



Alison Monahan: Welcome to the Bar Exam Toolbox podcast. Today, we're talking about learning through failure. Fun! Your Bar Exam Toolbox hosts are Alison Monahan, that's me, and Lee Burgess. We're here to demystify the bar exam experience so you can study effectively, stay sane, and hopefully pass and move on with your life. Together we're the co-creators of the [Law School Toolbox](#), the [Bar Exam Toolbox](#), and the career related website [CareerDicta](#). I also run [The Girl's Guide to Law School](#). If you enjoy the show, please leave a review on your favorite listening app, and check out our sister podcast, the [Law School Toolbox podcast](#). If you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out to us. You can always reach us via the [contact form](#) on Bar Exam Toolbox, and we would love to hear from you. With that, let's get started.

Lee Burgess: Welcome back. If you've listened to this podcast over the last few years, it shouldn't be shocking to you that Alison and I like to read about education research and how we learn, in our free time.

Alison Monahan: We're so dorky.

Lee Burgess: We're so dorky. And we're also fascinated by how we deal with failure, which is evidenced by [one of our first episodes of the Law School Toolbox podcast](#) being on the book [Mindset, by Carol Dweck](#). So if you haven't read that book or listened to that podcast episode, we highly recommend it.

Alison Monahan: Definitely worth checking out.

Lee Burgess: Worth checking out. So shockingly enough, we actually learn the most about learning when we read about the research about how children learn, because as adults, we can really learn a lot from what is being done in the classroom to better learn about learning and retention. And a lot of these studies are done around math. I guess it's probably because it's easy to measure performance.

Alison Monahan: Well, and I also think because people have a lot of fear around math and learning math. Of all the subjects in school, I think math is probably one of those where people do have the most sort of fixed mindset of like, "I'm just bad at math."

Lee Burgess: Right. So recently, I read an [article](#) and then I sent it to Alison and then we sent it to the team, and it was all circulated by my son's preschool teacher. So thank you to her. But it was about learning, and it was focusing on how mistakes can actually lead to better learning. We're going to link to this – it's an NPR article – in the show notes, but I wanted to cover the gist of it here.



- Alison Monahan: Basically, it was really interesting, I thought. It was about how you retain information, particularly after you've made a specific mistake.
- Lee Burgess: Yeah. So picture yourself studying for the bar exam. You're doing a challenging MBE question. It's on evidence and you are sure that you got this one right. You just studied 405(b). You're really right there. 404(b). Now see, I'm even getting my writing wrong. So, you're really sure about the rule and you've identified the trick in the fact pattern. You are golden! And then you look at the answer and you are completely wrong.
- Alison Monahan: Ooh.
- Lee Burgess: Ouch. So you might at this point start to feel demoralized or that you really shouldn't be studying for the bar, and then maybe you should just go have a cocktail and just let it all go. And that kind of can be a normal response, but it turns out that although you might feel super frustrated when you've given something your all and you want to run and shut the book and run away from the experience, that this moment turns out, is actually a moment for great learning. The research covered in this article says the mistakes that we make with high confidence, that are then corrected, is one of the most powerful ways to absorb something and retain it.
- Alison Monahan: And I think that's so powerful because there is always that feeling of when you're so sure that you're right about something and then you're not – I think there's a shame component for a lot of people. You are embarrassed and you may even feel like your face is flushing, like, "Oh my gosh, how could I possibly have thought that was right and gotten it so wrong?" But this is actually one of the moments where you can really get your brain to focus on, why is this incorrect? What mistake did you make? And then not make the mistake again.
- Lee Burgess: Right, because we're all generally afraid of failure.
- Alison Monahan: As a culture, we're not people who sort of embrace failure.
- Lee Burgess: No, and we're going to do what we can to avoid it at all costs, really. I think that's one of the reasons why people do not really push themselves out of their comfort zone to test themselves while they're studying for the bar, because if they get the wrong answer, they feel like a failure and then they want to give up.
- Alison Monahan: Well, and the reality is, even if you look at the MBE, a good MBE score is going to be maybe 70%.



