Alison Monahan: Welcome back to the Law School Toolbox podcast. Today we're excited to have sleep and productivity expert Lindsay Scola here with us to talk about her new book, *AI for ADHD*. Your Law School Toolbox host today is Alison Monahan, and typically, I'm with Lee Burgess. We're here to demystify the law school and early legal career experience, so that you'll be the best law student and lawyer you can be. 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 or rating on your favorite listening app. And if you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out to us. You can always reach us via the contact form on LawSchoolToolBox.com, and we would love to hear from you. And you can check out the Bar Exam Toolbox podcast if the bar exam is on your radar. And with that, let's get started.

Welcome back to the Law School Toolbox podcast. Today we're excited to have sleep and productivity expert Lindsay Scola here with us to talk about her new book, *AI for ADHD*. Welcome, Lindsay.

Lindsay Scola: I am so happy to be back. This is my third time.

Alison Monahan: Well, third time's the charm.

Lindsay Scola: That's what they say.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, your sleep episodes with Lee were super interesting, so I'm sure this will be as well. Many of our listeners and many of our students have ADHD, so I'm super excited to talk about this. Well, to start us off, can you give our listeners some information about your background and your work, just so they have some context here?

Lindsay Scola: Yeah, absolutely. I was one of those gifted and talented kids, which I'm sure there are a lot of us in this space right now. And had a bit of an injustice sensitivity. I scheduled my first... I organized my first walkout when I was in first grade, over unfair treatment in the lunchroom. It was the first, but not the last time my parents came to pick me up.

Alison Monahan: Nice.

Lindsay Scola: And I was one of those kids who, when I was really engaged, I talked a lot, did a lot of daydreaming, did a lot of talking back. So, there were a lot of ADHD symptoms there. But that's not really what we looked for for women in the '80s and '90s. And went on to a pretty high-powered career in politics. I was an advance person for President and Mrs. Obama. And then when I was in my

thirties, I felt like I really hit this wall. I'd struggled with a lot of these things throughout my career, but I felt like I was always able to really like muscle through. And then this brick wall went up in front of me and I got diagnosed with narcolepsy when I was 35, which is a break in the sleep-wake cycle. And I went on medication to help with that, and a lot of it was relieved, but there were still things that I thought that the narcolepsy medication should take care of, like getting started on tasks, feeling overwhelmed when I had more than one subject in front of me. And then as time progressed and when I hit my late thirties, I started to see this endless web of possibilities. And that would happen whether I was trying to write an email for work or I was trying to figure out what to make for breakfast. And then eventually paralysis just set in, and no matter what I was trying to do, I was stuck on the couch. Now, I might've looked sedentary from the outside, but from the inside it was like 150 browser tabs were open. I didn't know which one was playing music, and there was that frozen wheel of death over everything. And it was just absolutely debilitating. And finally got some answers at 41 that this was ADHD, which gets a lot worse for some of us when we hit perimenopause. And so, I've really sort of focused my whole life around trying to make life easier for people by looking at sleep and productivity. And so, even if you don't have ADHD, a lot of the tools that work for those of us with ADHD can help you sort of focus and bring you back to center.

Alison Monahan: That's awesome. And if people want to learn more about you or learn more about, slash, get the book, how can they do that?

Lindsay Scola: LindsayScola.com. It is all right there.

Alison Monahan: Awesome. Yeah, so it's very recently come out. I have read a copy and it's a great book. I will say, every time I get more deeply involved in the ADHD world, I think, "Huh, you know what? Some of this does not sound that disfamiliar to me." So, I know you were diagnosed fairly late in life, and fairly recently. I mean, how did you end up with this diagnosis? What prompted you to sort of say, "You know what? Maybe there is something going on here."?

Lindsay Scola: It was this real place of paralysis that I had hit. And I had been on Ritalin for narcolepsy, because there's no novel for narcolepsy, so we end up taking a lot of ADHD stimulants as a way to stay awake, because they have a wakefulness component to them. And I had gone sort of up and up on the Ritalin to get that wakefulness component and I got on a dose that was a bit too high, and I started having these really bad panic attacks. So I went off of the Ritalin, and went onto a non-ADHD stimulant. So I had some of these symptoms that had potentially been a little bit at bay that I was unaware of, starting to pop back up in my life. And then a pilot script that I had been working on for a few years, we

started working with a producer that suggested adding a neurodivergent character, and we gave a woman in her thirties ADHD. And I thought I was very familiar with ADHD – it's that thing that boys get where they're like bouncing off the walls. And then I started researching this in a woman in her thirties, and all of a sudden I was like, "Holy crap, I'm writing myself." She became the easiest character in the script to write, because I was just writing me. And that was an "aha" moment...

