



FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE DES CONSEILS  
EN PROPRIÉTÉ INTELLECTUELLE

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF  
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ATTORNEYS

INTERNATIONALE FÖDERATION  
VON PATENTANWÄLTEN

**COVID-19 Resources**

## **FICPI webinar notes**

### **“Wellness during Covid-19”**

**13 May 2020**

Good morning, afternoon and evening!

My name is Elia Sugrañes, a professional here in Spain and FICPI Deputy Secretary General.

I’m here today to talk with two lawyers and a mental health trainer who I’ll introduce shortly, on the topic of wellness during Covid-19.

As you probably know, FICPI is a global community of independent IP attorneys. In fact, FICPI is the only international NGO whose membership consists entirely of IP attorneys in private practice. We believe that the FICPI business family makes the world a little bit smaller, bringing independent IP attorneys from around the globe together to connect, share knowledge and grow.

Like everyone else in the world, FICPI and FICPI members are striving to address issues that arise as a result of the COVID-19 crisis and we are working hard to support FICPI members and the IP community at large.

As part of our resource package during that time we’ve developed this webinar series; a comprehensive spreadsheet of key changes in IP offices; plus blogs and news articles; and other initiatives, to bring alternative ways to share knowledge and thought leadership and for members to contribute their own ideas and experiences.

For those of you who are not yet members of FICPI, but are interested in joining, we will send you details about how to join after the webinar.

So our agenda for today will cover a number of topics relating to wellness.

Now, let’s start with brief introductions for our speakers:

We have Paula Krasny, an IP attorney and trade mark lawyer from Levenfield Pearlstein in the US; Clare Davis, a mental health trainer and facilitator from Nova Associates in the UK; and Jim Denness, a patent attorney at IP firm Abel & Imray in the UK.



FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE DES CONSEILS  
EN PROPRIÉTÉ INTELLECTUELLE

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF  
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ATTORNEYS

INTERNATIONALE FÖDERATION  
VON PATENTANWÄLTEN

## COVID-19 Resources

**Elia:** Jim, let's start with you.

Could you tell us how your firm is coping with the new normal?

**Jim:** To answer that question, let's look first at what was the old normal. In my firm we were mainly working from 9 to 5 or 630 in the evening. Prior to Covid-19 our people were all office-based and as a firm we were quite resistant to people working from home a lot; partly because of health and safety reasons and partly because of wanting people to become integrated into the team. On 23<sup>rd</sup> March this changed overnight in the UK, our attorneys were used to the idea of working from home and some were well equipped for it but it was new for our support staff. Our end of year was end of March, so we had all our end of year billing in progress and there were huge demands on our administrators, accounts department and IT department. It all went unexpectedly well, everyone pulled together. Our end of year billing got done and we are keeping up with our due dates, not needing to take up extensions from IP Offices. Clients are continuing to send us instructions and the EPO are still issuing communications and we feel that life is going on the way it should do.

Our new normal after 7 weeks: our offices are all closed and have been for 7 weeks now. Just occasionally someone goes into the office to pick up the small amount of post – the coronavirus is still spreading in the UK and will continue to do for quite a long time. There's still no medical cure or treatment, so us and our staff are at risk. Opening the offices must increase that risk because it would be bringing everyone together. We are all really working well from home so we can be very cautious.

**Elia:** And I think you recently carried out a survey, could you tell us about that?

**Jim:** We reached out to our staff to ask them what they thought about home working. It was a very mixed picture, about 17% of staff wanted to return to the office full time and about 25% wanted to continue to work at home full time, plus various permutations like 40/60 splits, etc. That big range reflects everyone's individual circumstances, but we could see that people did want the office to reopen. We've been thinking about how to do that and how to keep the offices safe. We could do a deep clean but that seems like a waste of time as the offices have been closed and any virus that was live will be dead; we could have hand sanitiser stations, one way routes, close the kitchen and coffee machine, reduce interoffice travel or ban it, same for general business travel. Some measures are easy to introduce, like hand sanitiser. Others are trickier – how to keep toilets safe, for example. There will be a little residual risk however we do it, so we will be cautious. A lot of us are going to be working from home for a while and even when we reopen the offices the new atmosphere in the office could be a little strange.



FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE DES CONSEILS  
EN PROPRIÉTÉ INTELLECTUELLE

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF  
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ATTORNEYS

INTERNATIONALE FÖDERATION  
VON PATENTANWÄLTEN

## COVID-19 Resources

How is our working from home going? How can we improve that? We will look at encouraging staff and people working from home to improve their workstations in terms of getting proper office chair, screens at the right height, having a comfortable and appropriate area for working. Health and safety is really important in terms of long term wellbeing. Another concern is how to keep the firm ethos moving forwards. Some of our teams have Zoom meetings and get together across a glass of wine. They have gone surprisingly well and are fun! We have a weekly drop in call for the partners where we talk for an hour without any agenda – we can just share our concerns. Our managing partner does a short 2-3 minute video every week to communicate status of the firm to everyone..

**Turning to my own personal experience:** I've been lucky and have enjoyed working from home with my family here and spending more time together. I have access to outside space. It's more difficult if you live on your own or in a city centre.

I've found the [Headspace](#) meditation app really easy to use and simple and it's helped me and been enjoyable for a 10-minute meditation session twice a day when I would normally be commuting. It helps me to take a conscious break from work at the end of the day and to start the day well.

As a middle-aged man, yoga has been useful too.

**Looking at challenges for the future:** marketing and business development will be a new thing for us all in this world. LinkedIn webinars and virtual events will be increasingly important. Bringing new staff in will be more challenging. Clients in certain sectors have been hit hard and maintaining morale in poor economic circumstances will be tough. Keeping up our wellness and morale will be important.

**Elia:** that was very enlightening, thank you Jim!

Now let's see if we can ask you to answer a question or two before we move on to Paula.

**Elia:** How will your staff feel about continued working from home?

**Jim:** I feel sorry for our younger trainees in small flats or shared houses and the new normal is probably tougher for them, others are finding it more acceptable. The change and uncertainty and feeling out of control is a challenge.

**Elia:** You mentioned new hires and training, what are your initial thoughts on how to mentor and train in the new normal?



FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE DES CONSEILS  
EN PROPRIÉTÉ INTELLECTUELLE

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF  
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ATTORNEYS

INTERNATIONALE FÖDERATION  
VON PATENTANWÄLTEN

## COVID-19 Resources

**Jim:** We have people set to join us in September. Thinking of my current trainee who has been with us a couple of years, I was formerly very traditional and it was more about sitting down together and working through cases. Now we use Skype for Business and edit across a shared document in real-time. It works very well, actually. More of a challenge will be how to bring a new trainee into the firm and to get them to know the people and systems, in the records and accounts departments, etc. That will require a special intervention or to wait until we get back to the office.

**Elia:** Do you think there's still a future for big city centre law practices?

**Jim:** People like the concentration of expertise and like living in cities. Our survey showed differences in answers between our London office and out of London, perhaps reflecting the need to use public transport in the city. I think firms will be able to work from home but whether they will want as extensive office space is something to be looked at when leases come up for renegotiation.

**Elia:** It seems there's some fear about going back to work in an office, how will you try to overcome that?

**Jim:** We will stay very far away from trying to push people back into an office. We will be as open as possible to people staying at home if they want to. We want to leave it initially to the people who really want to come back to the office to do so and we'll observe social distancing and keep as safe as possible while they are there.

**Elia: I'd now like to bring Paula Krasny into the conversation.**

**Paula:** Last time I spoke with FICPI it was a few years ago in Toronto.

I was practicing in a cloud-based firm at the time.

At the end we asked for a show of hands of how many people were ready to work in the cloud, and not many people raised their hand.

Since then, I have left the cloud-based law firm because I was craving more human contact and structure.

And here we all are, me included, working remotely.

