



- Lee Burgess: Welcome back to the Law School Toolbox podcast. Today, we're talking about different approaches to law school learning, with strategies for kinesthetic learners. Your Law School Toolbox hosts are Alison Monahan and Lee Burgess. That's me. We're here to demystify the law school and early legal career experience so you'll be the best law student and lawyer you can be. We're the co-creators of the [Law School Toolbox](#), the [Bar Exam Toolbox](#), and the career related website, [CareerDicta](#). Alison also runs [The Girl's Guide to Law School](#). If you enjoy the show, please leave a review or rating on your favorite listening app. And if you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out to us. You can reach us via the [contact form](#) on LawSchoolToolbox.com, and we'd love to hear from you. And with that, let's get started.
- Alison Monahan: Welcome back. Today, we're talking about being a kinesthetic learner in law school, which is unfortunately probably not the most common learning type in law school. So Lee, what is a kinesthetic learner?
- Lee Burgess: So a kinesthetic learner means that your brain processes material best by carrying out a physical activity, making you kind of a hands-on learner, or a doer. I like the fact that as I'm saying this, I'm like using air quotes while we're recording a podcast, which is the silliest thing ever. But maybe that's very kinesthetic of me to use my air quotes as I'm talking.
- Alison Monahan: Right, I think that makes the point too that nobody is 100% one way or the other. I mean, I know you pretty well. I probably wouldn't say that you're the world's biggest kinesthetic learner, but they're techniques. They're strategies that you can use from different aspects of this, depending on what you're trying to do, and of course, even though we're podcasting, air quotes. Why not?
- Lee Burgess: Why not? I can just do them through this whole episode. Would be very meaningful. Doubt it will add anything. You could spot where I'm using the air quotes, it'll be like a big secret. So [if you're wondering if you are a kinesthetic learner](#), a few things that you can look for. Maybe you find it hard to sit still for long periods of time and you've caught yourself zoning out in the classroom, you find it hard to focus. You might like to exercise.
- Alison Monahan: Wait, doesn't that happen to everyone?
- Lee Burgess: Well, I mean it does happen to everyone. But I think there are people who truly have an inability to focus versus those of us who sometimes just zone out during class because it can be boring.
- Alison Monahan: Right.
- Lee Burgess: You might find exercising more relaxing than sitting and reading a book, or doing something that isn't necessarily as physical. You're more likely to



remember how you felt during an event than specific details about it. So you're a little more like in your body, I think, than most people would describe themselves as being. You use hand gestures during conversations with others. And you would rather figure something out on your own than read or ask for directions. So you are someone who likes to grapple with challenges instead of having something explained to you.

Now, if you're in law school, and this sounds like you, you're probably thinking, "Yeah, this is not a good thing for a law student, because the law school environment seems to cater more toward visual and auditory learning." You're forced to sit in a classroom. You listen to a bunch of lectures. Maybe you make outlines and stare at them. So you might feel like your head's going to explode in some of these activities because they're not really designed for how your brain works.

Alison Monahan: I think that's right. I mean, I think the flip side of that is that even if law school itself is not necessarily the most natural fit, I think being a lawyer, depending on the way that you decide to be a lawyer, can really be.

Lee Burgess: That's true.

Alison Monahan: So you might find in law school that you're doing better in classes that have some sort of practical component, such as a legal clinic, moot court, mock trial. Hey, guess what? That's basically what lawyers actually do.

Lee Burgess: That's true.

Alison Monahan: So if you do feel frustrated by the classroom experience, I think it's worth taking the long view and thinking, "Well, you know I'm really set on being a trial litigator. I think understanding, having an intuitive understanding of how to move my body is going to be beneficial." And you're probably right about that.

Lee Burgess: Yeah. Yeah, that's a really good point that a lot of ... You can find your place in the law school environment to match the type of person you are, and that might make you a better lawyer in the end. Who knows?

