Hi, this is Pat Iyer with Legal Nurse Podcast. We cover a variety of topics on the show about legal nurse consulting and about running a business. One of the topics that I’ve covered in the past that has gotten a lot of attention has been how you stay fit as a legal nurse consultant and business owner. I brought on the show with me today Mike Schatzki who has been speaking to audiences worldwide for over 30 years.

Mike and I first met at the National Speakers Association New Jersey Chapter. He has a background in presenting both on negotiation techniques, as well as on health and fitness. He calls himself a recovering couch potato for the last 17 years. Mike is also a Certified Speaking Professional, which is a distinction that involves an application process, checking with past clients, submitting videos of your performance. Very few people are qualified, and Mike is one of 11% of nearly 6,000 people worldwide who has a speaking professional certification as a Certified Speaking Professional or CSP.

Mike received his BA magna cum laude from Haverford College, a nice Quaker college in the outskirts of Philadelphia, and his MPA from the Woodrow Wilson School of Princeton University, a nice Ivy League school located in New Jersey.

Mike, welcome to the show.

Thanks Pat. Thanks for having me on.

One of the reasons why I think this is such an important topic for our listeners is that we spend a lot of time sitting. We sit at desks. We sit in attorneys’ offices. We sit using our computers. It is a sedentary occupation and I’d like you to keep that in mind as we talk about these questions. We’re really focused on getting enough activity into our lives. Tell me about how you got into this area?

Pat, as you mentioned, I’ve been a professional speaker for a long time, and I do not only keynote presentations but also two-day seminars. I was on my feet a lot, and I figured I’m in great shape. Yes.
as I got a little older, I huffed-and-puffed up the stairs a bit, but I was in great shape.

I had a black belt in denial, and then one day somebody talked me into taking one of those fitness assessments. I thought I would blow it away, not so. It turned out I was in pretty bad shape. It was like a real wake-up call, so I decided that I had to get fit. I exercised, and I did it all wrong. I got injured, and I started again. I got injured again, and I stopped. Finally, I managed to push, and the more I got fit, I felt wonderful. I felt so great I wanted to tell everybody I knew about it.

You know how sometimes insufferable a newly converted person can be, and the folks who were exercising, they were all, “Yeah, that’s terrific. You love it, we love it,” but from most people I got some polite version of, “Exercise, yuck” and so I thought, “Is there any way to get fit without exercise?” I started to do some research. I did some more and some more. When you do that, you read a paper and then you look at the footnotes and that leads you somewhere else.

Yes, it turns out it most assuredly is possible to get fit without exercise. The scientists have known that for some time. It just hasn’t gotten out into the general populace. That’s why I created my program called the “No Sweat Couch Potato Recovery Program” to focus on folks who really don’t want to exercise and aren’t going to exercise, and also folks who have kind of sedentary business lifestyles to talk about how you get fit if you don’t want to exercise.

**Pat:** I know that that’s a great deterrent for many people. They don’t want to be sweaty. They don’t want their heart pounding. They don’t want to wake up the next day after exercising and feeling like they’ve got muscles in parts of their body that they were previously ignoring. How can we get through that negativity? I think it’s something that we build up in our minds, and we don’t want to be uncomfortable. How do you get through that piece and still become fit?

**Mike:** I think it’s because you have to change what you thought was going on. In other words, for the last 50-60 years it’s been kind of an equation. The only way to get fit is to exercise, which means you have to sweat, and you know, “No pain, no gain.” Buy some equipment and go out there in the freezing cold or the summer heat, or whatever and you have to do that. It turns out that that’s just the wrong equation. It’s
not that fitness equals exercise. The equation is that exercise is a pathway to fitness, but it’s not the only pathway.

The thing is we need to really think about, “What is fitness?” The interesting thing is that fitness is species-specific. We have a little box turtle that lives around the house in the bushes. Box turtles generally walk between 50 and 100 yards a day. That’s what they need to do to get enough food to survive, and so over the eons their bodies are tuned to function best when they do that. That little turtle, even though it may only go 50 to 100 yards, is fit for a turtle.

Humans, we know from the anthropologists, needed to walk between 10,000 and 20,000 steps a day to gather enough food and to hunt enough food to survive. That’s how our bodies are tuned. Our bodies are tuned to function best when we expend that amount of physical activity energy.