- Lee Burgess: Yeah. 75, you're really rocking it.
- Alison Monahan: If you get to 80% on the MBE, you're probably one of the best people taking the test. And that's hard, because we're all people who are used to getting like 95%, 100%.
- Lee Burgess: Yeah. And I think it is hard to own the fact that as we learn, we kind of need to create opportunities for these little failures, so we can challenge ourselves and engage the parts of the brain that are going to learn from these mistakes. And many of us are perfectionists, we're Type A, but I think we can learn a lot by looking at kids. So I've learned a lot about failure by watching my children try and learn any new skill and see how comfortable they are with falling or not being able to do something. I recently went to a children's piano recital and it was really interesting to watch the kids practice, to watch kids make mistakes. And I thought what was amazing is when the children made mistakes, most of them just kept on playing. It was just like a tiny speed bump, they didn't get frustrated, they didn't get upset, there were no tears. It was just like, they kept going. And it was interesting at the end of the recital, the teacher at one point had played along with one of the students, and one of the things she said was so proud of everyone about how hard they had practiced and how the kids had made mistakes and rolled through it. And then she called out a mistake she had made, I think, playing something from memory, and she said, "I made a mistake in the song that I was playing, and it was fine." And I think that that was a really sweet lesson to give all these small children, as young as four and five up to young teenagers, about failure, is that we all are going to hit these bumps on the road, and it's what we do with it.
- Alison Monahan: Well, and frankly, probably no one except her really even noticed.
- Lee Burgess: I didn't notice.
- Alison Monahan: Probably the person she was playing with me knew, but no one else knew.
- Lee Burgess: Nobody else knew. Yeah, and so what's interesting is, the research continues to show that you don't learn by just making wild guesses. And I think this is something that can happen – speaking of different parts of the bar exam – with the MBE. You're doing MBE practice and you're just like, "I'll just pick C."
- Alison Monahan: Like, "I don't really know. Eh, I've got like what, two minutes on this question. I'll skim it and not really... The answer is not jumping out at me, I'll just... Yeah, C looks good. Moving on."



Lee Burgess: You're not going to learn anything from that.

Alison Monahan: Well, maybe C was right.

Lee Burgess: Yeah.

Alison Monahan: But that doesn't really engage your brain's attention.

Lee Burgess: No. When you're doing practice, you kind of have to be giving it your all. You have to struggle to come up with the best right answer that you can, because then if you're wrong, you're more likely to remember why you were wrong, because you have your brain's full attention. This is called memory reconsolidation, because you're summoning up prior knowledge, things that you learned in your brain, when you're trying to answer a question and you're correcting it.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, and I think this is so key. I think the MBE is a great place for this. One thing we have our students do that you can do on your own, is for every single question they take, we ask them to make a grid of, "How confident are you about this answer?" And that takes what, five seconds basically after you've selected B. You're like, "Oh, I'm 50% confident", "I'm 100% confident", "I'm 0% confident."

Lee Burgess: Right.

Alison Monahan: Because what that does is, it basically shows you where you were totally guessing, meaning that you definitely need to go back and review this, even if you got it right. And it also shows you where is that point where you thought you knew what you were doing and you thought you were correct, and you are not correct.

Lee Burgess: Yeah.

Alison Monahan: That is where the alarm bell should be going off of, like, "Oh, this is a really great opportunity for me to figure out where I went wrong, and not do that again."

Lee Burgess: Yeah. And I think a lot of people don't want to ask themselves that question. I think they don't want to know.

Alison Monahan: It's uncomfortable.