Alison Monahan: Yeah. And I think if you're listening to this in your early years of law school, and you're thinking, "Oh, I'm just stuck in the classroom," well, think about ways that you can at least get a little bit of that practical experience, whether it's taking on a pro bono project, or you might have to figure stuff out on your own and you actually get to interact with a person. That might be something that makes the rest of it really make a lot more sense to you and make it worth putting up with, even if it's not totally natural for you.



Lee Burgess:

Yeah. I think that that's very true. The other thing to keep in mind is even if this is sounding very familiar to you, that it is important to know that your learning style may change based on the class that you're studying, or the information that you're trying to memorize. Just because you are finding that you really kind of need this more physical, mind-body connection to be able to memorize material, for some classes, it's possible that you could be more of a visual learner in torts, or that contracts makes the most sense to you if you are doing auditory activities. So you got to keep an open mind.

Although a lot of people talk about how important these learning styles are, we think it's more important to realize that [you need to have a whole host of ideas about the different ways that you can study](#). You need to try them out in your classes, because there's not one answer for every person, for all of your law school classes. You need to be able to experiment and you never know, some things might resonate with you that might surprise you.

Alison Monahan:

Yeah, I think that's absolutely right. I mean, it's just like people who say, "Oh, well I'm not a kinesthetic learner." And then they decide that they want to learn how to ski. Or they want to learn how to dance salsa. It's like, "Okay, great. Well you can't just read about that in a book." You can't just talk about that. You have to go and do it. And so a little bit of the same thing here. You might say, "Oh, well I'm a really kinesthetic learner, law school is just not a great fit for me." But you can also use techniques and strategies from different types of learning styles.

So we've got two other podcasts, you can listen to those. But it's not to say that we're going to offer you some tips specifically catering to the kinesthetic ideas, but you might also need to pull in different approaches, whether it's making [flow charts](#), or talking things out, or [reading your outlines](#) and that kind of thing. You're probably, to learn some of this material, going to have to pull in some techniques from other types of learning styles. It's just kind of the reality of the information you're trying to learn.

Lee Burgess:

It is. And the only way that you really learn that resonates with you is trying different stuff out. So if you're early in your legal career, or you're getting ready to start law school, it's good to think about what's worked for you in the past. But don't close yourself off to using some of these new techniques. Try them out early in the semester so by the time you get to exams, you have a better idea of how to study for your exam, because you've been practicing these different learning techniques, or trying different things out throughout the semester. So you might say like, "Flashcards? Blegh. Not going to work for me. Throw those out the window."

Great, then don't waste time making flashcards at the end of the semester. But you might find that some of the [recommendations for even the kinesthetic](#)



[learner learning style](#), which we're discussing in this podcast, maybe some of them really resonate for you, and you never thought about them. But you should try them out to see if they work for you.

Alison Monahan: Right. I think the key takeaway that you see in any type of study about how people learn anything, and also how they learn in law school, is really focusing on [active learning over passive learning](#). So passive learning is just kind of sitting in class, listening to a lecture, maybe reviewing your notes, and that's about it. There are lots and lots of other things you could be doing to make it more hands-on and to really drill down and make this material your own and use it in a way that makes sense to you, and that's really your goal. So everything else is really a strategy. The goal is really to be an active learner.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, and a point on the passive learning, as far as sitting in lectures and listening to lectures, I think that sometimes people think because you're sitting in class and you are taking notes, especially on a laptop, that you are actively engaging the material. But if you're catching yourself being a scribe, or a court reporter, where you're just processing information through your brain and not thinking about it, you're just typing it out, you are probably not going to retain that information in any sort of important way.

It's going to be much more effective for you if you close the laptop, if you are taking handwritten notes, if you are synthesizing the information as you're in class listening to it, that is more of an active approach to being engaged in class. So be careful, because it's an easy trap to get into where you think you're doing active activities in the classroom, but you're really just being a passive participant in what's happening in class.

