

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 the Celebration Bar Review.

Jackson Mumey: Hey everyone. Welcome to the Extra Mile Podcast. This is Jackson Mumey. Welcome to Episode 57. Today's discussion is going to be pretty timely. If you're listening just as this episode is released, we're about 45 days until the upcoming February 2106 bar exam. If you're taking the bar in February of 2016, you're absolutely going to want to stay with me today, because we're going to be talking about something I call 'reality setting in.' The week that you're about to go through is going to be the worst week that you'll have probably of your study in many respects and for most people, and so we're going to talk a little bit about that, and why it happens, and what you can do about it. As that reality sets in, it's a pretty scary time for a lot of people.

Now, if you're not taking the bar exam in February, you don't have to listen to this, but if you'd like a fore-taste of what's coming so that maybe you can maybe steel yourself against it and be prepared for when it happens, then great. I encourage you to listen, but if you don't feel like you want to hear that particular horror story today, I certainly understand. Maybe this is one you want to just archive and come back when you get within 45 days of your bar exam.

Before we dig into the meat of the discussion today, I just want to follow up on a couple of things. As you know in Episodes 55 and 56, we started a new series called the "Truth about the Bar Exam." The response to that has been absolutely phenomenal, I mean huge number of downloads, lots of comments and questions, and we'll be addressing those as we go along. I will continue to be talking about the truth about the bar exam and doing more pieces to that. It takes a little bit of time to put those together, and so watch for those in upcoming episodes. If you haven't gone through those two episodes, we focused in both of those on what the examiners are really doing versus what some of the mythology or some of the rumor is out there. Then more importantly, I think, in some respects, is how you can respond to that in Episode 56. So make sure you check that out and really lock into some of that information.

I also want to remind all of you that this Thursday at 3:00pm Eastern, 12:00 noon Pacific Time, we'll be conducting our free live Master Class. The title is "How to Make the Next Bar Exam your Last Bar Exam." This is a 90-minute course in which I give you the four steps that we've discovered over 25 years of teaching that passing bar takers really seem to understand and know, so it's the four steps that you need to know in order to pass your bar exam. It's totally free. We try to keep the class size down, although we're well over 1,000 people that have been through this course. The reaction to it is really phenomenal and very gratifying. I think it's made a big difference for a lot of people.

If you haven't been through that course, we invite you to join us. You can register in one of two ways. You can go to our website. It's

celebrationbarreview.com. Just click on the button on the home page there to claim your free seat, register, and you'll be all set up. If you prefer to text message us to get your seat, you can do that. Just text the phrase 'nextbarexam,' all one word, to 33444. Again, text the phrase 'nextbarexam' and message that to 33444, and we'll get you set up. I hope you'll join us on Thursday. Look forward to having you be part of that process.

Then one final quick little tease, I guess. Many of you are members of our Extra Mile Facebook group. We're over 300, almost 350 members in this private group now. We've got some big changes coming to that Facebook group, some really exciting stuff I'll be talking about shortly in the next episode or two probably, and encourage you to stay tuned. If you've not joined the Extra Mile Facebook group, there'll be a way to do that in the show notes, and I would really encourage you to do that. You're going to want to be part of it before we make these announcements. If you are already a member, well, just stayed tuned. I think you're going to like what you hear. So some cool stuff going on and exciting stuff going on.

Now reality is beginning to set in. We are 45 days or so until the bar exam. It's a painful, difficult time for everyone, or not everyone but at least a lot of people going through the bar. In today's message, I'm going to talk about what you do when reality sets in, so let's jump into that discussion.

Hi. Welcome to Celebration Bar Review. This marks 45 days until the upcoming bar exam. It represents, what in our experience has been, something that we call 'reality weekend.' What do I mean by 'reality?' Well, this is when the reality of the bar exam sets in. It manifests itself in a number of different ways. For a lot of people, we call this reality weekend because now you've been in your big, mega bar review classroom course for a couple of weeks. It now dawns on you that what they're doing is simply providing information. They do that well, but you were hoping that you were going to get some teaching, some instruction, some assistance, some feedback, and the reality now hits you that that's not what those courses are there to provide.

So this is the weekend when our phones start ringing like crazy with people saying, "Is it too late to get in the course?" The answer is, no, it's not too late. We can certainly help. But the reality is that most people will sit in absolute terror now, realizing that they've invested thousands of dollars in a course to just sit and listen to someone talk. They have no idea what's going on, and how to get better themselves as students. All they can do is look to their left, look to their right and realize the people sitting next to them know less than they do. That's not a very comforting feeling for people, and so reality begins to set in. You start to see some evidence of panic, some evidence of, "Maybe if I just do more, or maybe the answer is I'll just write hundreds of essay questions, or I'll do tens of thousands of multi-state questions." Or if they said to do 50 MBE questions a night, which is a joke in itself, "I'll do 75 a night, and I'll get better that way."