Alison Monahan: Eye-opening, I would imagine.

Lindsay Scola: ... that something else was going on. My GP agreed that this seemed like a likely thing, took forever to find a psychologist that took my insurance that would test me for it. The first psychologist I talked to told me she didn't think I had it, and I was just going through a cognitive decline in my forties. And that she'd test me if I wanted to, but I should really start keeping a calendar. And I was like, "Lady, I have been keeping a calendar since I was a teenager." I kept calendars for cabinet officials, I was doing advance for the president of the United States. I can watch a calendar. I'm coming to you because I can't figure out what to make for breakfast in the morning, and then I sit on my couch in the fetal position. We're not talking about the same thing here. So I finally found a psychologist about nine months after I started looking, who tested me. And not only did I have ADHD, I was in the 99th percentile, because I really believe in putting my all into things.

Alison Monahan: Right. You're a big overachiever, I can tell.

Lindsay Scola: I know I'm a big overachiever, it doesn't matter on what. Not so much in school. But now that I understand the ADHD and the narcolepsy thing, I probably could have done a bit better. But getting that insight gave me a ton of "aha" moments about what was going on in my head. Unfortunately, that did not lay down the tracks to get moving again. Starting was still the hardest thing for me. And so, I was getting a lot of tools to figure out why my brain worked the way that it did, deal with emotional dysregulation, but I wasn't moving. And AI became this bridge for me in the how to get back into making things happen and how to start having action, which is what spurred the book *AI for ADHD*.

Alison Monahan: Awesome. Well, before we jump into the AI component, tell me a little bit about the ADHD brain. What are some common characteristics that we see?

Lindsay Scola: So, it's really a break in executive function. And so, if you imagine your brain like an air traffic controller at the airport, where there're planes in line, and it tells the next one to go and then the next one to go and the next one to go – ADHD brains are a little bit like the Newark airport these days.

Alison Monahan: I was going to say, does that even happen these days? I mean, in theory we're directing the planes, but...

Lindsay Scola: In theory, there are air traffic controllers who are telling which plane to go, and then they're looking at the next one, and there is an order for this. Now, with ADHD brains, it's a little bit all over the place and we've really beat ourselves up for most of our lives about procrastination. But the procrastination isn't a choice in an ADHD brain; it's actually a miswiring. And so, most of these things like initiating tasks, planning and organizing, working memory, impulse control and emotional regulation happen in our prefrontal cortex. Now, for ADHD brains, most anything is going to send that prefrontal cortex up and like you're stuck in your amygdala, which is our "fight or flight" area. And anything that really involves that prefrontal cortex, we have to do a lot of work to bring it back. Now, with something like emotional regulation – that's tapping into our vagus nerve, which is the thing that runs from our brain down through the back of our neck, it touches our tongue and then into our organs, which, you can put an ice pack on the back of your neck and that's going to bring back that prefrontal cortex. And so for me, it really feels like there's a lot of noise happening, like an old TV static builds up. I have a lot of analogies that I use with this, which I realize are all for people who were born in the '90s or before, so I'm going to have to come up with some other ones. In the book, over and over again, I'm like, "If you were born after 1995, please stick with me." But on an old-school TV, you used to get static when a channel didn't show up, and that's what it feels like inside my brain. And so, once we can bring that prefrontal cortex back, we can start working on the different executive function pieces that need to happen. Another thing that's going on is dopamine. So, in neurotypical brains I say, "I need to do this thing, and when I finish this thing, I will feel good." That is enough dopamine to make a neurotypical brain work. In an ADHD brain, something that's happening in the future is a little tiny bit of dopamine and you're hearing a much louder, "This is boring. I want to do anything else." That's why people with ADHD might not be able to start something, but the minute you have a deadline looming or some other attack thing happening, where "Yes, I've got it. I can write a dissertation on this in four hours overnight, but only if that deadline is right around the corner." And it's another reason why people with ADHD, we can manage massive things and be totally calm. I used to plan events for 250,000 people and be cool as a cucumber, but the minute I'm trying to like untangle a cord for an iPhone, I'm ready to pull out my own eyelashes. There is nothing worse for me than trying to put on a sports bra while slightly damp – that will spin me out of control. Meanwhile you're like, "Go handle this thing where other people are panicking" and I'm like, "Got you. I'm good." That's the same thing with the dopamine regulation.

