## ABC’S OF HELPING THE SENIOR LAWYER

### IDENTIFY THE PROBLEM
*(be alert for small changes to intervene early)*

- Denial of any problem
- Non functional without assistant always present
- Frequent irritability
- Changes in routine or behavioral work
- Deteriorating performance at work
- Memory decline, consistently forgetful
- Increasingly misplacing everyday objects
- Perfunctory answers
- Loss of control of emotions, crying at work
- Grievances

### APPROACHING THE SENIOR LAWYER

- Consult TLAP at (800) 343-8527
- Meet in a non-confrontational manner
- Partner with someone the lawyer trusts
- Review TLAP website before the meeting for questions on having the conversation
- Include a witness

**Starters:**

- “I am concerned about you because…”
- “We have worked together a long time, so I hope you won’t think I’m interfering when I tell you I am worried about you…”
- “I’ve noticed you haven’t been out much lately, and am wondering if you’re okay…”

- Get the lawyer to talk; listen not lecture
- While listening, add responsive and reflective comments
- Express concern with gentleness and respect
- Talk about what other people are saying
- Review the lawyer’s good qualities and happy memories
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- Act with kindness, dignity, privacy; not crisis mode
- Be yourself, not an authority figure
- Suggest assessment by a specific professional and have contact information ready
- Offer assistance and make recommendations for a plan that provides oversight (such as a buddy system or part-time practice with co-counsel)
- Remember that this is a process, not a one-time event

### DO’S & DON’TS

**Do’s**

- Be direct, specific, and identify the problem
- Speak from personal experience; state your feelings
- Report what you actually see
- Be respectful and treat the lawyer with dignity
- Act in a non-judgmental, non-labeling, non-accusatory manner
- Offer to call the lawyer’s doctor with observations
- Refer for evaluation, have resources at hand
- Suggest alternatives; inactive status, disability leave
- Suggest the potential consequences: grievance investigation or disability proceedings

**Don’ts**

- Ignore and do nothing
- Include family, unless requested
- Insist if lawyer says “back off” (attempt to discuss again at a later date)