Alison Monahan: Right. And I think if you are a kinesthetic learner, I think [taking notes by hand](#) is probably going to be very beneficial. I mean, typically studies have suggested it's beneficial for everyone, but I think it's going to be especially beneficial for you, because there's something about that act of writing things out that's more of a physical act, which I just did cursive in the air to demonstrate writing it out.

Lee Burgess: I feel like there should be some sort of video podcast or something for the kinesthetic learner. I don't know.

Alison Monahan: That's true, exactly. But rather than typing, there's just something different about it. You feel the pen on the page, and there's more of a connection to your brain, so think that is definitely a strategy worth very strongly considering if you think you're a more kinesthetic learner. And once you're ready to study this material, hey, hand gestures. You can totally do that. So one technique sometimes people find helpful when they're trying to memorize is actually to close their eyes and use your finger to write whatever you're memorizing into the air. And you can picture the word in your mind, you can try to retrace it. You



could even retrace it say on a white board or something. But these physical acts of moving your hand, moving your finger, with the words, is going to help your brain memorize better.

Lee Burgess: Yeah. That's a really interesting idea. Again, this might sound weird, but nobody's going to judge you if you get an A in your class about how you memorize the material.

Alison Monahan: Right. And say that you come up with a mnemonic device, which is something that we recommend for memorizing for all different types of learning styles, but for it to really stick in your brain, you might need to really imagine writing it out, or you might need to actually write it out 20 times, 30 times, 40 times, so that it becomes essentially muscle memory. So that when you get into the exam, you can just write your entire page of mnemonics literally without thinking about them.

Lee Burgess: Yep. The other thing that you can do as you study, although this is going to be different than what you can do in an exam room, is engage in a physical activity. So physical activities can help you memorize material, and any sort of exercise has many benefits to studying anyway. You get endorphins. It helps you sleep. You are preventing hopefully getting sick and things like that. It's like good for you. But sometimes combining exercise and studying can really help a kinesthetic learner. So you can take your outline or flashcards to you at the gym and use them when you're on the treadmill or the elliptical. Or look up things between reps and think about them while you're doing weight lifting.

A lot of people also have found that standing desks can be very helpful. So I know that some people like to stand while they study. I even have a friend who is a big proponent of standing desks and she has this little swing that she swings one of her feet. I don't know if you've seen these, Alison? So you're standing on one foot, but you're like swinging your other foot on this little swing, because standing in one spot isn't good for your body either. But there are these little things that you can be doing to create movement, even while you're working at your desk. And it might be worth it to try some of these things out, because that little bit of movement may make a big difference in how you're able to focus and learn.

Alison Monahan: Right. I think sometimes something like going to the track, whether you're running, or even just walking, but that type of movement can really help people memorize too, where maybe it's like every other step you're alternating whatever it is that you're trying to memorize. I mean, it sounds a little bit complicated, but I think that that degree of complicatedness is actually really what makes it stick.