Alison Monahan: That was interesting to me for two reasons. What you just said is interesting to me, because I get very calm in a crisis situation in a way that actually freaks people out. But also, I recall writing my entire undergraduate honors thesis, which was supposed to be a year-long project and I didn't pick the topic until spring break. And I did it like nonstop for three weeks and got highest honors. And it's things like this that made me think, "Huh, is that normal? I don't know."

Lindsay Scola: Definitely an ADHD thing. I'm not here to diagnose you, I missed that day at med school.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, exactly. But I was kind of like, "Huh? That's curious, isn't it?" It's a little abnormal, I think.

Lindsay Scola: Yeah, for a lot of us, getting started is very hard, but we're able to do it once there is the fear that this thing is due, because we also don't want to let anyone down. So, you're constantly balancing this, "I'm going to let everyone in my life down" and roam the streets as this toothless ogre. But I can't actually get started on this thing that's not due till next week.

Alison Monahan: I mean, for me, it literally became the case. I was not going to graduate, because I decided to graduate early. And if I did not finish this project, I was not going to graduate. So, I graduated with two extra units, I think, in the end, because I finished the project. But yeah, it was definitely a pretty high stakes situation by the time I got started on it.

Lindsay Scola: I feel like that was pretty much every class I took in college, where it was like, "I'm going to wait until the absolute last minute to figure out how to get this thing done." And then if there was an early morning class, I wouldn't go, and then would find the hot Italian TA in the Statistics lab that could coach me through not failing my final exam. So, maybe that was a win-win for everyone.

Alison Monahan: Yeah. All of my college apps were written the night before and never proofread, and sent in and whatever. I mean, I was good at writing them, but just, I couldn't come up with anything to say until the very last minute.

Lindsay Scola: Oh my God, same. Still cannot think of anything to say. I write a weekly newsletter, which I will have nothing to share until the very last minute, where I have too much to share, and then it becomes a task of like, how do I not write three hours worth of information every week?

Alison Monahan: Yeah. Lee and I were doing posts for About.com for a while, and we had to do them monthly, and literally every single month it was like, "Okay, we have one

day to get these done. What are we going to do?" We're just like, "Why are we doing this to ourselves over and over and over again?"

Lindsay Scola: Oh yeah. No, I mean, it goes out Tuesday morning and there is nothing in my brain to say till about 4:00 PM on Monday. We are recording this on a Monday and my newsletter is loaded up for tomorrow morning. So, I'm really quite proud of myself. We're going to celebrate that.

Alison Monahan: Congratulations! That's great. Alright, so what else? We've mentioned executive functioning, dopamine. What else is going on here?

Lindsay Scola: I mean, those are our big things. With ADHD brains, it really comes back to this executive function and dopamine problem. And so, pretty much anything that's happening in this area, whether it's our working memory or it's our creativity, is really functioning back into this spot. And one of those things is really being hypercritical with ourselves, which for me became a serious problem with my writing. I have very bad visual processing, so I don't see spelling errors, I don't see words that are missing in sentences. So, I can read something over and over again and not see that there's an adverb missing. And then again, I spell like a second grader. I just cannot spell; it has always been a problem for me. And so, after decades of public typos, I got very, very precious about my writing. And I would actually find myself sort of dumbing sentences down, because I was afraid that I was going to use the wrong version of a word. So, words that I know that there're two versions of it, but I'm always concerned I'm going to wrong one because I don't see it – I'd stopped doing that. And over time that became like a real gap in me trying to share what I had for the world. And I am a writer; that is definitely who I am. And so I would find myself weaving these really beautiful phrases in my head, but by the time I got to my keyboard, I get so stuck on the like, "Do I start this sentence with 'and' or 'the'? Do I start this sentence with 'once'?" And then, a lot of times with this working memory with ADHD, we have a very hard time finding words. So, it's like that old analogy for people born before the century, but we used to have the stacks in the library where we'd have to go find the card catalog for the book that you needed and scroll through – that is what my brain is all the time, and I'm just like scrolling and looking for the word. And so, I would be writing and I'd get stuck on the word I couldn't find, and then I would stop. It would take me hours to maybe come back up with that word. But by that time I had no idea what I was trying to say. So I was just kind of caught in this vicious cycle. That is a working memory problem that's really very common with people ADHD.