Unfortunately, this is life. Control is a fiction. We pretend we have it. But we really do not.



FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE DES CONSEILS  
EN PROPRIÉTÉ INTELLECTUELLE

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF  
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ATTORNEYS

INTERNATIONALE FÖDERATION  
VON PATENTANWÄLTEN

## COVID-19 Resources

Our clients pay us good money to influence and change outcomes. Even though a global pandemic is beyond any individual's control, there are definitive things that are in our control. We just have to step back and see them.

If we look inside, and realise that we can influence how we perceive the world's events and the consequences they will have on us, we may be able to better manage some of the anxiety, fear, frustration, and loss we are experiencing. Let's face it; many of us are grieving.

We should not forget that challenges also present opportunities.

If we shift or reframe our perspective, even though we are isolated, each of us can find gratitude, beauty, compassion and connection that will sustain us through this period of time.

### **Perspective**

Many of us work with younger people who have not yet had to grapple with traumatic life experiences or know people or family members who fled from poverty, persecution or famine. They truly do not know what it is like to have their life on the line. This is their first main trauma.

To the extent we can, we should try to help those people in our firms. We are also helping ourselves by doing so.

It is normal to feel angry, frustrated, anxious and helpless. It is better to admit that you feel that way than to deny it. Sometimes when you are going down a rabbit hole of doom, maybe you can just realize you are doing it stop yourself in your tracks, and maybe even laugh at yourself.

I continuously remind myself that I will be fine because

- Survival is my DNA. When he was 14, my grandfather left Russia to escape the pogroms. He left Russia on foot, with the clothes on his back, and was responsible for getting his mother and younger siblings to France to take a boat to New York.
- What I am dealing with now is nothing. Regardless of what happens to me financially or with respect to my job, I am blessed. I have food, a roof over my head, a washing machine, a dishwasher, a cute cat, and even though I cannot be near them physically, people who care about me. It is all about perspective. Rather than worrying about could happen in the future, I try to come back to the present moment because right now, that is all we have.



FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE DES CONSEILS  
EN PROPRIÉTÉ INTELLECTUELLE

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF  
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ATTORNEYS

INTERNATIONALE FÖDERATION  
VON PATENTANWÄLTEN

## COVID-19 Resources

- I remind myself that this is not World War II. No one is bombing our cities. There is food in the supply chain. Most of us have way more than what we need, especially the hoarders amongst us.
- This even is not like the 1918 Spanish flu pandemic. We have better resources and we are connected with technology.

### Dealing with Stress

- Everyone is stressed. Our colleagues, our staff, and our clients.
  - Try to connect with someone in a meaningful way. At least once a day. In fact, I now make it a point to tell someone if they were my meaningful connection for the day and thank them.
  - Exercise. Movement is key. It changes your energy. People on the panel are making references to my yoga practice. Do not be intimidated about yoga. Yoga is linking breath to movement. Try a simple basic online class or do gentle stretching where you mindfully breathe.
  - As hard as it may be now, do not drink too much. Alcohol is a depressant. Also, avoid stimulants like refined sugar and caffeine.
  - It is important to laugh. Watch a screwball comedies.
  - Listen to music. Music can really shift your mood.
  - Meditate
  - Gratitude

**Elia:** How do you deal with clients right now who are also struggling or may have very short tempers?

- If someone is short with you, or a client is complaining about a bill, there are various things you can do.
  - Listen. Let them vent.
  - Show them true empathy.
  - And to preserve yourself, try to put distance between yourself and how you are reacting internally to being yelled at.
    - This is where perspective helps.
    - You may need to take a couple deep breaths, walk around the block, call a colleague, or even cry.



FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE DES CONSEILS  
EN PROPRIÉTÉ INTELLECTUELLE

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF  
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ATTORNEYS

INTERNATIONALE FÖDERATION  
VON PATENTANWÄLTEN

## COVID-19 Resources

### Our clients

Our clients are also struggling, working in our kitchen tables, balancing family, or living alone. I believe that shared our struggles and humanity also afford us an opportunity for greater and stronger connections.