- Lee Burgess: Yeah. I think that's a good point. Also, if you are one of those people who can memorize material by hearing it, if you're doing something physical, you could read your outline into an audio file, or listen to other audio recordings or lessons while you exercise or are walking on a track. Sometimes the combination of those two physical activities ... Well, I guess the more physical activity of the walking with the auditory material in your ear can help you put this material into your brain. But also, little things can make a difference. Some people find that using stress balls, those little things that I'm, again, for the visual people, I am making a stress ball like motion with my hand.
- Alison Monahan: Squeeze.
- Lee Burgess: Squeeze. I do not have a stress ball in my office, but I am engaging my hand to show what the stress ball would look like. But you doing something like that with your hands could help you concentrate or study. Maybe playing with a rubber band, a paperclip, or a pen. Even using like a rock in between your fingers. Lots of different things that you can do to give your body some sort of movement that can really just trigger your brain to allow it to absorb information in a much better way.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, and I think certain people find it calming. I mean, I used to work at a summer camp once with a bunch of kids who were autistic, and they tended to have different repetitive motions that they did if they were in a stressful situation. And for whatever reason, that is a very calming thing for a lot of people. As you know, I have my own tick. I am obsessed with chewing ice. So if I am feeling stressed out, I literally will just chew the entire cup of ice.
- Lee Burgess: Yeah.
- Alison Monahan: I don't know if that's normal or okay or whatever, but whatever works right? So chewing gum might be a better way to get that sensation of giving your body something to do that for whatever reason is soothing to your mind. It allows you to focus.
- Lee Burgess: Yeah. Speaking of autistic children, I have to share this, and I just think this is so fascinating, because it goes back to how our brains work, which is what so many of these podcast episodes are. I was meeting with someone who's working on a startup to help autistic children start to work on noticing facial recognition. And one of the things that she did when she was a teenager is that she had a very hard time noticing an emotion in somebody's face, so she studied movies. She really liked music, and she would listen to soundtracks and she would wait, listen to the music in the movie to help identify the emotion of the people in the scene. And she basically created for herself in her brain almost a library of soundtracks for like, "This is sad. This is romantic. This is pensive."



And she would try and identify somebody's face with one of these soundtracks that she'd basically memorized to help her label an emotion. Fascinating, right? But like, kind of brilliant. So she is working on a startup to try and create video games around helping autistic children be able to use some of these techniques to learn how to identify emotion in other people's faces. But I thought it was so interesting how she took this very auditory ... This very auditory thing of I guess soundtrack, and was able to connect that to the visual identification of looking at someone's face and trying to decide what that emotion is. And that that was one of the ways that she was able to teach herself how to identify emotions. I mean the brain is amazing in the way that it can connect.

Alison Monahan: It is really interesting.

Lee Burgess: Isn't that fascinating?

Alison Monahan: But if you think about it, I mean if you're thinking about someone who's a composer who's working on a movie, that's their goal. They're trying to encourage that sort of emotional reaction. So it does make a lot of sense in a lot of ways.

Lee Burgess: Yeah. And in a way, and probably many composers almost see the world that way, right? With their own soundtracks. And I have friends who are musicians who are able to even go to a movie and play the whole soundtrack after the movie, after hearing it once. And so when someone's brain works that way, it's interesting to be able to kind of harness the power of music to connect to learning something. And I think that although maybe soundtracks isn't the answer to your law school problems, but I do think that this idea of thinking outside the box for answers to create associations that can be meaningful for you can make a lot of sense. So if music is something that's been powerful to you, then maybe coming up with jingles or something that you can remember musically for some of this material may really be more meaningful for you. Maybe even singing that material to yourself is a great way to memorize.

Alison Monahan: Not just singing. Singing with grand hand gestures like you're on a stage.

Lee Burgess: Exactly. Yes. Like a Broadway star. So you kind of got to think outside the box and I think we often times are so critical of ourselves about what works to learn material. And children I think who typically don't have as much of a fear of failure as us adults, or a fear of judgment, will do just about anything to learn how to do something. And I think we can learn a lot from that freedom to say, "Hey, if I'm in a room by myself, nobody's going to know how I learn this material. I just have to evaluate for myself how best I can make it work for me and go from there."



Alison Monahan: Right. And I think let yourself have some fun with it. One of the things you can do if you're more on the kinesthetic side of the scale is you can really channel your inner actor. So you are on the stage, your physically acting out. Maybe you're acting out a case, for example. Or you're playing the different parties, and then that helps you really understand where each party's coming from. And you can even envision ... Obviously you can't run around the exam room during the exam, but you can imagine yourself physically switching sides of the plaintiff and the defendant.

Maybe you don't just think of them as plaintiff and defendant, or whoever it is in the hypo that you've been given. You might give them a face and immediately picture this person and make them three dimensional. And then, mentally switch back and forth the sides of the argument. It's interesting the acting thing, because I mean a large part of being a lawyer, or whatever role you're playing as a lawyer, there again the role, is you're really playing a role.

