

Speaker 1: Welcome to the Extra Mile podcast, for bar exam takers. There are no traffic jams along the Extra Mile, when you're studying for your bar exam. Now your host, Jackson Mumey. Owner of Celebration Bar Review.

Jackson Mumey: Well, hey everybody. Welcome to episode 44 of the Extra Mile podcast for bar exam takers. This is Jackson. I'm really glad to have you with this date. The release date for today's episode is Thanksgiving, so if you're listening over the holiday weekend, we certainly wish you a wonderful Thanksgiving and time to spend with family and friends. That's actually going to be the topic that I'm talking about in today's episode. I'll get to that more in just a moment.

Just to bring up everybody up to date as to what's going on around the world in the bar world. We now completed the cycle of exam results from July 2015. California results came out on Friday, the 20th. We're waiting, as I record today, to get those final numbers. I'm guessing, and this is just my intuitive sense right now, that it probably was not a very good set of results state wide, across the country. I'll have more to say about that in our next and upcoming episodes.

Basically, what this means is that we're now pointing our attention toward February 2016. There's a lot going on to prepare for those exams. If you've not yet started your study, and you're planning on taking the February exam, I would say this is the moment when you need to put your foot to the pedal or your foot the metal. Pedal to the medal. One of those things. One of those analogies. Get your studies under way. If you start now, you're going to have enough time to keep your studies at something less than full time. That is to say, in our course, maybe 20, 25 hours a week. Pretty consistently you can do that.

Now if you're in law school, and you're not going to start studying until after your exams. Your finals, that means you're going to actually start your studies about a week before the Christmas holidays. That's really a miserable way to do it. I would encourage you to look at alternatives to sitting in the big box bar review and having a wonderful end of December and all of February in a hotel room somewhere. Tough way to study and tough way to go.

Now, I also know that as results have wrapped up in all these jurisdictions, they're probably more repeat bar takers than we've ever seen before. I want to directly invite those of you are that are repeating the bar to a special seminar we do on Thursdays. It's called how to make your next bar exam the last bar exam. I invite you to go to our website at celebrationbarreview.com. When you go there, you'll see a link to register for the live webinar that I do. Won't be doing one today, on Thanksgiving, but pretty much every Thursday other than that and Christmas I guess.

I really would invite you to come and find out the four steps that passing bar takers have to know. This is a master class that have been very well received by the people that have gone through it. I think they found it quite valuable. Full of content and ideas and information that you can take and use right away. I really encourage you to do that. If you prefer to register, it's totally free but seating is

limited, but if you prefer to register for our upcoming class you can do it by text message. Just text the phrase "Nextbarexam," to 33444. That's all one word. "Nextbarexam," to 33444.

I also want to thank those of you that have been subscribing and listening to these podcasts. I'm hearing from more and more people who tell me they've been listening. I would really love it if you would go to iTunes and leave a rating and review for the series. It's helpful for me to get a feel for what you like and don't like. Really the growth of this podcast has been kind of extraordinary. We're excited, we do it twice a week and we're really thrilled to have you with us. You can also go to our website, celebrationbarreview.com. Click on the link for podcast and you'll find the show notes and all of the past episodes. They're all there for you.

Let's turn our attention now to this holiday season that's coming up. If you're not listening on Thanksgiving. It's okay. It's still got a value, I think, for you. One of the things that happens frequently is that when we get to this time of the year, we tend to find people either really struggling with how to balance their family and holiday commitments with their studies. There's a tendency to work towards extremes. You'll hear in my video lecture today those two extremes. The Scrooge extreme and maybe the Cindy Lou Who from the book, the children's book, at the other extreme. The wide eyed innocent that wants to have a great time in the holidays. There's a middle ground in all of this, and in today's discussion I'm going to talk about that middle ground. Talk about how you can effectively study throughout the holiday season. Without going overboard, without stopping your studies all together or ignoring the holidays all together.