It’s not really a question of how you expend the energy. It’s that you go ahead and expend it. Some huge studies have been done that absolutely prove that walking does the same job as exercise because walking involves expending physical activity energy. In one of the earliest studies published way back in 1999, they looked at 72,000 people, and the conclusion was that it doesn’t matter. They looked at runners and walkers, and the conclusion was it doesn’t matter how you expend that physical activity energy as long as you expend it.

I weigh 200 lbs. and when I move 100 yards, I’ve expended the energy that’s required to move 200 lbs. 100 yards. It doesn’t matter how I expend that energy. Walking is a perfectly good and, in fact, the evolutionary natural way humans have always been fit. It’s by walking a fair amount. The sweet spot is to walk up in the 8,000, 9,000 or 10,000 steps a day. You get the same benefit as you would get if you went to the gym because it’s all about expending physical activity energy, not how you expend it.

Pat: I have this discussion with my husband on a semi-frequent basis because he likes to walk more slowly than I do. I know that many couples are able to match the same pace. He’s not able to match my pace, and he says, “As long as I get in my 10,000 steps, it doesn’t matter how fast I get there or how slow I get there.” What do you think about that?
Mike: That is absolutely true because it’s sort of the law of physics. If I move my body, which is 200 lbs., and if I move that half a mile, it doesn’t matter how fast I move it. Now if I move it very fast, if I walk very quickly, I’ll expend more physical activity energy per minute than I’d do if I go slowly. When I get that distance or when I get that 10,000 steps, regardless of how fast I’ve gone, I would expend the same amount of energy.

Now some people say, “Well, that’s not so because look at runners.” When you have a runner and a runner runs the same distance as a walker, the runner is going to expend about 40% more energy, but it’s not because they’re going faster. It’s because the mechanics are different. A runner has to take a jump every step and that extra jump is what causes them to require the extra 40%, which is why, by the way, pre-agricultural humans never ran to get from here to there. They ran to run away from something or to run after something, but otherwise it was too expensive from a calorific expenditure point of view. Calories were scarce, and so you didn’t waste them running. You only ran for very specific purposes. Humans always have walked.

Pat: We’ve talked about the importance of getting fit. Can you give us some of the other benefits associated with getting your energy up and getting those 10,000 steps in?

Mike: Absolutely. The first thing that you get, if you’re really not doing anything right now, if you’re basically sitting behind a computer all day, you’re probably walking 3,000 to 4,000 steps still just through day-to-day life with shopping or whatever. When you move up and start to get up to 6,000, 7,000, 8,000, 9,000 steps, what you discover is you have a ton more energy.

I have more energy now than when I started 15 or 18 years ago, much more energy. That’s the first really good benefit. It takes a little while to get over that hump. You have to get up there, but once you’re there, you feel great. I think we all know that people who are fit have half the illness and half the death rate of people who are sedentary. It’s just a huge impact on cardiac issues, diabetes and all that kind of stuff.

Some people can lose weight if they get fit, but most of us have to diet to lose weight. It’s almost impossible to keep it off unless we’re following a fitness regimen. It’s very clear that most people tend to
put it back on, which is how the diet industry continues to survive. We’re good at getting it off but not at keeping it off. They depend on people putting the weight back on again. The only way to really do it, it turns out from the research, is you simply have to have a fitness regimen, or you’re going to put that weight back on again.

There’s issues of brain fitness. Just in the last couple of years studies have come out that show us that we can reduce the incidence of dementia and Alzheimer’s by 50% if we’re fit versus if we’re sedentary. That’s kind of a long-term thing that you want to invest in your body, but people who are fit have half of the dementia rates as people who are not fit, so there’s another huge thing.

The other thing is, we don’t really realize this when we’re young, but when the CDC, the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta, does studies and does polling of people who are in their 70s and 80s, for the group that’s 85 and older, about a third can’t walk for five minutes at all, and another third have difficulty. You got two-thirds of the population, 85 and older, who basically can’t walk. That makes them dependent either on others or they have to be in an institution, assisted living, or a nursing home, and that’s absolutely not necessary. The human body can walk as long as it lives, but it’s use it or lose it.