For example, the judge that I worked for, who when I worked for him had been on the bench 20 years and seemed like the exact personification of the judge. In the court room he was very judicial. Always very judicial. Very, very, very, judgey. In a good way. But I found out later that when he first went onto the bench, and he was quite young at the time. He was, for awhile, the youngest sitting judge in the country. His mother was an actress, and so he would actually have her come and literally critique his performance on the bench. And they would go back and discuss it. And she would say things like, "Well, your intonation on that certain phrase, the way that you said that made it sound not so authoritative. So you should say it like this." Or, "Oh, that gesture was good, you should do it more often." And so he literally developed himself into the role of the perfect judge.

Lee Burgess: Yeah. And I think that sometimes people think when you talk about developing a role or a persona around a lot of this work that it is artificial. But I don't think that's the case. I think it's just that version of yourself, that role that you're playing. I mean, I think the law specifically is unique because we get not maybe as dressed up as the barristers do in England and things like that, but you wear ... I think they're a more extreme case still, where they where costumes basically to fill these roles.

Alison Monahan: Right. No, and so does the judge.

Lee Burgess: But yes so does the judge. And you have to wear a suit to show up in court. That is your costume. That is your role. And I think most of us feel different if we are in our dressed up work attire than we're in our yoga clothes. It's part of getting into that persona. And I don't think there's anything wrong with that. I think there's a lot of power that comes from that. And it can be a little freeing because maybe you don't find that role as ... It doesn't make you as nervous to



perform in that role, because if somebody criticizes that role, they're criticizing the role, they're not criticizing you. And so I think it can also be a way to sort of protect yourself as you get more and more confident, because it's really not as much about what you, as your vulnerable person, are doing. It's more about what you're doing on stage or in the courtroom or something that's a little bit separated from yourself.

Alison Monahan:

Right, and I think this is certainly an area where if you do tend to be more of a kinesthetic learner, and you are more comfortable in your body, again, like I said earlier, this really can ultimately be an advantage in the legal profession. I think a lot of people who are in law school who've really been taught to ignore the signals coming from their body, or the signs. I mean, I remember I was in therapy because I was clinically depressed, and my therapist would say, "Well, how does this thing that you're telling me, how does that make you feel?" And I literally had no idea what she was talking about.

So we had to start from kind of like first steps of like, "Well, I'm asking you actually what you're feeling right now." And I had no concept, and she's like, "Well, do your hands feel sweaty? Do you feel tight in the chest? Do you feel ..." Then I was like, "Oh, this is so fascinating." These are things that most people are more kinesthetically inclined probably take as a matter of course, so you may be more aware of the flashes of insight that you get from your body.

There's a really fascinating Martha Beck book on this called Finding Your North Star I think it is about how we disconnect from the intelligence of our bodies and how you can really get back to that and use that as a tool. So I think really appreciating these aspects of your way of learning and your way of being in the world, even if it seems like maybe you're a bit of an outlier, I think that can be very positive.

Lee Burgess:

Yeah, and I think we have to recognize that these activities, these more physical activities can just happen to a part of ourselves that sometimes we squelch down. When I was in my 20s, I used to do a lot of singing and performing, and I had ... My grandmother passed away one day, and I was in rehearsals for a musical. And I decided to go ahead and go to rehearsal that night. And I had had a really tough day. I mean, that's a tough day. But the best thing that I did for myself all of that day was actually to be with other people and sing music that was important to me, because it allowed my body to process information and this reality differently.

It was like the music was really healing. And making music with other people specifically for me was very healing. I like making music with other people. And I'll never forget thinking that that was like the best way I could have ever spent that evening, because I was able to kind of work through something by allowing myself to feel my body, because singing is a very ... I mean, if you're doing it



right, it's very physically engaging activity, and how therapeutic that was. And I think that we often times get away from that. That there are some of these techniques and things that we can do to create awareness in our body or work through things that we discredit because they don't seem to be connected to other things.

