

Wellness Insights with Mei Zhang: the Power of Movement

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PRACTICES Finance

Haynes Boone is launching a movement challenge this month to all lawyers and staff in furtherance of the firm's wellness initiatives. To mark the occasion, Wellness Manager Abby Read interviewed Dallas Associate [Mei Zhang](#), a member of the Finance Practice Group, who discusses her passion for rock climbing and her commitment to self-care. Mei is a role model for the heights (literal and figurative) professionals can attain by being physically active.

Abby: What do you enjoy about being a finance attorney?

Mei: The people I work with and the work I do. I really enjoy working with my colleagues. We have a diverse group of attorneys in Finance Section, which is not always the case in the legal field. I also work with very diverse client teams on many deals, which is wonderful. I'm very passionate about the work I do, because the deals I work on are interesting and challenging. That makes my job exciting and enjoyable.

Abby: How do you manage the stressors of a client-facing and time-intensive profession?

Mei: It has always been important for me to establish a boundary between my work and personal life. I have made the commitment to not work past a certain time in the evening unless it is absolutely needed since my brain does not function well at late night. Setting that time limit ensures I have a clear mind and a sharp brain so I can make the best judgement in my work. I rock climb with friends for 2 or 3 hours every weekend. I set the time in my schedule and will work around it. Some people say climbing is like solving a puzzle with your body. I totally agree. Every week, for 2-3 hours, I solve puzzles through my body movements and different techniques I have learned in order to reach the top. Now that have done it almost every week, for over 3 years. It has become a weekend routine for me.

Abby: What do you enjoy about rock climbing?

Mei: Rock climbing requires your full concentration to coordinate your body and mind to successfully ascend the wall. This allows me to be present and focus only on what I'm doing in that moment, not having any headspace for work or any other anxieties. The process itself helps stimulate my mind and oddly, at the same time, it recharges me. I feel relaxed and recharged after climbing. It is a much-needed breakaway from stressing about work or other responsibilities.

Abby: What else do you enjoy doing outside of work?

Mei: Book club. I started a club six years ago and we read six books each year centered around a selected theme, such as women empowerment or Asian American literature. We meet regularly to discuss the books. Reading relieves stress by itself. Getting together with friends to discuss books and sharing views helps us connect with each other better and makes our friendship even stronger.

Abby: How do you find a balance between work and your other passions?

Mei: Our job comes with a lot of pressure and responsibilities, so a clear mind is essential for us to provide services of the best quality to clients. Setting a boundary between work and personal life and resetting and recharging yourself during off work hours are very important for our professional life.

Abby: What would you say to someone that is struggling with self-care?

Mei: If you can find an activity you are passionate about, it makes it easier to make a commitment and make it a habit, because it will become something you look forward to. You have to remain mindful that you have to allocate time for yourself. Whether it is every day for 15-20 minutes or every week for a few hours, it is very important for your professional life, health and happiness.