These connections are important for our own mental health. They are also good for us professionally. Having meaningful connections are invaluable tools because maintaining, growing, and obtaining new client relationships are key to our business.

How we treat our clients during this time is going to pay off in dividends.

Even if the client goes under, or you have to discount bill, that person will probably be at another company someday and will be in a position to refer work to you.

Also, when times are better, and people are handing out legal work, they will remember that connection you had with them and how you made them feel during this period.

I want to end by saying it is okay to admit that this is tough. It is okay to struggle. It is okay to question. I truly believe that if we are in touch with our feelings, and we accept and manage them productively, it will be okay. I truly believe that under times of stress, we can both grow and thrive.

**Elia:** Do you have recommendations for people who never have meditated or done yoga?

**Paula:**

**Here are some meditation apps:**

- Headspace – As Jim mentioned, he uses this app.
- Calm
- Ten Percent Happier - I recently started using this app. I learned about it from one of the resources my law firm made available to me.
- Insight Timer
- HeartMath - This measures your variable heart rate. There is a device that you clip onto your ear and plug into your phone or iPad. This is a breathing app that is very good in helping to manage feelings of overwhelm or anxiety.



FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE DES CONSEILS  
EN PROPRIÉTÉ INTELLECTUELLE

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF  
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ATTORNEYS

INTERNATIONALE FÖDERATION  
VON PATENTANWÄLTEN

## COVID-19 Resources

I am going to make a plug for my meditation studio as well. It can be found at [www.yogaview.com](http://www.yogaview.com). Tom Quinn has a free meditation course at 9am (Chicago time) on Sundays.

If you are overwhelmed with all of the online choices, ask someone who exercises or meditates for a recommendation of what he or she thinks would work well for you.

**Elia:** Thank you Paula, that was a great perspective.

Now let's ask you to answer a question or two before we move on to Clare.

**Elia:** Paula - how are you finding the level of trade mark applications? How are they being impacted by the virus?

**Paula:** I have been fortunate to have some new filings. Some of my clients are also tweaking their brand so I have been doing clearance work. I think we are going to start seeing more restructurings and need to have conversations about how the brand is potentially a very important asset in workouts.

**Elia:** Do you see firms offering subscriptions to resources such as Headspace as part of the salary package moving forwards?

**Paula:** Some firms are doing that. The Ten Percent Happier app which I discussed above, also has a podcast and free talks on YouTube.

**Elia:** Thank you Paula that was very useful for all of us.

**Elia: I'd now like to welcome Clare Davis to the conversation.**

Clare, you're a mental health trainer working with many legal and financial firms in the UK and overseas. I'd be really interested to hear your perspective on how to motivate staff during these constantly changing times.

Thank you for the kind introduction Elia. My expertise is delivering mental health first aid training, enabling managers, leaders and mental health first aiders to have the conversations with their teams and prevent problems with mental health in the workplace.

I have been working in law firms for many years with their managers to help them motivate and communicate their teams, understanding what makes them 'tick' so they are healthier. To promote positive mental health, we need to motivate others. I am going to go through 2



FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE DES CONSEILS  
EN PROPRIÉTÉ INTELLECTUELLE

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF  
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ATTORNEYS

INTERNATIONALE FÖDERATION  
VON PATENTANWÄLTEN

## COVID-19 Resources

motivation theories to understand how people are motivated, especially during Covid-19, then look at the emotions we have gone through with all the changes.

Herzberg looks at 2 factors – Motivators which make us want to get up in the morning and go to work. As managers we need to be communicating these factors. How can we recognise what people are doing, help them grow through Covid-19, give them responsibility?

We also need to look at the hygiene factors. These are dissatisfiers. What will dissatisfy us if they are not in place?