Alison Monahan: Right. I think if you're a kinesthetic learner, you're probably going to need to take more time for doing things like exercise. If you've been struggling with some complex area of the law for two or three hours, you probably need to go take a walk or jog or maybe go to a yoga class so that your brain can really start working on that. You're not just going to be able to sit in the library for 10 hours. I mean, not anyone really can. But even more so, you're not going to be able to do that. And I think you just can't expect yourself to do that. You need to play to your strengths.

Lee Burgess: Yeah. I think that's very true. Okay, so going back to some of our kind of more law school related tips and techniques, so we talked about using your hands when you're studying alone. You can use your hands when you're studying in a library too. You just need to not care what other people think.

Alison Monahan: Which is totally fine.

Lee Burgess: Which is totally fine. But you might find yourself either explaining a case or a subtopic to an empty chair, to a significant other, to your pet. One of our tutors told us about this piece entitled [Keeping Kinesthetic Tactile Students on Target](#), which I feel should be like, "Say that five times fast."

Alison Monahan: Yeah, like what?

Lee Burgess: I know.

Alison Monahan: It's a lot of Ks.

Lee Burgess: Yeah. But apparently, the article talks about the difference between talking to cats versus dogs. So cats tend to condescend when they listen. So long as you use a voice that suggests you are showering them with ... Unless you use a voice that it sounds like you are showering with them with compliments. I would say as someone who lives with cats, or that I'm going to feed them or do something for them that they want. But then dogs listen very attentively and look at you as though your brilliant. So they make you feel smarter. I think my cats would usually just go to sleep if I'm talking to them for a long period of time. They're like, "You're boring."

Alison Monahan: Yeah. We had cats when I was a kid, and I think they would just be like, "What are you going on about? Like, oh my gosh. Like, no."



Lee Burgess: I know.

Alison Monahan: Your cat is probably not going to take very well to you trying to teach them. But dog, definitely.

Lee Burgess: But, if you like to just have a warm body in the room, the cat will probably sleep on the bed while you talk to them, so that's something. But I think animals, you can use animals to engage with to kind of have somebody you can teach, especially if you don't have a person who wants to engage with you in that way. Although I'm not a huge fan of flashcards myself, I think some kinesthetic learners can find that flashcards are helpful because the physical act of writing out the cards and then flipping them over kind of engages the brain. You just have to make sure that you're not falling into the pitfall of just creating busywork, creating thousands of flashcards, that the flashcards actually have meaning for you and can be something that you are using.

Maybe you're reviewing them while you walk around your house, or while you're at the gym. Maybe you organize the flashcards in groupings so you can create kind of a bundle of concepts. Maybe even kind of like creating an outline or a map through those concepts. I could use color coding systems or doodles or pictures to help solidify legal concepts. Make notes about your pneumonics or jingles or things that you're trying to memorize as well. I mean, a flashcard just doesn't have to be a word and a definition. But if that's something that has worked for you in the past, you can get creative with what those flashcards could look like so they have a little bit more meaning than just the typical flashcard.

Alison Monahan: Right. And I think the thing with flashcards you always have to be careful about in law school is it tends, for obvious reasons, to be kind of a very atomic way of looking at things, when what you really have to do is see how all these things relate to one another. So one thing that I've heard people be successful doing is devoting say an entire wall in their bedroom or their office to a bunch of Post-It Notes, which essentially are flashcards, but you can move them around and see how they relate to each other and take a step back. And that can be a more effective way of kind of getting the same concept, but not just having a stack of stuff that you're flipping over all the time.

