

Mental Health & Wellbeing at the Bar

Professional Error



Wellbeing
at the Bar

Possible professional error

"I think I messed up."

Ways to deal with a possible professional error

- We all make mistakes. But there is a major difference between real errors (negligence) and judgments one makes on tactical issues in giving advice or in court (where what may seem like an error is not properly classified as such but was just judgment call). Barristers, as ruminators and perfectionists, are masters at replaying events and wishing they had done something else.
- So the first step is ask yourself: was this really an error or a judgment call which went wrong?
- If it was really what you think is an error, the first step is to share. There is nothing worse (for magnifying the scale of the problem) than internalising.
- Ask a colleague in chambers or another barrister friend for their view of the issue, including why you advised/acted as you did.

Where can I find out more?

Contact Bar Council's Ethical Enquiries Service: 020 7611 1307

(09:15-17:15 Monday-Friday)

Email: Ethics@BarCouncil.org.uk