In fact, a study just came out the other day where they compared 70-year-olds who had been active and following a fitness regimen for a long time with fit 20-year-olds. Even though they had lost some of their aerobic capacity, the 70-year-olds were still in great shape, walking, running, and doing whatever they needed to do. It was just amazing, and compared to people who had been sedentary, they were so light years ahead it was unbelievable. The human body can keep going forever as long as we keep using it.

Pat: Living in Southwest Florida as I do, I’m surrounded by people who are in their 70s, 80s, and 90s. We have just across the street from us some great friends who can’t go to a theater with us. I invited them to go to a program with us this weekend, but the man’s back is bothering him, and he can’t sit for that long. Next to us, the other couple we wanted to invite, this guy is very stiff and tall, and can’t comfortably fit into seats. My husband’s friends, who lives across the town, we would like to invite them, and the woman can’t walk any distance at all because of a bad knee that didn’t heal well after a total knee
replacement. We finally found the couple directly across the street who are a little bit younger, very fit, and they’re able to go.

As I’m listening to you, I’m thinking about the social implications, recreational implications associated with not being at your top form as you get older.

**Mike:** Absolutely, and I always say, “Absent catastrophic illness or injury, the human body can walk as long as it’s alive.” Yes, there are some people obviously who have had some serious health problems, and they may have difficulty walking because they have structural issues. To stay fit they’re going to have to do some other things. You’re going to have to swim or do an exercise bike or something like that. I think for most people it’s best if they keep up from a slightly younger age, but there’s never a late time to start. You can always start.

If you really keep it up, one of the advantages is you are less likely to have injuries. You are less likely to fall. You’re likely to have those kinds of problems. You’re really investing in your body the same way you invest financially in your 401K. It’s a long-term investment process so you’ll be healthy and fit when you’re older.

As nurses we sometimes feel like we have an excellent grasp of what causes dis-ease, but there is a lot we don’t understand about how our bodies handle stress. Any small business owner is prone to stress. I want to share details about something I think is important for every LNC to understand – how your mind and body interrelate to keep you healthy- or sick. Kay Rice challenges assumptions about Western medicine and presents a different model of thinking: mind-body medicine. She asks us to think about medical care in a way that will help you realize

• why “a pill for every ill” could harm you
• how Western medicine and Ayurvedic medicine differ
• the basis of mind-body medicine and how that can help you
• how you can help your body fight disease
• the impact of stress on the body
• how you can harness your body’s intelligence to create better balance in your life
Order the Mind Body Connection, our one-hour online training, at http://LNC.tips/mindbody and use the code Listened to get a 25% discount. Let’s return to the show.

**Pat:** I’d like to talk about with you about the momentum to get a kind of program started like this. I’m going through a course right now on creating online courses. The man who presented this material is Eben Pagen, and he talked in a session that I watched just last night about the gravity that habit creates and the need to focus on escape velocity. He likened this to when a rocket ship goes up, all the energy is focused initially on getting that ship off the launchpad and fighting gravity and fighting the factors that want to keep that machine, that device, that object on the launchpad. I think about this related to getting fit because of all of the excuses that we are so capable of marshalling to prevent us from making changes.

What can you give us in the way of some guidance on helping us with the escape velocity part of this?

**Mike:** Let me start by saying that there really is a difference between what a rocket has to do and what a person has to do. Obviously, I’m not talking about the chemistry of it, but if you think about it, the rocket has to do an enormous amount to get up that first hundred thousand, two hundred thousand feet, whereas when we want to build a habit to walk, we don’t have to do that. It’s like saying, “First you have to walk 10,000 steps. Then you have to walk eight, and then you have to walk six.” It doesn’t work that way. That’s what a rocket has to do, but we can start slowly.

The first thing you have to do is obviously make a decision that you want to do this. The second thing is you have to have some way of calculating your steps. There are lots of programs you can download to your phone that will keep track of it if you carry your phone all day. I happen to use something called a Fitbit Zip that hooks onto my belt, and I like that. You can get a mechanical one. You have some way that you can figure out what your baseline is.

Let’s say you do a baseline for a week and you say, “My average is about 4,000 steps a day, and my goal is 10,000 steps a day.” Now whether you can do that in a reasonable way or not depends on the
timeframe. Some people take two years, and some people take six months. Let’s say you say, “Okay, I’m going to set a target of trying to get from 4,000 steps to 10,000 steps a day on average in a year.”

