

Announcer: 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 everybody, welcome to episode 25 of the Extra Mile Podcast, this is Jackson. Couple of milestones today. First of all its episode 25, which I think is pretty amazing, frankly. I hope you're enjoying it. I think based on the number of downloads, and ratings, and reviews you are and we really appreciate that. Appreciate you taking time out of the day that you've got to spend a few minutes with me a couple times a week. If you're not a subscriber yet we hope that you will. You can subscribe on iTunes or by going to our website Celebrationbarreview.com. Just click here on the podcast link there you'll see all of the episodes and show notes and you can subscribe from there. That's one milestone and one that I'm actually pretty proud of.

The second milestones is that this is the first podcast episode that is releasing as a major bar exam jurisdiction, is releasing their exam results and that's Florida. At least based on the schedule today, if you're listening to this on the 21st, on Monday bar results should be out in Florida. I'll be talking about that in our next episode just too kind of bring everybody up-to-date on the early feedback and results and what's going on there. We certainly wish everyone best wishes and good luck as they get their results during the day today. If you're listening after this date and you've gotten your results well congratulations, if you passed and if you didn't pass stay with us, hang in there. We've got lots of resources and ways that we can help you make the next bar exam your last bar exam.

Before we get into today's episode which is the second of our series on bar exam peace. We've titled that Not Following the Crowd. I think you can imagine what we mean by following the crowd. The crowd goes out and takes the standard bar review courses. They study in the standard way, and they get the standard pass rate, which is usually a very very low number. We'll explain in this episode today why that happens, what the economic insensitive is for some of the bar review courses and companies not to make changes and not do things that might be in their students best interest. Why you want to be much more proactive as a bar taker and a consumer, then perhaps you've been. For those of you who just got Florida results back if they weren't good ones and you took one of those courses I think you probably would be saying, Amen right now to that.

We're going to jump into that in just a minute. I do want to let all of your know that this Thursday I'll be doing a live online training at 3:00pm Eastern, that's 12:00pm Pacific. The name of that training is How to Make the Next Bar Exam Your Last Bar Exam. It's the 4 steps that every bar taker has to take in order to pass their test. This is a heavy content filled, free information but very much

stuff that you can take and use right away. I'm getting great feedback to this training and I'm delighted to be able to do it. There's no charge to you.

All you need to do is reserve your seat in advance and you can do that in one of a couple of ways. You can go to our website at celebrationbarreview.com/webinar. That's celebrationbarreview.com/webinar and register there. You can register just by texting us, text the phrase, Next Bar Exam all one word, nextbarexam to 33444. Again, that's nextbarexam, text that to 33444 and you can register by text. There's no cost and I think the webinar you'll really love it. I think you'll find it incredibly helpful based on the feedback I'm getting from people going through the training right now. Love to have you join me for that training this Thursday.

Also, want to let you know that we have a private Facebook group called the Extra Mile for bar exam takers. It's by invitation only so you do need to send a request to join the group. The groups made up of current and future bar takers, but also previous bar takers, people who've been successful on their bar who've come on to this community to offer their insights and suggestions. I come in couple times a week with resources and to answer question for people. We've got several hundred people in the group, and really think it's proving to be a valuable resource. Definitely as results come out it's a great place I think to kind of see what's going on and get a feeling for that. It's free to join up and at the end of this episode I'll give you the instructions on how to do that.

Hope that you'll stay with us. Today's message about not following the crowd is one that I think will make a great deal of sense to those of you who've been struggling with what to do in terms of how to get started and how to proceed with your studies. It will also make sense to those of you that have just finished your bar exams and maybe didn't get the results that you were hoping for. Look forward as always to your comments and thoughts. Let's jump into today's discussion about bar exam peace and not following the crowd.

Hi, welcome to Celebration Bar Review. Today is the second in a series of video lectures, brief video lectures, that I've titled, Exam Peace. Two words that don't seem to go together very well. Kind of ways to really think about how you can get some peace around your studying for the bar exam. In the last installment I talked about what happens after the exam, postmortem. If you've taken your bar already, and you're waiting for your bar results, I really encourage you to watch that message.

Today I'm going to kind of back track to the beginning of the process a little bit and talk about how you get peace by not following the crowd when it comes to studying for the bar. Now this is going to be a really painful message for some people because I'm going to really tweak some preconceived notions pretty squarely in the eye. When it comes to tweaking I have to tell you that some of the people I'm tweaking, tweak back. There's no question that there's some

people that are unhappy with me because I say these things. You can find them very easily on the web, Google's a great thing.

I think that the ultimate truth of what I'm going to tell you is really unassailable. I want to talk about how you get some peace at the beginning of the process by doing something that's kind of intuitive, which is to not follow the crowd. Now here's what I mean, most people who take the bar exam take what I will euphemistically call, the big box courses. That is the courses that almost everyone knows about that are now locked in a titanic struggle with one another for supremacy on most law school campuses.

The reasoning that most people use when they take one of these big bar review courses is not that it's the best course, or that's a course that actually meets their needs most effectively. It's not even that it's the best price, or the most convenient, or has the best professors, or does the best work, or certainly not the one with the highest pass rate. That would be us. They take it because everyone else is doing it.

