



Anxious Advocacy in the Courtroom: Your Anxious Brain is Your Superpower — Here's How to Use It Without Losing Your Mind

Introductory slide

Presented by Renée Pardo Coaching LLC



Defining Anxious Lawyering



We are not talking Anxiety Disorders

Clinical mental health condition with disproportionate fear or anxiety that impairs function



Natural Lawyer Anxiety

Proportional anxiety experienced by lawyers in high-stakes courtroom situations



Differentiating Anxious Lawyering

Understanding when anxiety is a disorder vs. a natural response to the legal profession

By distinguishing between clinical anxiety disorders and the natural anxiety common in legal practice, lawyers can better understand and manage their mental state for optimal performance.

Who Does Anxious Lawyering Affect?



Affects Attorneys of All Experience Levels

- Anxious lawyering is not limited to new or junior attorneys.
- Experienced lawyers with a proven track record also struggle with anxiety due to high standards and fear of mistakes.



Gender Differences in Reporting

- Women lawyers are 3 times more likely than men to self-report experiencing daily anxiety.
- Women also cite workplace culture and work-life balance as major sources of anxiety.



Men vs. Women in Lawyer Assistance Programs

- While women report more anxiety, men are more likely to utilize lawyer assistance programs for issues like substance abuse, gambling, and other conduct-related problems.

Anxious lawyering is a widespread issue that impacts attorneys regardless of gender or experience level. Understanding the nuances in how anxiety manifests and is reported is crucial to providing effective support and resources.

The Impact of Anxiety in Court

Anxiety can have both a hindering and an enhancing impact on a lawyer's performance in the courtroom.

While excessive anxiety can cause a lawyer's brain to go offline, leading to issues like getting lost during arguments or missing crucial objections, the right level of anxiety can also heighten a lawyer's awareness, empathy, and intuition.

The key is managing this natural anxiety is accepting it AND understanding that it is not a problem.



Preparing for the Anxious Brain Specifically: This is not about Meditation, Mindfulness or Breathing

- **Outline with Brain Anchors**

Use an outline with key details, not a full script, to provide mental

- **Looping and Bookends**

Incorporate techniques like looping (repeating a portion of the witness's prior answer) and bookends (transitional statements) to keep your narrative organized and your brain focused.

- **Objections Checklist**

Prepare a comprehensive checklist of common objections to have as a reference, so you can quickly identify and respond to improper questions without getting flustered.

- **Memorize in Your Own Words**

If memorizing your opening and closing, make sure to draft the content in your own words, rather than trying to simply recite someone else's language.

Mastering the Anxious Mind



Accept that Anxiety is Normal

Recognize that baseline anxiety is a natural part of the lawyer experience, not a problem to be solved.



Harness the Power of an Anxious Brain

Understand how the heightened awareness and vigilance of an anxious brain can be an asset in the courtroom.