Alison Monahan: Interesting. Well, tell me a little bit about how you have found ChatGPT or maybe some other AI helpful in helping you kind of manage some of these things and get stuff done.

Lindsay Scola: So, like I was saying that I was just stuck, and this combo of being very scared about making typos and just feeling like I couldn't get things started, it was a place where I just didn't know how to put one foot in front of the other. And so, things like follow-up after meetings weren't happening. My brain was loaded with creative projects. The thing I always say about ADHD is that it's like trying to catch glitter, but by the time you have this brilliant idea in the shower, the number of ideas that die between the shower and the towel is endless. And so, there were all these ideas that were happening all the time, but the idea that I would actually grab one of them, come up with enough to-dos to actually get the thing started and then get it done was not happening at all. And so, I started using ChatGPT as really like a very high-end spell check. And then I was very sort of skeptical about using it for anything else, because I think so many of us have seen that LinkedIn post that sounds like it was written by a robot in 2087, where someone did zero training of it, walked in fresh and was like, "Write me a post about leadership."

Alison Monahan: Right.

Lindsay Scola: And if you use these tools in that way, that's what it's going to sound like.

Alison Monahan: Totally.

Lindsay Scola: There's none of you in that. I don't want to read that; nobody else wants to read that. And so it was this very big mental gap for me about why to even start using these tools. But what I started finding was, it did more than just check my spelling. When I got to that place where I couldn't find the word, I could write a sentence and just literally write a blank line and then keep writing and have ChatGPT give me suggestions for that word. And then, all of this sort of panic that used to happen with my writing that was causing me to freeze, knowing that I had this sort of digital safety net for myself, allowed me to just sit down and allow these freeflowing thoughts to just hit the paper, because I knew that I had something that I could work with that was going to catch the typos and that could help me make sense when things were messy. And so, I think about it like acrobats – they're not going to go up there and do the death-defying stunts without knowing that there is a net behind, below right. So, that's really what ChatGPT became for me, was really this place where I felt like I had freedom with my writing again, and I could get these things out of my head without worrying about what they sounded like on the other side. And it's very much my writing every time I use ChatGPT to help me. It's helping me fix a sentence that doesn't make total sense, or helping me find that word that I was missing, catching those typos. I'm never sitting down from scratch, without training this thing to say, "Write me a post on leadership." But once I got really comfortable

with this writing piece of it, I realized that there was so much more that I could be using it for. And one of those things was, with ADHD, we have a lot of emotional overwhelm when there's more than one thing going on in our head. We don't task-switch very well, but all of us have to do this, involve more than one thing, even if it's beyond work stuff. There's the calling the dentist, which you don't want to do. And then there's the paying the bills that you don't want to do. And then there's the figuring out what you're going to make for food, which you don't want to do. And once you have more than one thing that's building up there and the anxiety around it, the to-do list goes out the door. You order off of your Uber Eats again, or you just don't eat at all because that becomes easier than trying to figure out what to make for dinner. And I realized that I could start using this to just dump out everything that was going on for me, have it help me put together a to-do list that felt manageable, task things out on the level of importance. Because sometimes with ADHD brains, we'll have this moment where, your to-do list is like "Write a book", which we all know doesn't happen in one sitting and one to-do list. So, you can actually start breaking those things apart. But then you also have this moment where you have "Schedule the dentist appointment, write the email for work, and learn Japanese", and they all have the same importance and they all need to happen right now. And so, I have this tool that I can work with that's like, "You should schedule the dentist today. That bill's not due for two more weeks, so we can sit on that for a minute. And maybe start looking at Japanese next week or the week after."

Alison Monahan: Right, or maybe download Duolingo, check the box for Japanese and commit to five minutes a day.