Now, obviously I'm talking in large part about 3 L's, but this really even applies to people who are going back and taking an exam again. I hear from lots of people who tell me in the past tense, "Well, I took big box mega bar review because everyone was doing it. Then I realized somewhere during that process, oh oh this is not a particularly wonderful course, or doesn't meet my needs, or it's not convenient, or I'm not getting any feedback, or I'm not getting much help. It was too late to make any difference or change out of it." They didn't pass the bar and now they're coming to us.

I recognize that law students in particular and people in our profession generally are risk averse. Here's the real irony about this idea of taking a bar review just because everybody takes it. It really has to do with the math, kind of like looking at postmortems I guess. If the biggest bar review is as they say, the one that almost everyone takes in any jurisdiction. You know what their pass rate is going to be? Think about it, it's going to be in the state pass right. In other words, in California the big box bar review has a pass rate of, get this, 35%.

If they advertised, hey take our course because we've got a 35% pass rate. I think a lot of people would say, oh that doesn't make much sense, so they don't say that they're smart people. Instead they say, take us because, what? That's right, you can say it, everyone takes us.

Here's the interesting part, your goal is not to get the state pass rate is it? Your goal is to pass the exam 100% for you. If you do what everyone is doing you've suddenly diminished your changes in most of the major jurisdiction. When I say the major jurisdictions really to be specific I'm talking about California, New York, Florida, Texas. Those jurisdictions alone, the bar rate is for the state is much much lower than the bar rate that we've had for more than 10 years now.

Why is that? We're not the big company. The big companies are simply going to get the state rate.

Imagine for a minute that you're actually running the big mega bar review, and you know that no matter what you do, no matter how good your course is. No matter how fabulous it is, because you prepare 90 or 95%, or whatever that magic number is of bar takers in that jurisdiction, that no matter what you do your pass rate is really controlled by the examiners by their setting where the level or the bar will be for that particular jurisdiction. If the examiners of state X determine that only 45% of the applicants are going to pass this year. It doesn't matter how great your course is you're only going to get 45% pass rate.

For those of you that are economics Majors think about it in terms of incentives. What incentive does that create for a bar review to do something extra, or to provide more service, or to give greater feedback, or to be more intense in what they offer? That's right, it doesn't. There is no incentive whatsoever. What happens is that when you follow the group, the herd, you're getting the least incentivized. The least responsive kind of course because there's really no reason for that bar review provider, or group of providers to do anything different or special. The only thing that might cause them to write a better course is the competition for the other mega big box bar review. I think the Federal Trade Commission's made it pretty clear over the years that's not really the way most of these guys behave. As a result following the crowd is getting you mediocrity at best. In many cases much less than that.

Here's the other thing that's interesting to me about following the crowd. Did you follow the crowd when you picked your law school? I really want you to think about that for a minute. My guess is that very few people watching this video could say, oh yes, I choose X law school because all my friends were going to X law school. I don't think that's the way it works. I think most people choose a law school based on what programs it offers. What its reputation is. What convenience it offers. What kind of financial package they got. The range of law schools is huge. I think it would be foolish to say one size law school, one concept of a law school fits every one. In one of the most important decisions that you had to make about your legal career, what school to go to. You actually exercised individual choice.

Isn't it ironic that when you come to really the next big decision that has to be made after entering law school, which is how do I pass a bar exam to get out of law school. That people then suddenly become drone like if you will, mind trick. In that mind trick they suddenly say, I must do what everyone is doing. Very strange. If doing what everyone else was doing actually gave you peace of mind I wouldn't have any leg to stand on here. I mean like sheep to the slaughter, oh yeah we're doing bah, and we're going right along, and then flip right over the edge.

The reality is that when people get into those big courses very often they realize very early on that it's not particularly a good fit. For some people it's okay. For a lot of people it's not convenient. It's not well tuned to what they want. It doesn't give them much responsiveness. There's not much feedback. There's not much personal attention. Wow, now you've started your studies, you sitting in this room watching a video or God forbid there's actually a human being up there that's reading a script, and not taking questions, and not interacting. You suddenly say to yourself, this doesn't look like law school. Oh, yeah it doesn't. That's not what they're trying to do. Now you don't have any peace at all. Now you're frantic, and you're panicked. I get those phone calls I can tell you almost to the hour when courses start across the country from the big box bar reviews. Because within a day I'm getting phone calls and emails from people saying, "Is it too late to register for your course?"

You see, you can't really be successful by following the herd because this process, the bar exam, is really counter intuitive. To be really successful you should zigging when everyone else is zagging. Particularly if you're in a jurisdiction like California, New York, Texas, Florida, Georgia, New Jersey where pass rates aren't wonderful. If you're doing something different than the people who are all grouped together at the bottom of that range, then you've got a much better chance of passing.

One of the ones I think that you get peace of mind about all of this, is to make the decision, a choice, that's based on what meets your needs. If we're that course great. If we're not, that's great too. Do the research, find out. Look at the comments, we've got thousands of comments on our website from past students who think we're wonderful. Can you find a few from people that think we're not so wonderful, sure. It's nowhere near the number that say, yeah this course really met my needs. That's really the point. You want to find a course that meets your needs. When you do that, you begin laying the foundation for peace that you're going to have throughout this process.

As we go forward in this video series I'm going to talk about the bar study specifically, and how you get some peace as you go through each part of the study for the bar exam itself. I hope that that's helpful and useful to you.

Thanks very much for watching. If you've got comments or questions as always I invite you to contact me at celebrationbarreview.com. Thanks again for watching, and have a peaceful week.

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. We'll see you along the Extra Mile.