What does hygiene factor mean? I look at it like my bathroom. If my bathroom is clean, it does not mean I am really motivated to use it. HOWEVER, if my bathroom is dirty, I am dissatisfied and do not want to use it, I am not happy. Jim mentioned earlier WORKING CONDITIONS. If our teams are working from home and their working conditions are not good – they may not have the space or a working zone, they may be home schooling, they could be dissatisfied and feeling fed up. The same goes with personal life and co-workers. They may be living alone; they may not be having much contact with co-workers. This can cause them to be dissatisfied and fed up. We want to talk to them about their situation. I know myself; I have put workstations for all my family, and we have made sure the house is clean. This has helped us feel better about our working conditions.

Maslow's theory is about the hierarchy of needs. We go up and down this hierarchy and we need to get every level in place to move to the next level. This diagram has added Wi-Fi and batteries for Covid-19. These are the physiological basic needs. If they are not in place with food, shelter etc we would not be motivated. We also need to get safety, belonging and self-esteem into place – Jim mentioned Team Meetings via zoom – this is all part of belonging.

What do we need to understand about motivating our staff? How can our teams be feeling? How are we feeling? We have gone through a lot of change. People's emotions have changed. Where are you? Where do you want to be? How are we going to get to the growth zone? How are we going to help our teams come out of the fear zone? We need to be helping our teams with their mental health and realise that motivating them is a big part of positive mental health. What can we do to support if people go back to the fear zone?

As managers we need to promote wellbeing. How can we promote wellbeing to gain positive mental health? It is all about motivating them. Inclusivity and keeping in touch is also very important. Were you aware that loneliness is more detrimental to people's health than smoking 15 cigarettes a day? What are you doing to keep in touch? If people live alone,



FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE DES CONSEILS  
EN PROPRIÉTÉ INTELLECTUELLE

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF  
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ATTORNEYS

INTERNATIONALE FÖDERATION  
VON PATENTANWÄLTEN

## COVID-19 Resources

how are you staying connected? If people are home schooling, how are you connecting with them so they also feel part of the team?

How can we promote wellness within our team and for ourselves? Something that is very important is to get into a **ROUTINE**. If we can get into a routine of our work as well as our personal life, we will have better wellness. Paula mentioned breathing exercises. Meditation and breathing has transformed me through this. I heard about 15 years ago how important meditation and breathing is and I kept thinking, “It won’t make any difference. I don’t have the time.” I decided to set myself a 21-day challenge to meditate and use breathing exercises at the beginning of April. I do this for 10 minutes in the morning. I am calmer. Think about what Jim said with regards to a routine of breaking work from home. He meditates for 10 minutes in the morning and 10 minutes in the evening – going to work and coming home from work.

Me time – even if we are living alone, we need ‘me time’ away from work. What are you doing to have your ‘me time?’ How are you encouraging your team to have ‘me time?’ Are you encouraging them to have breaks? Routine of breaks?

Friends – How are you connecting with friends? Positive friends. We need to connect with people who are making us feel good during Covid-19. Not the friends who are always looking at the negatives.

Healthy food and exercise. I know myself if I do not eat healthily, I feel really low. It is not good for my wellbeing.

ROUTINE – how can we get into a routine of eating and exercising? When can you fit this in? Paula mentioned her gym and the yoga classes. There are plenty of on-line workouts we can tap into. One that is worldwide and has a variety of classes is [Les Mills](#). We can then exercise in our own time, the way it will suit our routine.

LAUGHTER - Paula mentioned laughter. How can we bring laughter into our lives? I want to ask, “How many times do you laugh a day? How many times on average does a child laugh? 400. How many times on average does an adult laugh a day? 17. Laughter increases the elation in our body, getting all the natural chemicals to move and bring positivity. How can we bring laughter into our day with our teams? One law firm I work with has a team meeting on a Friday which is fancy dress with a different theme each week. Lots of laughter going on there. Another firm has a quiz on a Friday at 3pm with the whole firm. Watching comedies as Paula said is another great way to have down time.



FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE DES CONSEILS  
EN PROPRIÉTÉ INTELLECTUELLE

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF  
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ATTORNEYS

INTERNATIONALE FÖDERATION  
VON PATENTANWÄLTEN

## COVID-19 Resources

**SUNSHINE** – we need our vitamin D to feel great. I know when the weather has been good, I have felt so much better. Where is your desk? Is it in a room with good natural light? Are you sitting in a place that gets sunlight? It can really help positivity.

**SLEEP** – how much sleep are you getting? How can we make sure we are getting enough sleep and quality sleep? Are we in a **ROUTINE** of sleeping? Do we have a good 6-8 hours/night?

**HAVING GOALS** – you might be thinking, when would I have the time? I don't want you to stress about this. Having goals is motivating and is great for our wellbeing. One of my goals is to call family and friends in Australia I haven't been able to talk to for ages as I'm too busy. Your goal might be to play boardgames on the weekend, or to play the instrument you haven't picked up for years. It needs to be an enjoyable goal, one that is good for you.

**GIVING** – Evidence shows that helping others is actually beneficial for your own mental health and wellbeing. It can help reduce stress, improve your emotional wellbeing and even benefit your physical health. Unfortunately I do not have the time to volunteer, but I do know that I have found ways to give during Covid-19 and it has really helped with my positivity. What can you do? You may have a neighbour who is not able to get groceries, so you could help out. Or a friend you know is lonely, so you may send them a gift. We as a family have got all the clothes and toys we are not using anymore and have given them to the children who live on our road who could use them.

I help law firms with their mental health strategies, training mental health first aiders to have confidence. I am running 2-hour virtual workshops every Wednesday to help people cope through Covid-19. Look at my website for other virtual workshops I run for law firms to encourage confidence when dealing with mental health concerns and strategise wellbeing to prevent mental health concerns. You are also welcome to connect with me on Linked In. Just look up Clare Davis Nova Associates. Looking forward to hearing from you.

**Elia:** Thank you Clare, there were some great insights and tips there and I know you offer regular workshops and training sessions, all the information can be found on your website and people can investigate those links when we circulate the recording and make it online after the session.

**Elia:** So, let's answer a couple of the questions that have come in for Clare.

Some people are working ridiculously long hours and finding it hard to switch off, even at night. What do you recommend?



FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE DES CONSEILS  
EN PROPRIÉTÉ INTELLECTUELLE

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF  
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ATTORNEYS

INTERNATIONALE FÖDERATION  
VON PATENTANWÄLTEN

## COVID-19 Resources

**Clare:** Meditating after work helps to get into switch off. I write a gratitude diary at night which brings positive thoughts. Before I leave my desk I write my to-do list.

**Paula:** You can also try cooking a nice meal in the evening to distract yourself and unwind. Physically remove yourself from your work space. You can also try a warm bath, or a sleep meditation on one of the apps I had mentioned.

**Jim:** I use the sleep section of the Headspace app. There's always a limit to how much work we can take on – can you delegate some work?

**Elia:** Some of our managers are quite new and haven't experienced such challenging times. How can we help them to be better leaders?

**Clare:** This topic would be a whole series of workshops but communicating better is the most important thing and helping them to learn how to do that. In a workshop I would include areas such as drawing out people who are introverts and how to help them to relax and take it slow.

**Elia:** Would you provide people working from home with broadband packages?

**Jim:** Most people in the UK have unlimited data services I think. If someone came and asked us, we would look at it.

**Elia: Thank you Clare and the whole panel!**

I'd also like to highlight that we will have number of additional webinars coming up, as you can see listed on the slide. Keep an eye open for announcements.

Elia: And finally, thank you to all of you for attending. You will receive an email shortly with a link to the webinar recording and other useful information.

### **Suggestions for future topics**

Please contact: [secretariat@ficpi.org](mailto:secretariat@ficpi.org)

### **How to join FICPI**

Go to the website [www.ficpi.org](http://www.ficpi.org) where you can see many national sections and you can contact them directly and join that way

Otherwise – can apply direct to [secretariat@ficpi.org](mailto:secretariat@ficpi.org) and we will contact you and provide you with more information.