- Lee Burgess: It's uncomfortable. And I think even acknowledging whether or not you're confident is uncomfortable.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah. I mean, sometimes people don't even know; it's just not something you've thought about. But you need to think about it, because ideally, when you go into the test on actual test day, you want to feel pretty confident about most of your answers. Obviously, there are going to be some where you're like, "Wow, I did not ever see this rule." When I had that happen, I just tried to tell myself, "Probably those were the sample questions they're just testing."
- Lee Burgess: Yeah, "Those aren't the real questions."
- Alison Monahan: Yeah. I mean, if it's so crazy that I'm like, "What in the world is this even about?", that's a test question. Don't need to worry too much about it. I'll answer it to the best of my ability, but I'm not going to stress over it.
- Lee Burgess: Yeah.
- Alison Monahan: But, yeah.
- Lee Burgess: Yeah. And so, I think one of the things that we kind of seem to ebb and flow is when it comes to how to learn things. I feel like we are in this camp now around looking at education as a whole, where we're like, "Standardized testing really doesn't work. You can just learn for the test, it doesn't really work." And so, I feel like we've moved away from this idea that you want to be quizzed, you want to test your knowledge. And I think that these are skills about retention that you can look at it in a different way. This is different than just kind of these blanket testings. We could also talk about whether or not the bar exam should be the gatekeeper, but it is.
- Alison Monahan: It is. So you have to pass.
- Lee Burgess: So you have to pass.
- Alison Monahan: Well, I think it's also of the difference between, if you're thinking about the bar exam or a classroom test – there's a difference between the end of grade test, where it's like you've studied all year, you've done your thing, and then suddenly you have two days of testing that's supposed to tell you something. That's different than what they're figuring out now, which is that ongoing, well-designed quizzes and things like that can actually help you understand and retain information. But you need to be doing them on a weekly, bi-weekly, even sometimes daily basis.



Lee Burgess: And the research in this article raised this with math students at a school in New York City. They had been giving more quizzes, but they had followed up those quizzes by a review of student-specific errors. And the initial results showed that that review of those errors was actually helping performance. So by forcing students to quiz themselves and kind of be one with their wrong answers and learning from them, that they were in the end doing so much better. And I think that we have really tried to implement more quizzing in our tutoring programs. I don't think everybody likes it, but...

Alison Monahan: No.

Lee Burgess: Or even does it sometimes. But we're trying to really show students you have to have these honest moments with yourself and practice recalling this information to be able to see if you can do it and to see if you can get it right. And if you're not going through that process, you're not really learning. And I think the neural science behind this, as we learn more about it, is interesting, that there are different parts of our brain that are controlling the memorization of information in this way.

Alison Monahan: Yeah. I think people often the bar, they think, "Oh, say I have 10 weeks. I'll spend eight of those weeks learning the material, and I'll spend a week or two memorizing the material, and then I'll be good to go."

Lee Burgess: Right.

Alison Monahan: And then it's like, "Hmm."

Lee Burgess: Maybe not.

Alison Monahan: That is probably not our recommended technique. You basically need to break this up into much smaller chunks and learn a little bit of material, and then test out your knowledge of that material, and then move on to a different topic. And then circle back, because spaced repetition is going to help you get this in your head and help you really memorize it. But just trying to memorize all the material you need for the bar in a week is unlikely to be very effective, unless you have a photographic memory, which you probably don't.

Lee Burgess: Right. And the spaced repetition is very interesting, because it's not just about reviewing it; it's really about recalling it and making it your own. I think one of the things that happens when you're doing a lot of this bar prep is so many of



the activities are passive, that even if you have seen... People will be like, "Well, I saw the material." It's like seeing it is not really how it works.

Alison Monahan: Even something like flashcards – it's like "Okay, can you flip the flashcard? Can you recall that?" Great, okay. That's step one – this legal trivia type level of just like, "These are the elements of" whatever, manslaughter. Ding ding ding! Okay, great. You do need to know that.

Lee Burgess: Yes.

Alison Monahan: However, that is really not sufficient.

Lee Burgess: Yeah. So when you're thinking about studying, preparing for the bar, let's all just accept bar takers don't like to be wrong or fail, because we all want to be lawyers, and typically lawyers are perfectionists.

Alison Monahan: Right, and also it seems scary because if you're on week two of your bar prep and you're seeing law that you've never seen before in your life, or you're getting questions wrong and, say you're missing 50% of the multiple choice questions you attempt – that can be demoralizing. But you're only a couple of weeks in.

Lee Burgess: Right, you've got to roll with it.

Alison Monahan: You've got to kind of stick with the process. If it is eight weeks of your 10-week program and you're still getting 50% right, then I have a really serious concern about your ability to pass the bar.

Lee Burgess: Right.

Alison Monahan: However, two weeks in, that's kind of normal.