Frankly, this is just such a tough time for people. I really encourage you, if you're a bar taker. Listen to this episode, but maybe share it with somebody in your family. A significant family member, so that they get a little bit of an idea of what you might be experiencing as you go through. If you're a bar repeater, this is even more fraught with tension and difficulty. I really want to make sure that you're paying close attention as well. I invite you to listen. If you're more of a watcher kind of a person, these broadcasts are also on video, on YouTube. I'll link that up in the show notes. Again, our best wishes to you and your family for a thankful holiday season. We hope it's a great time for you, hope you managed to stay awake for the meal later today.

In any event, thanks for being with us. We're going to jump into my discussion of how to study over the holiday.

Well, hey everybody. I just wanted to do a short message. We're coming up on the holidays. This is a really, it's a difficult time for bar takers, in a couple respects. I thought I would just do a brief message today about how you balance the holidays and your bar exam study. Stick with me here and let me tell you a little bit about this.

For those of you that don't know me, my name is Jackson Mumey. I own Celebration Bar Review and for 25 years I've been preparing people for their bar exams. Which means I've seen a lot of holidays and a lot of things that happened to people around this time of the year. It's a great time of the year. It's obviously a wonderful opportunity to reconnect with family. If you like your family. It's a horrible time to reconnect with your family if you hate your family, but it's a great time to be around kids. You've got all of the holidays at the end of the year and New Year's and you've got Christmas and Hanukkah and Kwanzaa. There's a lot of things going on. It's just a festive time and people feel good. Here you are studying for the bar exam.

That creates a couple of interesting perspective changes, I think, for people. I want to just identify a couple of those to you. One perspective change is the individual who takes the Scrooge approach. The "Bah, humbug! I don't want anything to do with the holidays because I've got to study for the bar." They put themselves in this and they're just really uptight and unhappy. They completely cut themselves off from the world. They're angry and well, they are, well, they're Scrooge. I got to tell you, when you're Scrooge, it doesn't work very well.

If you're at all familiar with A Christmas Carol, which by the way, just a little piece of trivia. I was in the original Hallmark Hall of Fame version of that. Famous TV movie. Yes, really. In a Christmas Carol, Scrooge really goes from really awful to really wonderful. What changes for him, along the way, is that he sees a bigger perspective. He sees the need around him. He sees the joy around him that he's missed all the way.

For a bar taker, what this means is if you're studying so intently for the bar exam through the holidays that you completely lose sight of the need around you, the love around you, the family around you, all of those things. You really don't get very effective study done. You really irritate and make everyone around you unhappy with you. Which has a really negative long term effect.

I know that it is culturally, within the culture of the bar taker, law student, lawyer world to say, "Oh, I'm not going to be prone to those emotions. I'm just going to keep my blinders on and study right now." Oh come on. Bah humbug. Get over yourself. I mean, take some time and enjoy the family meals. Enjoy the traditions. Enjoy the experiences. There's that this person, there's Scrooge.

Then at the other end of the extreme, the spectrum. You've got the person who lives perpetually in Christmas land. They're just too excited and it's the holidays. "Oh, I can't possibly study from Thanksgiving until at least the middle of January, because it's just so wonderful." Really? To me, that is just rote example of procrastination. That's really just putting something else in the way because you don't want to deal with the harder questions of how to study for the bar. Or the fear that the bar exam engenders or the problems that it creates for you.

I think that the person that is just wide eyed and wonderful and innocent is great, but within certain limits. If you're one of those people that just said to yourself, "Well, you know, it's almost Thanksgiving and of course I can't possibly get in studies over the Thanksgiving weekend because I have to go and get the early morning specials on Black Friday. Then, the week after I'm going to be decorating the tree. Then the week after that we've got some holiday parties and the week after that, well that's almost Christmas. Then there's Christmas and then there's New Year's. Oh my gosh, it's January 5th before I'm ready to study."

