've been sitting for a long time. That's absolutely welcome. And then, once you settle into comfort, finding some stillness, if that's available for you, I'm going to invite you to close your eyes, or simply lower your gaze if it's not comfortable in your space to close your eyes. And then, taking a deep breath in through the nose. Let the belly fill up. And a slow, long exhale out the mouth. And we'll just take that again. A deep inhale through the nose, and a slow, long exhale out the mouth. And now just notice how you arrived, what sensations you feel. Resisting any urge to change it, or judge it as good or bad, right or wrong. And we'll just take a few seconds here simply to just be.

And now I invite you to take two sips of air in through the nose. And a slow, open mouth exhale. And I'm going to invite you to just gently start to flutter your eyes open, if you closed them, or just raise your gaze back to neutral.

I call that practice "just be." And I use it at the beginning of all my classes. I also use it at the beginning of all the meetings that I'm on, some leadership committee meetings. And why is it important to practise the pause? So often we are physically present, but mentally we are somewhere else. Personally, my mind is still thinking about the great Purple Reign songs that Derrick had going. Or maybe, if you're presenting later today, you're thinking about that, right? It's natural. It's human nature. And so, this simple pause just allows us to get our mind and body in the same place. And for lawyers and academics who live largely in our heads, presence really is a practice. And when we do this, even briefly, we can experience more clarity. If you think about a pond, the surface becomes really clear once the mud starts to settle. Even a brief centring practice can create conditions for that kind of clarity. And doing that then allows us, and allows the students I have seen, to absorb and retain information better. And perhaps even most importantly, it also creates an environment for deeper connection. When we're present, when we become attuned not only to what we feel, we're better able to attune to what others are feeling and cultivate that empathy. And that's an important legal skill for interacting with clients and colleagues.

And then finally, I like to use this cartoon, because turning inward, even briefly, isn't always easy. And I want to normalise that experience and also help students and lawyers approach it with a sense of play that invites curiosity rather than judgement.

(Susanne van der Meer) Stay active and interactive here. I will share the second exercise, called “Time Wise.” No matter where you are in your legal career. Jump forward. Yeah, it is on a delay. Do you now see Time Wise? Yeah, we do. Okay. Thanks for catching it. Because sometimes, no matter where you are in your legal career, time is like oxygen in the ecosystem. You can't do anything without it.

And many lawyers and educators identify a lack of time as a big hurdle to engaging in reflective practice in a structured way. And the goal of this exercise is to recognise that time is subjective. It's a sense of time. It is not time pressuring you. It is the emotional charge that we experience and create. And even when it feels like you have no control over the amount of time or the workload, the volume of work demands, you can regulate and influence your sense of time by working with your pace.

So, I'd like to walk you through this exercise, and if it's available to you, I invite you to stand up, and otherwise just move along in the position you currently are in, in your seat. So first, think of a situation this week where you felt super busy or time pressured. And now let's rush to get there, in 20 seconds. Again, if it's available to you, stand up. Move. Jump. Sprint. Big steps. Swing your arms. Jog, like your breathing goes up. Your big steps, swing your arms, your head. You're looking around in all directions. Checking your time. Check your clock. Stop, sprint. Catch up, catch up. Keep going. Almost there. You'll make it. Keep going. Check your time. Swing your arms. Okay. Let that go. And find your seat again. Or you can continue standing.

Now check in with yourself. What was your pace as you were rushing to this appointment? On a scale of 1 to 10. So, give it a number. Maybe it's a five. Maybe it's a nine. Maybe was it ten? And how did you feel this in your body? Now slow down two points. Maybe from a nine to a seven, or even a six. And take yourself, and you can do that sitting, into going to this situation, this meeting, at a pace that is two points lower. So, how are your feet touching the ground? How are your hands moving? How's your breathing? How are your thoughts? Are they racing? Are you more present? Just give yourself a few more moments to get there. Any adjustments that you can find in your body to adjust pace a little bit?

Okay, we'll close this for now. And then, notice just an energy. If you have pen and paper, write down in a few words, what is one thing that you can do to slow yourself down? And one that came to mind to me yesterday as I was practising was, oh, I can take a slower sip of my coffee. Instead of making a rushed movement, I can actually mindfully take a sip of coffee with a slower pace. I can actually taste the coffee. So what adjustment can you make to your pace?