Lee Burgess: Well, and that's where you have to really practice this growth mindset about failure. And I think the bar, because you are doing maybe more than you did in law school, like a ton of practice questions, hopefully, and then you're getting feedback on performance in a way that maybe you haven't done in law school – that it can be hard to keep that growth mindset. It can be hard to say, "This doesn't mean I'm stupid. This means that I need to work on this." That's really the fixed versus the growth, is it's not a label or a state of being; it is a process, it is something I can continue to work on. And I think that the bar on a daily basis is going to give you the opportunity to choose that growth mindset over and over again, but if you want to be able to implement a lot of these techniques,



which are going to work the best with your brain, you have to be able to keep yourself moving to that growth mindset.

Alison Monahan: Yeah. I had really interesting discussion with Kate McGinnis on a [recent podcast](#), where she said as a coach, one of the things she really likes to say is just "add yet." Like, "Oh, I'm not getting the percentage I need to get on the MBE, yet." And I think that just turned everything around, which you're like, "Oh, okay. It just hasn't happened yet. Okay, I can live with that."

Lee Burgess: Yeah. And I think we get so caught up in exactly where we are supposed to be. So going back... I wouldn't want to talk about my kids on all of these podcasts, but I read a lot of parenting stuff because that's a big part of my life.

Alison Monahan: Because you have a growth mindset around parenting.

Lee Burgess: I do, and I'm like a researcher. I kind of am a copious deep dive type of researcher. I see something and then I have to go read ten more things about it. It's a good part of my personality; it's also a wasteful part of my personality. The Internet does not help that, let's say. And so, I came across this thing that was talking about speech, and it was talking about how many words children are supposed to know at a certain milestone. They've got this, "Your child at one year should have 20 words. Your child at 18 months should have 50 words." And then the speech... I'm on these online mommy groups. Anyway, there's a point to this story. Then a mom who was a speech therapist was like, "Oh yeah, maybe they need to have 50 words to not meet this milestone, but they should have like 120 words." And then as a parent I'm trying to count the words my daughter has, who's 18 months. And I'm like, "One, two... Does it count if she thinks it's a word but it's like 'avoa' and not avocado?" She's got her own made up her words for things.

Alison Monahan: I'm like, I got that one. That was avocado.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, exactly. But she's got some kooky words for things. So then you're counting it up and I'm like, "I don't know how many words she uses." And then you're kind of like, "Should I be tracking this?" And then I kind of have this moment where I'm like, "Whoa there, crazy lady. Roll it back." I think that we can get so caught up in these statistics. In bar prep, it's the same thing: "I'm getting 25% of these questions right. I'm getting 50% of these questions right. What's my score on the essay? I'm getting a 50? If I'm getting a 50, why aren't I getting a 60? I'm getting a three." You can get caught up in all these numbers and these ranking yourself, and that is not any growth mindset. That is not any growth mindset. You are totally mistaking the actual path to learning and the





actual path to growth, right? The more important question is not, how many words does my daughter have? I think the more important question is, is she learning new words every day?

Alison Monahan: Right. And I've met your daughter a number of times. I think she's fine.

Lee Burgess: Oh, I think she's fine. But you can see how quickly you can go down the rabbit hole. We can do this with the MBE too.

Alison Monahan: We were all freaking out because my nephew, who is almost a year, didn't have any teeth until a month ago. It was like, "Why doesn't he have teeth?" And there's a Bell curve. Some kids don't get teeth immediately. He's fine.

Lee Burgess: I know. My daughter's bald too. She's pretty bald.

Alison Monahan: He has a lot of hair.

Lee Burgess: I know, I know. So, he's overachiever in the hair department, my daughter is an underachiever in the hair department. But that's okay, I do believe she will... I have very long hair. I think she will have hair some day.

Alison Monahan: Well, your older son has hair, and he didn't have any for a while.

Lee Burgess: He does. Exactly.

Alison Monahan: But point being, they're going to get hair eventually. If you keep at it, you will eventually get more MBE questions correct.

Lee Burgess: Right, if you were studying in the right way. And so, I think that often times we're just asking the wrong questions when we try and evaluate ourselves.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, like the overall number is way less important.