Lindsay Scola: Exactly, exactly. And that's the reason that so many of us, it's like we have a new hobby every week, but we don't actually action on the hobby. It's because there's dopamine in downloading Duolingo, but I'm never actually going to open it. I really want someone to start a hobby service for people with ADHD, where you can trade in the expensive equipment that you purchased in that moment that you were really going to do the thing that you never actually used. Because I know my husband and I definitely have a closet full of those things. And so, it became this tool where I could actually see that I was dumping things out of my mind, actually making to-do lists and actually sticking with them. And so that's where this whole idea came together. ChatGPT or any of the AI services, they all work very similar. ChatGPT is my service of choice. But it's this tool that you can start and actually finish the things that matter to you. And the idea for me that I would write a book based on an Instagram post that I did last year was totally crazy to me a year ago. And this has been a real game-changer in the way I process and get stuff done. And so, I'm so excited to be able to share this with other people.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, I think the book is really fantastic. One of the things I like about it is it has very specific examples of prompts and how to think about them, but also the nitty-gritty of like, "You could just go type this in and see what happens." I introduced Lee a while ago to AI, and Claude is our new best friend, but she was just like, "No, I don't want to touch this, this stuff is kind of icky and gross and it's very tech-pro." And we're like, "No, you don't understand, this is going to be so life-changing for us." And that was a while ago. I mean, they've gotten so much better.

Lindsay Scola: It got so much better in the four months that I was writing the book, I had to rewrite sections over and over and over again, and then finally find ways to say, "This is how this works in theory." Because I kept using very specifics and by the time I would edit that section, it had totally updated again.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, I mean, I can just say, "Oh, I've got these five ingredients and I want to make some stuff." It used to be really bad at recipes. That was like a running joke in the beginning, but I feel like it's gotten way better.

Lindsay Scola: No, it's gotten really good. It's actually been this thing where it gave me this creativity in writing, it's given me this creativity in cooking that I'm really enjoying. I am someone who likes to play and tweak, but when I look at all these steps and all these ingredients, I tune out and it's become too complicated and then I can't do it. And so, I've enjoyed finding recipes that look good to me but maybe are too many steps, and asking ChatGPT to make a less complicated version of that. And then giving me some room to tweak. So then I started looking at ingredients in my kitchen and being like, "Oh, what could I do with this? I have an idea to make this type of recipe." I've gotten really into these pizza bites with mozzarella and tapioca. I'm allergic to gluten. So it's literally like that Brazilian cheesy bread. And I have all these ideas of different versions I could make with this that I go into ChatGPT and be like, "Okay, I've got these things. This feels like a thing that I could do. What part am I missing?" And that's been really fun to work with, and it's gotten much, much, much better, just in the last couple of months alone on that stuff. But it's actually allowing me to use all the food in the house, like, "Alright, I've got four eggs left, I've also got rice noodles, and I've got a couple of carrots left that I wat to use before they go bad." And helping me come up with a recipe, where before, if I don't have a specific recipe that I purchase these for or a plan for them, I'm going to end up throwing it out next week.

Alison Monahan: That's so funny. I'm like, "Oh my gosh, I've got to get eggs. Don't forget to get eggs." And I'm like, "Oh, it's already on my calendar. I already put that on there. Thanks."

Lindsay Scola: Yes. I'm in the grocery store and I have soy sauce on my list and I don't know where to find soy sauce. Where in the grocery store does soy sauce normally live?

Alison Monahan: I mean, do not ask that question about Safeway, because I swear they put stuff... I mean, literally people who work there cannot find basic ingredients, and every time I have to go into Safeway, particularly in California, I'm just like, "This store is insane. Who designed the layout of this place?" It's the craziest store I've ever been to. No, I feel like they do it just so you end up walking around the store like eight times looking for the soy sauce, because you're like, "Well, I think it would be with Asian, but maybe it's with condiments. I don't know."

Lindsay Scola: Absolutely. And it's been in both places, at different stores. Anytime you think you know where it is, it definitely is not. It's like one of those things like molasses.

Alison Monahan: Oh God. Yeah, I've tried to find molasses before in a grocery store.

Lindsay Scola: I keep buying molasses and then I realize I really hate baking.

Alison Monahan: I mean, I have multiple sets of molasses in my cabinet. I like baking, but you don't use that much molasses. I mean, how often do you really make like ginger snaps?