What that comes to is adding 115 steps a day and that’s all. Let’s say this week you did 4,000 on average, the next week all you have to do is 4,115 on average for those seven days. That’s a very small rocket boost, if you like, and then if you want to keep going, then the next week you want to try and get up to 4,230 steps on average per day. If you take it nice and slow, you can get there.

It’s what Confucius said, “It does not matter how fast you go as long as you do not stop.”

**Pat:** That’s a great expression that applies to many aspects of our lives and running businesses.

**Mike:** Absolutely.

**Pat:** What do you do with a person who says, “I don’t have time for this, Mike. How can you possibly ask me to add one more thing to my day?”

**Mike:** Well let me ask you this, do you have time to do all the priorities that you have in your life?

None of us do, right. An example I give in the program is I say to people, “Have you ever had a situation where you had to drop a child off at school or pick up a child?

Usually at least half the people in the room will raise their hand. I would say, “Is that a high priority?” “Yeah,” everybody says it’s a high priority. Okay, so one day you tell your daughter, “Gee, Sally I’m sorry I didn’t pick you up at the school today, but I had a meeting that came along that was a higher priority. I hope that hitchhiking home in the rain was an informative experience for you.”

See, picking up Sally isn’t a priority because priorities can get bumped. Something that has a higher priority can come and bump that. Picking up Sally is not a priority; it’s a requirement.
We don’t have enough time in the day for all the priorities, so higher priorities bump lower ones, but we do have enough time for those few things that are requirements that have to be done, that we schedule the rest of our day around. If you make doing whatever you need to do to build your steps up a requirement, something that everything else gets scheduled around, then you have enough time to do it.

**Pat:** I think you’re right. I think it’s a matter of discipline and focus and making sure that you do it even when you don’t feel like doing it.

**Mike:** Yes, and one of the key things is some is better than none. Let’s say you’re up to 6,000 steps, and today it’s “I just don’t feel like doing nothing, whatever.” Do something. Do what you can do. Don’t let the perfect be the enemy of the possible. If this week you end up short, well, fine, that’s life. Just always think something is always better than nothing. As long as you think that way and just keep on going, eventually you will get there.

**Pat:** At the time that this show airs, Mike, it will probably still be deep winter in much of the country. Do you have any thoughts about keeping fit and getting your steps in if you are not able to comfortably be outside?

**Mike:** First of all, if you’re working at home and if you have the space and you buy something that even folds up, is consider getting a treadmill. Treadmills are great. People say, “They’re very expensive.” Yeah, if you get a gym-quality one that people run on 24/7, it’s going to be about $5,000. We have a very good walking treadmill that cost about $750, which is probably less than the TV you’re watching. One of the things we say to people is to think about if you have to be on the phone, and you don’t need to have the computer in front of you, just talking to somebody, think about getting on the treadmill.

If you’re in an office environment, think about walking up and down the hall. There are things you can do. If you’re watching TV, think about trying to walk while you’re doing that. Put a TV in front of the treadmill or watch a movie on your computer.

I listen to music, and Jeannie reads a book. There are a lot of ways that you can do that. A lot of companies will have indoor walking paths. You will be surprised how many steps you take if you really
start calculating when you go to the supermarket. A lot of malls are open early in the morning for walkers. If you really start thinking about it and say, “Okay if I really want to do this. I want to walk, and I really don’t want to go outside,” you start to discover ways that you can do it.

Pat: I was at a conference in which the CEO of Varidesk was talking about how they put in a gym and modified the work environment in his company. Varidesk is the desk that sits on top of a flat surface and can be used when you’re standing. He says there’s a concept in his company of a walking meeting in which people will stand next to each other on a treadmill and hit that go button. They will conduct their meeting while they’re simultaneously walking on a treadmill.

Mike: Which is a fantastic way to do it, absolutely. What we find is you can do a walking meeting with two and sometimes three people. After that it gets kind of hard. With a treadmill, you really can only do it with two, but if you’re walking elsewhere, out on the grounds or through the parking lot or something, usually three you can manage. Beyond that, it gets a little hard. I think walking meetings are super.