Lee Burgess: Right.

Alison Monahan: Like 70%.

Lee Burgess: And the other thing is, we focus on the numbers instead of the struggle. [AdaptiBar](#) is a tool that we use in our programming. And in AdaptiBar they've built a back end to constantly give you questions that you're going to get wrong probably because they're the ones you're struggling with. So, if you are just only tracking accuracy, you might find that your accuracy is starting to dip.



- Alison Monahan: Oh yeah. One of our tutors, who's studying for a different bar exam just posted something on our internal Slack group about this, where she basically said, "Oh, I just realized there was a setting on AdaptiBar and then when I changed the setting, my scores went up. So, they're giving me a different type of question. So if your students are freaking out about their scores not being so great, maybe they can boost their confidence by just changing this one setting."
- Lee Burgess: Right. Or they can also appreciate to keep doing those hard questions, because they're probably also going to be making more progress.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah. So I think you've got to be realistic about what's actually going on here.
- Lee Burgess: Right. I think that's true, and really not get caught up. We have had students... It might be shocking to hear that not always are all of our tutors in agreement about the best way to do everything. And so, we will sometimes have internal discussions about scoring practice exams. This is one of my things. I do not like to give student scores on the practice exams. I think it is a distraction. I think the feedback is more important. Every now and then we will have a student who proves me right and causes us to have this dialogue yet again with all of the tutors. I think there is this idea that the scores are what's important, and of course I'm like, "No, it is the process. It is about writing the best possible answer that is important." And then there will be a student who literally cannot look past the score.
- Alison Monahan: Right, and this would be early on in the process typically too, when of course, it would be pretty common for the score that you're getting not to be that amazing, because you've just started studying.
- Lee Burgess: Right. But you get so caught up on the score that you don't get caught up on the mistake, and then there's no focus on the mistakes. I would much rather spend energy talking about the mistakes and the solutions, and less about the score. Again, I think that being conscious of these easy pitfalls about how you learn, can make you more aware and encourage you to do the heavy lifting, which is going to be testing yourself and making mistakes and learning from them, instead of doing affirmation work. Basically doing easy stuff that you know is just making you feel better as a person.
- Alison Monahan: Well, and I think developing some curiosity about why maybe your score is not where you want it to be or why you're missing so many of these questions and getting frustrated. If you can turn it into a curiosity of like, "Okay, I acknowledge that this is stressful and frustrating, and I'm not doing as well as I would like.



How can I start to turn this around? What are some very baby steps I can take?" For me I always go back now, because it's winter and I'm doing ski lessons – like, "Okay, my form is clearly falling apart. Why is that?" And it turns out there are these tiny little things you can correct in the moment of like, "Oh, I need to move my hand forward six inches." And you do that and suddenly everything gets a lot easier. So, on the bar, I think it's a lot about like, "Okay, maybe my MBE scores are dropping and I'm using AdaptiBar. First off, is there a reason that I'm just getting the harder questions? Okay, I can live with that." Or maybe you are really in a dip. [Seth Godin](#) talks about the dip. He's like, "That's the part where things get crappy." And you kind of have to push through that and that's a normal part of any process like this. But is it that you're tired? Are you burned out? Do you need to take more breaks? Do you need more coffee? Did you not eat lunch? There are all these things that can be causing your scores to be dipping.

Lee Burgess: Right.

Alison Monahan: Or is it literally just you don't know the law? You need to study this area of the law, there's no harm in that. These are all things you get curious about. Why are these things happening to you?

Lee Burgess: Yeah. The other thing that I think has been interesting over the years as we have hired people is I have seen that identifying mistakes and learning why those mistakes are being made and correcting them, are two different skill sets, it turns out.

Alison Monahan: Oh yeah, absolutely. Sometimes people are really good at telling you all the things you're doing wrong. And you're like, "Okay, that's a great starting point. What do I need to do right?"

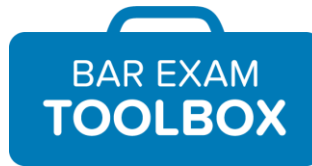
Lee Burgess: Right. One of the things that we do is, we have a lot of people apply to work for us who have been bar graders. We like to hire bar graders. Hey, if you're a bar grader listening to this, go ahead and send us an application.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, we love you.