Thank you for participating in this exercise, and I will turn it over to Kim for our next exercise.

1:06:51 (Kim Wright)

We've already been talking about values, and in our playbook, we're going to do a section on values. Not only are they a pillar of integrative law, but also a piece of reflective practice and professional identity. They allow us to make decisions that are based on thoughtful inquiry that's done in a peaceful time. We think about it now, and we actually get in tune with what are our values. And then in times of stress, they can be called forth. So, they give us orientation and direction. They're a compass. They help us align with what's important. And they centre us when we're in chaos and complexity.

In our course at Quinnipiac, and in our training professionals, we have participants create what we call the touchstone. Each is unique to the individual, and contains elements like a vision, mission, and values. And each one is completely unique to the person. So, we're just going to page through a few of them. This is Hannah's. Hannah decided not to use Canva or anything fancy at all. She just handwrote and drew a tree. And I actually think about this one a lot, because her mission is to be a tree. Offer a safe place to rest. To grow, to be protected. Keep growing. Keep reaching. Remember that strength is about stability, adaptability, and peace. So that statement is really an amazing one that, you know, is very quick to remember.

Whereas Amy decided it was a recipe. This is what Amy is. And she talked about pancakes. And how do you cook pancakes, as part of her mission? Their operating principles and beliefs that are her chef's tips, and so forth.

Then the next slide is Savannah. And, as soon as it comes up, Savannah decided to put a picture of herself and kind of make it like a poster.

Very often people do create posters. And in fact, I have one right in front of me on the wall that shows their touchstone, to keep them grounded all the time. Well, and in fact, the next one is mine, which I did use Canva. And you'll have a chance to look at these more when you get the slides, and we all have touchstones.

So, the next one is Kara's. And then Susanne's.

And now we have an opportunity to take that pause and reflect on our values, and to explore Susanne's metaphor of time, because I'm sure that by now we're starting to be concerned about that. And you're going to craft your own value statement. Now, we have a lot of different exercises. This is the shortest one, and the one we use for presentations often, but we also have a whole workbook and so forth. But in this exercise, we're asking you to identify five people you admire or respect. That could be your family, friends, mentors, public figures. Some people like to choose authors. Your heroes. Who are those five people? And then describe them using concrete words. Just a list. You don't have to do sentences or anything that is fancy. Just, what are the words that represent what you admire about the person, or the characteristic they embody?

So, one of my choices is always Mandela. Nelson Mandela, who, in the face of tremendous challenge, brought together the South African people. So, creating unity might be the way I would say it here. And now, when you put those values in a statement for yourself, those are the qualities that you admire and respect, that reflect something about your values. So, if you would put some of your statements in the chat. Again, they don't have to be fancy. We didn't ask you to get on Canva and start creating something, although I find it a very meditative process to use tools, but since I don't have any skill in drawing. Thank you. A few more. Just a list of words would be fine. Sharry, thank you. Thank you. Purpose driven. Grounded. Reliable. Resilient. Faithful. Loving and kind. This is such a great group. Resilient. Standing up to unjust authority. Empowering.

So just think about, having recognised that these are your values, how are those values alive in your life? How do they guide you? How can you align with those?

Michele, thank you. And we'll go to the next page, which is our sign off page. Thank you all. Here is a list of our email addresses. And, appreciate your attention.

1:14:13 (Sharry Aiken) Thank you so much, Kim, Kara, and Susanne, for a really engaging introduction to your playbook. How fabulous. Well, we've had a set of very rich interventions, and I know that we do have one question in the Q&A box, but just before getting to that, I saw that Deborah was back in the room. Am I right that she's back? I don't see her. I saw her as co-host. And yet she's here. Okay, so, perfect.

I wanted to invite you, Deborah, assuming your internet connection is stable enough, to just share a few words with us about how the labyrinth walks have helped students handle those disorienting moments that we've been talking about, and that students are facing in today's poly-crisis context. Can you give us just a high-level sense of the labyrinth?