Pat: Do you have a step-by-step program that someone can follow if they are wanting to get started with the “No Sweat Couch Potato Recovery Program”?

Mike: Yeah, absolutely. Step one, and we kind of overlook it, but it’s so key. You got to make a decision. You got to make a decision to say, “I’m really going to do this. I’m really going to give it a shot.” That’s so important. The next step is you have to have some way of measuring your steps. You can download a program to your mobile phone if you carry it all the time. I like the Fitbit Zip, and they’re about $80 on Amazon. You have to have a way to do that, and then you have to calculate what your baseline is, what you normally do.

The next thing to do is you set yourself that target, so say, “I want to reach 10,000 steps” and do it in a reasonable timeframe. Take the number of weeks you want to take to do it. You’ve got 6,000 steps to go. Divide it by the number of weeks, and that gives you your target. You want to keep track of that and say, “How am I going to do it?” and just start. Just do it. Just walk and keep track of your progress.
Average and keep track of your steps each day. That’s really it. It’s not rocket science. Just do it.

As you get to building up your steps, the first thing we say is park a little bit away and walk a little further. As you get to 6,000 and 7,000 steps, you want to get to 10,000 and you probably going to have to do a little planning.

This is what I do each day. I think about what’s on my agenda today, what meetings do I have and what do I have to do. I say, “Okay, when am I going to get these steps in? Where am I going to get some steps in and what am I going to be doing?” Create basically a little plan for yourself in order to get from here to there.

Most of us in business, we’re planners. We think about things, and it’s just a matter of taking that planning skill that we have and thinking about, “How am I going to do this?” If you happen to have a dog, your dog just loves to walk. Your dog will take you for a walk. If you normally just go outside just long enough for them to do their business and come back in, start saying, “I bet that dog will love to go for 20 minutes or a half an hour.” They will love it because dogs often don’t get enough walking in either.

There’s another way to consider it. Some people really like to go alone. It’s alone time. It’s time for them gather their thoughts. Other folks just love to have a person that they go with, and that can be a great way to do it. The key is to never stop. Some is always better than none.

**Pat:** Tell our listeners how people can get in touch with you and obtain more information?

**Mike:** They can go to [www.recoveringcouchpotato.org](http://www.recoveringcouchpotato.org). When you get there, you will find the phone number and the email address. I should say that everything that I do in Recovering Couch Potato is in the Creative Commons. That means that everything that’s on the website, including the handouts for the program, the slides, the audio and there’s a transcript of it, all of that is in the Creative Commons. Anybody can download it. Anybody can use it for free. They can modify it. I will say to other speakers who want to take pieces of it and add it to their program that it’s there for the taking. In fact, if
somebody actually wants to give the program, I’ll be happy to coach them at no charge.

Everything is at www.recoveringcouchpotato.org and it is all available in the Creative Commons to use for free.

Pat: That’s very generous of you Mike.

Mike: I’m really committed to seeing people get fit.

Pat: That website again is the word recoveringcouchpotato.org.

Mike: Right.

Pat: Mike, I so appreciate you sharing your expertise. You’ve gotten me motivated. I know that there are people listening who have perhaps a few regrets over overindulgence in holiday eating and are really thinking in terms of how they can shed the weight, get more fit, feel better and move more easily. I think your content is really going to inspire them.

Mike: Fantastic.

Pat: Thank you so much for being on the show Mike.

Mike: It’s been a great pleasure. Thank you for having me Pat.

Pat: This has been Pat Iyer and Mike Schatzski talking about how you can become a recovering couch potato with the emphasis on the word ‘recovering’ by being fit, staying focused on those 10,000 steps a day, overcoming your inertia and knowing that the journey of a thousand miles starts with that first step.

Stay tuned, next week we’ll have a brand-new show and a new guest. Please be sure to tell other legal nurse consultants about Legal Nurse Podcast.

Order the Mind Body Connection, our one-hour online training, at http://LNC.tips/mindbody and use the code Listened to get a 25% discount.
Check out the webinars, teleseminars, courses and books at legalnursebusiness.com. Expand your LNC skills with our resources.

Explore coaching with Pat Iyer at LNCAcademy.com to get more clients, make more money and avoid expensive mistakes.

Invest in the monthly webinars at LNCCEU.com for 2 webinars each month designed to deepen your knowledge and skills.