Lee Burgess: We love you. But often times, I will get these applications, and part of our application process is actually doing some feedback. And I have found that people who have spent 10 years, or more sometimes, grading the bar, literally cannot tell somebody how to fix what they've done wrong.



- Alison Monahan: Right. It's like, "Oh, that's wrong." It's like, "Okay, great. Well, how should we correct that? What advice can you provide so that the next time this person writes this essay or if they rewrite this essay, they're not making that same mistake?"
- Lee Burgess: And I've also found that sometimes these bar graders who sometimes will even grade exams on the same subject matter over and over and over again, are not experts in that subject matter because they don't actually practice applying those rules. They can just tell you if the rule is right or wrong. And so, they also have a hard time sometimes teaching somebody how to apply that rule, because they don't actually have that understanding of it. Now, that does not mean that they're not good at grading consistently on the bar exam; that is a separate skill set. But I think that it's another example of why this idea of having to go through your mistakes and figure out how to remedy them, really shifts your understanding in the material in a way that just... I just always think of the red pen back when we were in school. You get the exam and it's just like checked, crossed off things. You missed seven. And then you just put it in the drawer.
- Alison Monahan: You're like, "Eh, seven, okay."
- Lee Burgess: Right. This is about wrestling with material, and that really changes your engagement with the material.
- Alison Monahan: Well, it's been interesting because we have incorporated a lot more process stuff as we've developed more and more materials. And so recently, we had our tutors actually write sample answers to bar questions and a lot of them said, "Wow, that is a different process. I'm actually glad that I did this, because I have a better appreciation for what my students are struggling with now."
- Lee Burgess: And it's humbling. I think almost every tutor was humbled by the process of putting themselves under time. We asked them to do it under somewhat time conditions. Under time conditions and trying to execute what the students were doing, because I think that's an exercise that most teachers don't ever put themselves through.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, it's like you've become the expert so now you don't have to actually do it. But when you do it, you really... Once you become the expert, that's almost when things become dangerous too. For me, I was taught to swim before I could walk, and then years later when I was a lifeguard, they asked me to teach swimming lessons. And I was a terrible swimming instructor because I had no idea what I was doing. I had to really break it down and do like, "Oh, I guess I'm



blowing bubbles when I lift my mouth out. I had no idea, I didn't know." So, I think breaking it down and really thinking, "Why am I getting water in my mouth? Oh, because they don't know to blow bubbles."

Lee Burgess: Right. No, it's so true. And so when we try and break down our curriculum, both in our [Practice of the Week program](#), which we call POW, which is on the MBE, our [Writing of the Week program](#), which is on the essays and the performance test – we are really trying to parse through and say, "Here's your law, but let's talk about where the struggles are. Is it about how to outline? Are you making mistakes with outlining? Go back and do it again." We're really trying to help you identify where these mistakes are being made, so you can go rework them, because I really believe that feedback and re-writing is just the missing piece. Nobody likes to do it – nobody likes to get feedback, nobody likes to rewrite, nobody likes that. This is why nobody wants to go to the dentist, because they don't want to get lectured about how they haven't been flossing and...

Alison Monahan: Oh, I love going to the dentist.

Lee Burgess: I know you love the dentist.

Alison Monahan: Because I always floss.

Lee Burgess: Because you are a flosser, I know. I've got a Waterpik. I'm much better than I used to be.

Alison Monahan: I even have my own dental tool that I scrape everything off with, so they think I've been flossing. A little secret right there.

Lee Burgess: But I think a lot of people have fears of this stuff. They don't want negative feedback, right? And so, there is something about making it okay for you to get this negative feedback so you can learn from it. You can do that for yourself or you can engage people or curriculum that will help you do that for you.

Alison Monahan: Yeah. One of the things I like about the POW program is that we have a video 1 and we explain to you a question, and we walk through a specific piece of law. But one of my favorite pieces is actually that then we give you a sample question on the same topic, that you do immediately afterwards; the idea being, hopefully you learned something and you get it right. But if you didn't, it's a really good point to be like, "Huh, maybe I should go watch that other video again" or, "Maybe I should think about this a little more deeply because obviously I missed the point here." I want you to have that immediate feedback.



