
CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION ACCREDITATION PACKET

Professional Well-Being / Professionalism

I. PROGRAM INFORMATION

Program Title:

Conquering Your Everest: Resilience, Teamwork, and Performance Under Pressure

Program Format:

☒ Live, In-Person

Program Length:

60 minutes (Instructional time only)

Requested CLE Credit:

☒ Professional Well-Being

☒ Professionalism

☒ Mental Health/Substance Abuse

Target Audience:

Civil defense attorneys from the United States and around the world engaged in high-pressure, time-sensitive, or high-stakes legal practice.

Sponsor / Provider:

International Association of Defense Counsel

Program Date:

July 5, 2026 – IADC Annual Meeting

II. SPEAKER INFORMATION

Speaker:

Bonita Norris

Speaker Biography:

Bonita Norris is the youngest person ever to reach both the summit of Mount Everest and the North Pole. She did this having never climbed a mountain before the age of 20 and then reached the summit of Everest only two years later at the age of 22. This rollercoaster journey that taught her the power of taking radical responsibility- for our own mindset, for how we show up in our team, and for finding the resilience to keep moving forward in life's toughest moments. Bonita went on to climb multiple 8,000m peaks including – Everest (8,849m), Lhotse (8,516m), Manaslu (8,163m), has skied to the North Pole, and attempted to become the first British woman to successfully climb K2 (8,611m). The barriers she broke through in the adventure world earned her a nomination for Cosmopolitan's Woman of the Year Award. In 2022 Bonita's book *The Girl Who Climbed Everest* became a bestseller.

She now shares *The Mountaineer's Mindset*; a set of high-performance tools learned on the ice face of the world's highest peaks for more ambitious, resilient and connected teams. *The Mountaineer's Mindset* explores three pillars of high performance, Growth Mindset- "focus not fret", being a "learn it all", accountability, resilience, Marginal Gains- "success by smallness", keeping tough moments in perspective, Teamwork- "Be great, make others great".

III. PROGRAM PURPOSE AND DESCRIPTION

This program is designed to enhance lawyers' professional competence, judgment, and performance by examining how stress, mistakes, adversity, and teamwork affect decision-making in high-pressure professional environments. Using real-world case studies from extreme expedition leadership, the program provides lawyers with practical, profession-relevant strategies to improve resilience, reduce error, and strengthen collaboration, directly supporting effective legal practice.

The presentation is educational in nature and does not provide medical, psychological, or therapeutic advice. Instead, it focuses on skill development, risk recognition, and performance optimization within the context of professional responsibility.

This program advances lawyer competence consistent with ABA Model Rule 1.1, which requires “legal knowledge, skill, thoroughness and preparation reasonably necessary for the representation”. The ABA National Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being emphasizes that well-being is “an indispensable part of a lawyer’s duty of competence”. High rates of stress, anxiety, and impaired decision-making among attorneys have been documented in the 2016 ABA/Hazelden study and related research. Consistent with nationwide CLE trends, numerous states—including North Carolina (requiring a Professional Well-Being Hour), South Carolina (requiring 1.0 MH/SA hour), and Georgia (new 2026 professionalism requirements)—recognize resilience, decision quality, and impairment-prevention as essential professional-responsibility education.

IV. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of the program, participants will be able to:

1. Identify how stress, fatigue, and high-risk decision-making environments impair professional judgment and increase the likelihood of error in legal practice.
 2. Analyze the professional impact of mistakes and failure, and apply structured methods for learning and recovery rather than avoidance or denial.
 3. Recognize behaviors—such as fear of speaking up, unmanaged insecurity, and overextension—that undermine individual and team performance in legal settings.
 4. Apply team-based strategies to improve communication, trust, and shared responsibility in litigation and other collaborative legal work.
 5. Explain the connection between professional well-being, competence, diligence, and ethical fitness to practice.
 6. Implement practical, profession-appropriate methods to sustain professional effectiveness during prolonged or high-pressure matters.
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V. DETAILED COURSE OUTLINE

I. Performance Under Pressure in High-Risk Professions

- Stress and cognitive load in extreme environments
- Parallel challenges in civil defense practice
- Decision fatigue, tunnel vision, and error risk

II. Mistakes, Failure, and Professional Accountability

- Normalizing error in complex work
- Structured post-event analysis and learning
- Risk of unmanaged fear or shame in professional decision-making

III. Resilience as a Professional Skill

- Distinguishing resilience from endurance at all costs
- Recognizing warning signs of impaired performance
- Maintaining clarity and judgment under sustained pressure

IV. Teamwork, Communication, and Psychological Safety

- Lessons from expedition teams and litigation teams
- Speaking up despite hierarchy or insecurity
- Shared responsibility and accountability

V. Professional Responsibility and Competence

- Well-being as a component of competence and diligence
 - Ethical risks associated with burnout and overextension
 - Protecting clients, colleagues, and the profession
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VI. WRITTEN MATERIALS

The following written materials will support the program:

1. Research & Authority Reference List

- ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct
 - ABA National Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being materials
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VII. LEGAL AND PROFESSIONAL AUTHORITY SUPPORTING CLE CREDIT

This program is grounded in nationally recognized professional standards and authorities, including:

A. ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct

- **Rule 1.1 – Competence:** Requires legal knowledge, skill, thoroughness, and preparation reasonably necessary for representation.
- **Rule 1.3 – Diligence:** Obligates promptness and sustained attention to client matters.
- **Rule 1.4 – Communication:** Requires effective communication, often compromised by stress and cognitive overload.
- **Rule 8.4 – Misconduct:** Addresses conduct prejudicial to the administration of justice, including impairment-related behavior.

B. ABA National Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being

The ABA Task Force has expressly recognized that lawyer well-being is an indispensable part of competence, directly linking resilience, judgment, and professional fitness to ethical and effective practice.

C. Nationwide CLE Trends

Numerous U.S. jurisdictions require or explicitly recognize CLE credit for:

- Professional well-being
- Mental health and substance-use awareness
- Professionalism and impairment prevention

This program aligns with those standards by focusing on performance, judgment, and professional responsibility, rather than personal wellness.

VIII. COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

This program:

- Is educational in nature
 - Advances lawyer competence and professionalism
 - Does not provide clinical, therapeutic, or medical services
 - Includes substantive written instructional materials
 - Meets CLE accreditation standards applicable across U.S. jurisdictions
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