You can't do that. This is lost time for a lot of bar takers. You see, the people who swing to the other extreme basically give themselves all the excuses to not do their studies. As a result, they lose about a month, five, six weeks. Those are usually the people that end up saying, for the February exam, "I have to defer. I just, I'm not ready." That's really not the right approach either. If you're not Scrooge and you're not the wide eyed wonder, where should you be?

Well, obviously, in the middle I think is the good way to do it, but let me describe what I think that realistically looks like. I think that one of the best ways to prepare and study for the holidays is to get yourself some kind of a calendar program. If you're online, there's a bunch of free programs, but Google's got one and Apple's got one. There are hundreds of apps out there that are calendar apps. You could even use a written calendar, but I really like the electronic ones because you can then go to that calendar and plug in. One hour at a time, for when you want to study and set an alarm, so that it alerts you five or ten minutes before. Now, I want to be clear about this. I want you to do one hour of a study at a time. You could put one or two or three of those blocks, maybe four of those blocks together, but do them in single one hour blocks.

The reason is, is you give yourself just an hour, that's enough time to get some studying done. Then you can shut down and reevaluate. Do I have a chance to do another hour? Great, let me do it. Do I need more time? Great, I can do that, but for an hour, don't multitask. Don't have your Facebook on, don't be watching YouTube videos. Don't have your phone turned on. Just have your studies, but just for an hour. When the alarm goes off at the end of an hour. Well then, you're done, you're free. Then you can move on and do the next piece.

Now, the balance during the holidays I think works out like this. Please, please, please do not take your bar review materials to the Thanksgiving of Christmas of Kwanzaa or Hanukkah dinner tables. Please don't do it. Every year, people do it. As though it's a badge of honor. No, it's a badge of stupidity. It's a badge of fear and panic, and you don't need to give into that. Make the family time sacred time. Make your community time sacred time. Make your church time or your religious time sacred time. Make your work time sacred time. Make your study time sacred time. Give it its own spot and do that work.

I think that the Thanksgiving weekend is a great time to be able to do some extra study. Many of you will get an extra day off. Does it mean you can't go on and have the opportunity to do your shopping on Black Friday? Well, of course not, but you don't have to shop all day. Put a couple of hours of study in. Put a couple of hours of study in on Saturday or Sunday. I'm a big New Orleans Saints football fan, so I've pretty well given up on the football season now, but even at that I know I want to have some time set aside to watch the football games. I block it on my calendar. Then, outside of that time, I get my work done for the various things I need to do. Just block it out and work it that way.

The same is true when it comes to the rest of the holidays. Find the time that works best for you and set that time aside for studying, but do it in small blocks. If you do it that way, you'll continue to make progress through the holidays, so that when you get on the other end of New Year's, you'll actually be in a position to keep moving in a more rigorous fashion. Certainly for those of you in the February exam.

Now, if you're taking the July exam and you're watching this. Well, great. You can take more time off around all of these holidays, but don't stop studying all together, because it's really hard to rebuild that momentum when you've done that.

Well, I hope that helps. I hope it gives you some ideas about how to handle the holidays. Really, I think that, as in all things around the holidays, moderation is the key. Don't overdo it. Don't give up entirely. Don't be Scrooge. Don't be the person who just stops studying because you love the holidays so much. Find a little bit that you can do every day. If you can just get an hour or two in most days, then you're going to find that the holidays really don't disrupt your studying and you can enjoy that time, that special time. Which frankly is what you'll remember years from now, far more than you remember how you did on the bar exam.

I really encourage you to keep that balance and to have a wonderful Thanksgiving and holiday season throughout this year. Thanks so much for being with me. Bye bye.

Well, that wraps up today's episode. Thanks so much for listening. If you'd like to be part of our Extra Mile for bar exam takers private Facebook group, just check the show notes. You'll find a link in which you can request an invitation and when you'll see along the Extra Mile.

Speaker 1:

Thanks for listening to the Extra Mile Podcast for bar exam takers. At www.celebrationbarreview.com.