Lindsay Scola: The once a year where I'm watching the Great British Bake Off and make an entire gingerbread city that no one's going to eat.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, exactly. They're like, "Oh, I need more blackstrap molasses." And you're like, "Nobody likes these things. They're kind of gross actually."

Lindsay Scola: Then it just goes on that shelf where you're like, "I don't want to get rid of it, because I might need it.

Alison Monahan: Right. I don't want to buy it again. I already bought it.

Lindsay Scola: And see, this is where ChatGPT can come in, where you can actually take a picture of what is on your shelf and be like, "Do I have the ingredients to make this thing?"

Alison Monahan: Yeah.

Lindsay Scola: It's gotten so good.

Alison Monahan: No, I believe that. Well, in the pandemic I did a huge kitchen take everything out and actually label it and put it in places. So now I could tell you exactly where the blackstrap molasses are. I just can't tell you if there's more than one, which there probably is.

Lindsay Scola: Yes, I've started using the label maker. I put a big label of the expiration date on top of everything.

Alison Monahan: That's a good idea. Yeah, I love myself a label maker.

Lindsay Scola: Label makers are amazing.

Alison Monahan: It's really been life changing. Well, let's talk a little bit before we wrap up, where do you think people can go wrong here, and particularly maybe students? I know a lot of people have a lot of anxiety around what's okay, what's not okay? How should we be thinking about how to use these tools?

Lindsay Scola: I want to think about it as my co-pilot. I think we have to be really careful about overreliance. I think a lot about my childhood, and before cell phones I knew my friends' phone numbers, I knew my parents' work phone numbers, I knew the school phone number. I knew the phone number for the local movie theater, because that was how we checked the times.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, and the weather.

Lindsay Scola: Life was really exciting before the Internet. Oh yeah, the weather phone number too. And now I'm hard pressed to remember my husband's phone number, and that's just because I use it to get the discount at Ralphs. My brain doesn't store that information anymore, because it doesn't need to. And so, it's really exciting, especially with an ADHD brain when you have these tools that bring this kind of relief and that are changing and growing and we can do so many things with, to want to use it for everything. And you have to remember that as soon as you start turning over your executive function to a tool like this, it becomes harder to access that stuff. I use it to write with me, I use it to come up with ideas. I don't ask it to write for me. And there's a big difference there. And you to think about it before you go in to be really thoughtful about it. This is not your brain; this is a tool for your brain. Can you access this information in another way, or is this going to be the best tool to use to help you figure out what to do next? Sometimes with writing, it's not that I go in there and say, "Write this thing for me", but when I need to come up with an idea for an article or for my newsletter, I ask it to interview me like a podcast host, and ask me

one question at a time and let me come back with answers and then ask me another question. And that is a way for me to use my brain to still come up with a topic to do for my newsletter or for the article that I'm pitching, in a way where I'm still tapping into all the information that's there, without asking ChatGPT to give it to me. And I think that's really important, that we still see these things as a co-pilot and not something that's going to totally take over for us, because if you were driving and you were only looking at the GPS and you're never looking up at the windshield, you're going to drive into a lake. There is going to be a road that is not there, or a road that has moved, or a road that has changed and hasn't been updated in some way. And so, we still have to use our brains, we still have to look for the stoplights, we still have to be an active participant in this thing. And then doing it that way, you're going to make sure that you're not asking it to completely do your writing for you, because there's an absolute big difference, especially for students of, "Help me find this word" or, "Help me restructure this sentence in a way that can make more sense" versus, "Write this thing for me." Because that's when we get into a really questionable situation about, who generated the work? And you don't want to put yourself in that situation. But it's absolutely okay to be using it as a tool to get yourself to the place where you're writing your words. No one looks down on someone using a calculator to do a math problem. And I really see these tools in the same way, especially when you're struggling with executive function.

Alison Monahan: Yeah, I used to say when I learned calculus, I basically forgot arithmetic. So, without a calculator for big numbers now I'd be like, "Wow, that's really hard."