Lee Burgess: Yeah, that's a good idea. I think the other thing to keep in mind, again, is distractions. While studying, you probably want to keep your desk pretty clear of distracting objects. Sit in a location that's going to provide you the fewest distraction. Be aware of whatever is the most distracting for you and try and get away. But something we talked about in some of the other podcasts about learning styles as well though is there are some realities about distractions in the exam room that you have to be okay with.



So as much as you can get very creative with your space that you're doing your study in, as you get closer to exam time, you have to be able to manage the distractions that are going to be in the exam room of a lot of people typing, and maybe don't have a lot of physical space to set up. You do have to sit in one spot for maybe three hours. Maybe you do need to explore, like taking little breaks to the bathroom, or walking or moving your body to make sure that you are able to engage, but you still have to function in the parameters of which are set forth by your school to take these exams.

Alison Monahan: Right. I mean, you're not going to have time to go on a huge go cook lunch break, but you do have a couple of minutes in even a three or four hour exam to get up for two or three minutes, walk to the bathroom, splash your face with some water, take a look around, refresh, come back, sit down. Like that's well worth spending a couple of minutes, even twice or three times, if you're switching between questions, that kind of thing. But again, you want to practice this. So you want to think about do you want to take your break before you start reading a question, or before you start writing.

Because that can be very intimidating to come back to a white piece of paper. So you want to make sure that you've practiced in exam-like conditions as much as possible, and figure it out. "Okay, this is a good use of a couple of minutes of my time. This is how I'm going to do it." So that when you go in, you feel comfortable that you have a game plan. You know what's going to work best for you and you're ready to go.

Lee Burgess: Yeah. And again, if you're going to use earplugs because noise is distracting, you've got to practice with earplugs, because earplugs can be distracting if you're not used studying with them. Although we talk so much about handwriting your class notes, I would not necessarily recommend handwriting an exam. I think exams should be typed when at all possible because a handwritten exam is hard from a grader, or a professor to grade, and you want to make their job as easy as possible. So maybe you do some handwritten study materials, but I do really think it's important to go ahead and be comfortable typing out your exam.

Alison Monahan: Again, these are things you need to practice. It's great that you can teach your cat the law, but really what it comes down to is can you get down on paper what your professor is going to give you points for? And that involves practice questions early, hopefully getting some feedback, and really practicing on what you're going to be tested on so that you're not left saying, "Well, you know I'm really great at moot court, but I just flunked out of law school."

Lee Burgess: Right, yeah. And nobody's going to give you a job if you can't pass any of your classes.



- Alison Monahan: Right. So you kind of got to suck it up and figure out how to work within the system that may not feel entirely natural to you.
- Lee Burgess: Yeah. Another thing, I think we mentioned this a little bit that's important as a kinesthetic learner is dividing your work and study time into shorter sessions. So try to take breaks in between. So this could be 50 minutes of hard work with a 10 minute break. I think a lot of people find that's effective. Again, that's fine. But if you do have a long exam, you are likely not going to have the ability to take a 10 minute break every hour. So you need to be able to separate how you're studying with how you're practicing for the exam. But frequent small breaks are great, but do ... Like use them to move your body as a kinesthetic. Don't just say, "Great, I got 10 minutes." And then you reach into your bag and you pull out your cellphone and your reading Facebook for 10 minutes.
- Alison Monahan: Right. You're going to be better off going and doing some jumping jacks, or pushups, or whatever it is to reset your brain basically.
- Lee Burgess: Yeah.
- Alison Monahan: And hey, you could even do some jumping jacks in your two or three minute bathroom break, no judgment.
- Lee Burgess: No judgment, no judgment. And really nobody should be spending their time on a break reading Facebook, even though we all do it every now and then.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, it's not really a break. Take an actual break.
- Lee Burgess: Take an actual break. That was interesting, because I was just ... I was out of town awhile back, and I really noticed that because I wasn't in my habits, I was looking at my phone a whole lot less. And I could tell because of my phone's battery life, which is not very good, and how fast it was-
- Alison Monahan: You can always tell. You're like, "Oh, I only got up a couple of hours ago and my phone already has 20% battery left. How did that happen?"
- Lee Burgess: How did that happen? But I really was like, "Oh, my brain is so much clearer," when I am not like buried in my phone all the time. It's just so ... It's like we need to set up these checks for ourselves to step back so we realize how easy it is to get sucked into the vortex of the phone.
- Alison Monahan: Right. And again, I think this is actually an area where being more of a kinesthetic learner really can help, because you're probably going to notice faster if you are not taking breaks and not moving your body and not doing things other than just staring at a computer screen, because you're just going to go nuts.