Manage Anxiety Through Preparation

Implement practical trial preparation techniques that create



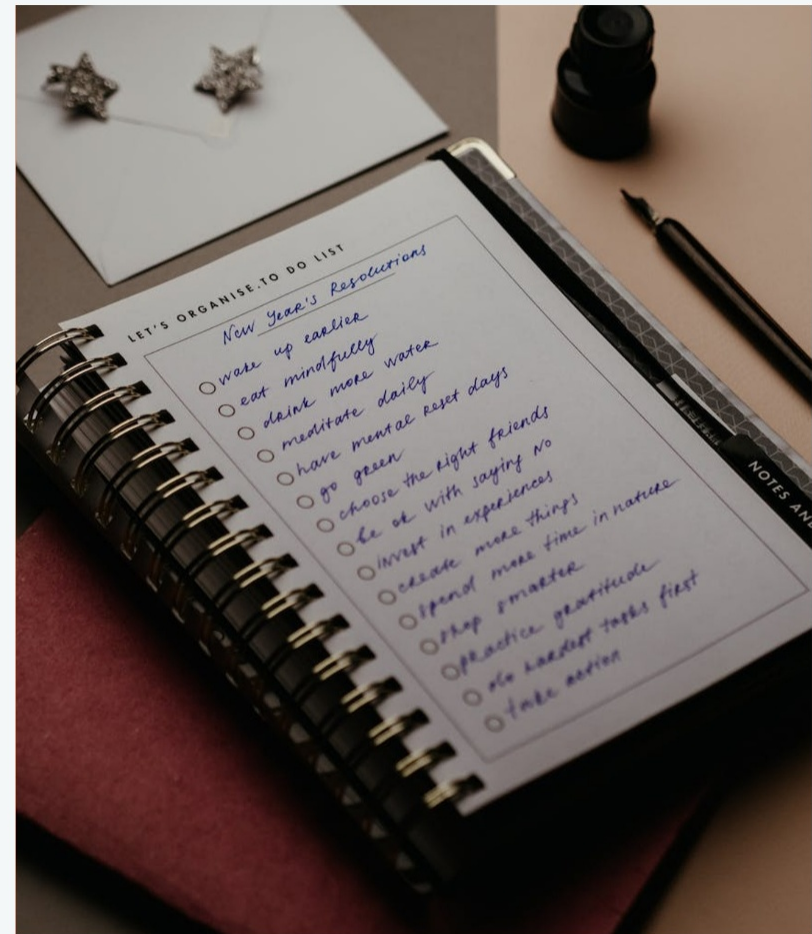
Allow Anxiety to Be Present

Adopt a mindset of carrying it around like a heavy purse . It's Do-able and it has goodies in it

By embracing the unique wiring of the anxious brain and implementing strategic techniques, lawyers can transform their anxiety into a powerful ally in the courtroom.

Objections Checklist

- Having a comprehensive objections checklist on hand can help lawyers react quickly and strategically under the pressure of court. This checklist covers common legal objections such as:
 1. Ambiguous
 2. Argumentative
 3. Assumes Facts Not in Evidence
 4. Calls for expert opinion
 5. Calls for a narrative
 6. Compound Question
 7. Confusing
 8. Cumulative
 9. Lack of foundation
 10. Leading
 11. Mischaracterizes the Evidence
 12. Repetitive
 13. Speculative
- By familiarizing themselves with these objection types and the shorthand used to identify them, lawyers can shore up their brain's ability to identify and articulate objections in the heat of the moment.



Embracing Technology



Become Familiar with Courtroom Technology

Use the equipment in the courtroom at least once, if not multiple times, prior to your proceeding



Have a Technology Backup Plan

Identify someone who can assist with setting up and troubleshooting any technology issues on the day of your proceeding



Offer to Assist Others

If opposing counsel is struggling with technology, consider graciously offering to help - good will can go a long way



Understand the Limitations

Accept that technology may fail at times, and have a strategy for how to proceed without it to avoid added anxiety

By proactively preparing for and managing technology-related anxiety, lawyers can leverage courtroom technology to their advantage and focus on being effective, confident advocates.



Anxious Advocacy in the Courtroom: Mastering Your Mind

By understanding and accepting the natural anxiety that comes with being a lawyer, and by implementing practical techniques to manage it, attorneys can transform their anxious brain into a superpower that enhances their performance and enjoyment in the courtroom. Through embracing their unique mental wiring and leveraging the latest research on anxiety and the brain, lawyers can become more confident, effective, and fulfilled advocates.



The Lawyer's Edge: Turning Anxiety, Perfectionism & People Pleasing into Powerful Assets

With this program, you'll learn to embrace your natural strengths and uncover the true potential within, becoming the confident, purpose-driven legal professional you were meant to be.

- Four weekly lessons LIVE on Zoom with Replays if you cannot attend live.
- Weekly opportunity at the end of each lesson to get coaching
- Access to the Replays and coaching calls for three months

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