1:15:10 (Deborah Burand)

So, I have to admit that I was one of those lawyers who compartmentalised quite a bit. And so, until 2024, I don't think anyone at my law school knew that I was a labyrinth facilitator. I did that in my own private life. And as we all know, when the murders occurred in Israel, things got very, very tough on campus. And those of us in New York, I think, felt that really acutely. And I started to realise that our toolkit, which is so heavily reliant on words, was actually being weaponised. And students were coming to my office in tears. I actually cried in a faculty meeting myself, because of the way people were either carelessly using language, or sometimes deliberately using it in a hurtful way. And I felt ill equipped, with my professor hat on, so this was again how separated I felt, to be able to respond to the pain and the fear and the anger that I was witnessing.

And I'll take a bit of an after the fact. I've had a chance to read Laurie Lane-Zucker's galley of his new book that's coming out this fall, which is fabulous, on the *Impact Entrepreneur*. And he says that embodied practices can

cultivate the cognitive and emotional capacity that's necessary to work with complexity. And I had come to realise that in my own labyrinth walking. But I had never thought about bringing it into my school. So, I went to the Dean of Student Affairs in the late fall and asked them if they would like me to bring a labyrinth to the school, and they said yes. So, in 2024, I brought, I guess I'm off by a year, but I brought my labyrinth to the start of our semester, and students walked it in quiet community. And that was key, in community without words. You didn't know if the person next to you on the labyrinth, passing you on the labyrinth, confronting you on the labyrinth, where their views were about these really challenging issues. But you did feel a sense of community. And it worked so well that they asked me to bring the labyrinth back on the anniversary date, during our mental health week that week. And so, I did, and we did that walk again.

So, when I retired at the end of the spring of 2025, I asked if I could bring the labyrinth one more time as my farewell gift to the students. And I have since brought it back twice beyond that, to the conference that I run every year, which I know Kim and several of the others here have been to. And I found that it's not just the students that have benefited from it. It's actually also been practising lawyers. I've now done two trainings for practising lawyers that are external counsel to the IFC, that's the International Finance Corporation. And I've taken them at the end of my workshops out to the labyrinth. I've taken the labyrinth to these conferences, I've taken it to my school, and I've taken it to these external trainings I'm doing.

And there is something about walking in community, in quiet, embodying, because we now know that we think from our gut, not just from our brain. That's what the science is showing, increasingly. And it's a very disorienting walk, a labyrinth. You can't get lost on it. It's not a maze. It's not a puzzle to be solved. It's just one foot in front of the other, and you'll get yourself to the centre. One foot in front of the other, you'll get yourself out.

There are three phases to a labyrinth walk. There's the release, so letting go of concerns and worries as you walk in. A receiving in the middle, in the centre. And then a returning to the world on the way out. And that rhythm, and that disorientation, you think, oh, I must have missed the path, how come I'm not at the centre yet, is one to pay attention to. A lot of people look at labyrinths as saying they're almost a mirror to the soul. You know what you're reacting to, how your body's feeling. This walk can actually give you a lot of insights into just where you are emotionally, spiritually, and in your own head. It also is a wonderful way of helping people cultivate attention. But attention to what's outside, and attention to what's going on inside of you.

So, it's become a much more integrated part of my professional identity than I ever thought it would. Maybe a little long in coming to that, Kim, because you got there a lot faster than me. But it is a big part now of what I do when I work with lawyers. It's an extremely powerful tool.

I'm here in Europe right now because I was in Charlotte last week, and I was training on a labyrinth with Christa Tibbetts. Some of you may know her. And she really is working now on the idea that we can have a lot of success professionally, or in our external world, but we often don't realise how much interior work it takes to be able to sustain that and make it durable. Make it resilient. And I think labyrinth practice, any practice that makes you physically move, I love how our last presenters had people physically moving, you know, it shifts the energy.

And I'll leave you with one last thought. AI will never have a body.

We have to think, as we think about the big question, what are we going to do with AI? How do we train students in a world of AI? Well, maybe we help them to listen to their bodies, pay attention, and think through their bodies as well as through their words. AI is grabbing our words as fast as it can scrape them from the internet, but it can't hear our bodies. I'll leave that as something law schools might want to lean into.

1:22:10 (Sharry Aiken) Thank you so much, Deborah. That was a really rich and multifaceted response to my question.

(Q&A omitted)