- Lee Burgess: Yeah, that's so true. If you decide that you want to study in a group or with a buddy, make sure that it's somebody who's going to be okay with you taking short breaks to retain focus, that's not going to encourage you to do marathon study sessions, because that's not going to work well for you. You can try and engage and be a leader in the discussions, so you're not just passively listening, because that's going to probably cause you to tune out. And you might want to even be in a study room where you could get up and like walk around in the back of the room, or move your body a little bit so you can engage that part of yourself, even while working in a study group.
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, and this is stuff that's good for everyone. I mean, I remember when we were at trial as a lawyer. And it's super long hours, everyone's stressed out, your brain's working really hard, and this friend of mine showed up and started doing yoga at midnight one night when we were all working. And it was this moment of like, "Oh my gosh, what are you doing?" He's like, "Yeah, my brain's going crazy." And then we all did yoga for five minutes, and then we're all like, "Wow, we're so much more focused. This is great. We should all be doing this all the time." But it took this one person coming in and being like, "I literally can't function anymore without moving. I have to do something." For everyone to realize it was actually good for them too.
- Lee Burgess: Yeah. And actually, I think there's some science behind inversions of which-
- Alison Monahan: In fact, that was part of what we did.
- Lee Burgess: Yeah. To be able to kind of like it flushes your brain with fresh blood. And the other thing about yoga is you typically breathe deeply, so you're also flushing your body with oxygen. And those two things can really shift your focus. I had a yoga teacher once who was like, "The worse my day, the longer I have to do a headstand, because it can flip my day over if I just flip myself over for long enough to try again."
- Alison Monahan: Yeah, so I think the key takeaway is there are lots of techniques that everyone could be using here that are probably going to improve your experience and possibly even help you get better grades in law school.
- Lee Burgess: Yeah. All right so should we just run through a couple other quick things to avoid, and then I think we're almost out of time.
- Alison Monahan: I think we ... Yeah, we're overtime, so go for it.
- Lee Burgess: Okay, so quickly, again, cramped spaces, not a great idea. You want to be able to move around. Watch out for the internet. It's bad for all of us, but I think that it is bad for kinesthetic learners as well. You don't want to get pulled into that. You want to be present in your body and in this material that you are studying.



Watch those marathon study sessions and make sure you are taking breaks. And as you get super busy, it can be very easy to cut out things like exercise, but that's a bad idea for you, so make sure that that's part of your study schedule and your study plan.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, absolutely. I think it's something that you definitely need to plan around, even more so than everyone else. But it's actually great for everyone who is in law school to take a break and get some movement. So think of it as an advantage.

Lee Burgess: Yep. All right now I do think we're out of time.

Alison Monahan: We are out of time. If you enjoyed this episode of The Law School Toolbox podcast, please take a second to leave a review or a rating on your favorite listening app, because we would really appreciate it. And be sure to subscribe so you don't miss anything. If you have any questions or comments, don't hesitate to reach out to Lee or Alison at Lee@LawSchoolToolbox.com, or Alison@LawSchoolToolbox.com. Or you can always contact us via our website [contact form](https://www.lawschooltoolbox.com/contact-form) at, guess what? [LawSchoolToolbox.com](https://www.lawschooltoolbox.com). Thanks for listening and we'll talk soon.

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