- Lee Burgess: And I think, with the writing portion, although we won't torture you with doing multiple essays one after the other, but I do think that it is interesting to write out an answer and then compare it. We're in the process and have developed sample answers for a lot of our curriculum to compare it to that sample answer. And then you need to go back to your work and say, "Why didn't I do this like this sample answer? Should I do it again?" Try it again, rewrite sections of it. I hear over and over again when I challenge students to do more rewriting that they do not have time to do this sort of studying. But this is where the magic happens. Put down the video lecture, move the outline to the side. Wrestling with this material is the way that you move it into your brain so you can actually recall it on exam day.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, and I think that rewrite is such a critical step in the process. Assuming that you actually did struggle the first time to get it correct, that's when your brain has tried to pull out the information and now you can put something else back in a different way that's actually going to help you in the future.
- Lee Burgess: Yeah. The other thing that we do more and more with our tutoring students are these quizzes that we already talked about earlier in the podcast. So even if you're studying by yourself, you're using a commercial bar review, come up with some quizzes. I bet if you wrote a quiz and then took it, you wouldn't forget that information.
- Alison Monahan: Or even if you're studying off of an outline, just cover up part of the outline and see if you can write down whatever is in it. If not, you probably don't really know it.
- Lee Burgess: Yeah. Alright, so there's lots of stuff that's come out of this podcast that you can try. We've talked about tracking confidence levels with your MBE questions, giving yourself feedback, rewriting questions, quizzing yourself, getting feedback from external sources, whether it be your school, whether it be a tutor like our team, and then doing rewrites and really doing the heavy lifting, and keeping a growth mindset. Really sitting and trying to check yourself when you get too negative, because this is not easy but you've got to keep learning new things. Be like a little kid. Just fall down, go boom, get up.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah. It's hard to keep that level of lightness and curiosity. People are really hesitant to test themselves because they don't want to find out that they're going to be wrong. "I can't do practice questions, I don't know the law well enough." It's like, "Well no, that's how you learn the law."
- Lee Burgess: Right.



Alison Monahan: I mean, there's good neuroscience, read the article. But I think recognizing the kind of emotional stuff around this and the shame component and all these things, and still doing it anyway – that's really the key to passing this test.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, alright. Well, with that, we are out of time. I want to take a second to remind you to check out our [blog](#) at BarExamToolbox.com, which is full of helpful tips to help you prepare and stay sane as you study for the bar exam. You can also find information on our website about the courses, tools, and one-on-one tutoring programs we offer to support you as you study for the UBE or California bar exam. If you enjoyed this episode of the Bar Exam Toolbox podcast, please take a second to leave a review and rating on your favorite listening app. We'd really appreciate it. And be sure to subscribe so you don't miss anything. If you are still in law school, you might also like to check out our popular [Law School Toolbox podcast](#) as well. If you have any questions or comments, please don't hesitate to reach out to myself or Alison at [lee@barexamtoolbox.com](mailto:lee@barexamtoolbox.com) or [alison@barexamtoolbox.com](mailto:alison@barexamtoolbox.com). Or you can always contact us via our website [contact form](#) at BarExamToolbox.com. Thanks for listening, and we'll talk soon!

### **RESOURCES:**

[Article: Why Mistakes Matter in Creating a Path for Learning](#)

[Practice of the Week \(POW\) MBE Workshop](#)

[Writing of the Week \(WOW\) Bar Essay Workshop](#)

[Private Bar Exam Tutoring](#)

[AdaptiBar](#)

[Mindset, by Carol Dweck](#)

[The Dip: A Little Book That Teaches You When to Quit \(and When to Stick\), by Seth Godin](#)

[Law School Toolbox Podcast Episode 1: Mindset – The Key to Success in Law School?](#)

[Law School Toolbox Podcast Episode 228: Boosting Your Confidence \(w/guest Kate McGuinness\)](#)

[Bar Exam Toolbox blog: Why Your Mindset Matters When it Comes to the Bar Exam](#)