When this reality hits at about 45 days, it's really important to take a deep breath, and assess where you are, and assess what you need to do. There's still time to make some real choices about how you're going to study, and how you're going to prepare. I think that for those of you in big, large bar review courses, you need to recognize that what your course is doing right now is simply providing you with information. They're not teaching. That's never been their goal. Their goal is simply to put information in your hands. It's up to you, now, to use that information. If you're not in a position where you can add a course like ours or get assistance, then you need to make the best advantage you can of the information that you're being given. That's probably why you're on the internet and probably why you're watching this video right now. That's not a bad thing. Do the best that you can. Take the information you've got and make something useful out of it.

What if you're already in a course like ours and now you've hit 45 days, is still reality weekend? The answer is yes. For a lot of people, 45 days starts to represent that middle ground in which the exam now is imminent but it's not so close that there aren't adjustments or things that can be done. This is typically when I start to see a lot more work being submitted for review. It's when I see the pace of the work start. Whereas previously someone might have waited a week between pieces of writing to send in, now it might be one or two days. That's okay. There's nothing wrong with picking up the pace and moving more quickly as long as your work is purposeful.

I think that that's a big key at this stage. Forty-five days in the bar exam is a very long time. You can make a lot of adjustments. You can make a lot of improvements. You're going to learn a lot of information in the next 45 days as long as you're open to that possibility. Now, if you're already in high panic mode, if you are not listening, not paying attention, not following process, then these 45 days are going to be very difficult for you, and each one will get excruciatingly worse.

Reality weekend is also a time when historically I start to get what I would describe as the eviscerating kinds of email and contacts in which students decide that things are not going well, and it must be the fault of the teacher, or the course, or the bar examiners, or their family, or their spouse, or their employer, or just about anyone except for themselves. This is a point when, I think, for some people it just becomes obvious that something isn't working right. The hardest thing to do is to acknowledge that you, as the bar taker, the student, may be the core of that problem. It's so much easier to look externally and say, "Well, it's all these other things that are causing me to not be successful."

In most cases, really, the core of this is the bar taker themselves. It's an inability to follow directions, or it's an inability to buckle down and do the work, lots of peripheral things going on. I get some of the most amazing task-avoidance notes at this stage. People talking about, thinking about, focusing on just about

anything except what really matters in their studies. It's human nature. It's just part of the process. As we get closer and closer to the exam, task avoidance becomes harder and harder to accomplish.

This is probably the last point at which I start to see some of that kind of behavior really manifesting itself. If that's the way you're starting to lean, if you're starting to get really irritated at everyone and everything else, first of all take comfort in knowing that that's pretty normal. Secondly, take a deep breath. Stop and step back. It's probably not everyone else that's causing the problem. You probably have some complicity in what's going on here and resolve to correct the things that you can correct. I would say that in most cases when I get that high tension, high anxiety contact from someone at this point, the best advice I can give is to just take a breath. Let's do what we can to fix whatever the seeming, huge problem is at that moment, which is typically not a huge problem at all. Then let's move forward, and it's the moving forward, it's the creating some momentum that, I think, becomes important. This is a momentum juncture for most people.

We're in baseball season as I'm reporting this, but it would apply anytime, but I'm thinking about the transition, the pivot that a second basemen makes on a double play when they hit the ball, and they pivot and turn and throw to first base. In a sense that's what 45 days represent. It's a pivot point. It's when you pivot from a fairly leisurely study rate, or just even beginning if you're a big bar review course, to suddenly realizing the exam is coming up, 45 days, you'd better get with it, and you have to pivot and throw the ball hard to get the runner out or to get to the goal, and that's an okay thing. There's nothing wrong with that hard pivot right now and working.

If you're in a course and it's not working, pivot and get out of it, and find some help. If you're in a course and you think it could be better, pivot, find out what you need, be clear about what you think you need. If you're in a course like ours, talk to us, and let's see if we can help you get to where you need to be. The reality of this reality weekend is that we can only respond as students come to us. It's impossible to predict where each individual is going to be, and so communication becomes pretty important here.

Over the next 45 days, I can assure you that you're going to learn a great deal. You're going to grow a great deal. You're going to become much more confident as you get into towards the exam. That should be your goal in everything you're doing. If when you look at where you are and how you're studying right now, you cannot see that happening, this is your chance to pivot, to take stock of where you are realistically and then to make the changes that you need to make. I hope that when you do that that'll bring you some sense of peace, and some sense of accomplishment, and some sense of hope for what's going to come up in those next 45 days. As always, look forward to your comments and contact. You can email me at [jackson@celebrationbarreview.com](mailto:jackson@celebrationbarreview.com), and give me your comments and thoughts. Hope you have a great reality weekend.

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 we'll see you along the extra mile.

Speaker 1:

Thanks for listening to the Extra Mile podcast for bar exam takers at [www.celebrationbarreview.com](http://www.celebrationbarreview.com).