Lindsay Scola: Yeah, if I'm not like trying to calculate the discount on a sale, that mental math will still kick in there. I do love shopping. The rest of the math skills, which I used to have quite a few, are totally gone. But the calculator is okay. When we're trying to pay our bills, when we're going through a spreadsheet and trying to figure out how much we're actually accumulating on something, no one is going to fault you for putting in a function in your spreadsheet to use the arithmetic. I'm terrible at follow-up. I love meetings, I love talking to people, I love having new ideas. I am so bad at writing the email afterwards, "This is what we talked about. Here're the action items, this is the to-do list", which all that's super critical. But now I use an AI notetaker called Fathom, and I will take the follow-up items, I'll make sure that they're accurate, I'll throw them into ChatGPT, I'll ask it to write follow-up email that sounds like me, and I will send that out right away. Nobody cares if I spent hours crafting that email or not. They care that they got that information. And so, it's a very big difference between an original thought that is mine versus, "Get that email out. Use the service."

Alison Monahan: Yeah. Lee and I are basically definitely big fans now of the, "Please summarize this meeting for us and give us action items. Thanks."

Lindsay Scola: Totally. And that's what these things are great for. And especially if there are things that you get really stuck on, whether that's finding the missing word, whether that's like, "Help me with this to-do list." I have a friend who lives in a studio apartment in San Francisco that needed to get a window replaced, and she needed a plan to move stuff, so that she could have it ready to go and not interrupt the rest of her life. And took one of the prompts from the book and got the thing done, still had her Sunday evening and there were no tears involved. And one of the biggest things that I want to convey to people with this book is that there is this big gap for us between, "Don't touch that thing. It's going to write you something that sounds like a robot", and then the prompts that we see on Instagram that are like, "Act like you are a lawyer with 27 years of experience, and also a public relations expert with 15 years of experience, and a professional chef who's been working for at least seven years, and write me this prompt." And you don't actually need that stuff. You can keep playing with prompts and you can add more information to it, but really start very simple. Try one thing at a time. Keep building on something. If you're stuck on how to actually prompt ChatGPT, it's very good at answering for you. Just write to it like you were asking somebody something like, "Can you help me write this prompt that I want to do X?", versus trying to get ahead of it in a fancy way. It'll give you the information that it needs. And then the last thing that's super helpful is the screenshot method. I am a very tech savvy person. We're having this conversation because I was an early adopter of AI. Tech is not a hard thing for me. But sometimes if I'm on a new program that I don't know how to master right away, it's like I have never seen a computer screen before. And so, I love being able to screenshot what I don't understand, put it in ChatGPT, and ask it to give me very easy instructions for what to do next. The service I used to format my book did a really great job, but it was not intuitive at all. And I feel like every step was like a new screenshot to ChatGPT and be like, "Okay, why is this formatting this way? Tell me what to do next." And it's very good at that stuff. And that is not outsourcing anything that I need to use to figure out later.

Alison Monahan: No, that's so interesting. Alright, Lindsay, we're about out of time here. Any final thoughts you'd like to share?

Lindsay Scola: I want to encourage people to play. Don't be scared of it, this is something that you can dip a little bit of a toe in at a time. Try one thing and see how it works for you. Make some notes, try it a little bit different the next day. ADHD brains specifically want to boil the ocean. And we all know that once we try that, it's very easy to feel like we failed and walk away from the thing forever. So, I have found AI tools incredibly helpful for me in my own professional development,

and I hope that they will be for you. But don't feel like you have to bite off everything right now. A little bit at a time goes a very long way.

Alison Monahan: I think that is very good advice, having seen some of my friends with ADHD go down the rabbit hole into some AI stuff sometimes.

Lindsay Scola: Hyper focus I real.

Alison Monahan: Yeah. Alright. Well, remind us again how people can find out more about you and get the book.

Lindsay Scola: LindsayScola.com, there is a link to get the book there. Or you can find it at Amazon, *AI for ADHD*. And just about a week or two from now, the audio book will be out on Audible as well.

Alison Monahan: Awesome. Are you reading that personally?

Lindsay Scola: I am.

Alison Monahan: Oh, so cool. Alright, well, Lindsay, thank you so much for joining us.

Lindsay Scola: Thank you for having me. This was really fun.

Alison Monahan: Oh, my pleasure. And I'm really excited for people to get the book and like you said, kind of play with some of these things. If you enjoyed this episode of the Law School 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 have any questions or comments, please 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 at LawSchoolToolBox.com. Thanks for listening, and we'll talk soon!

RESOURCES:

LindsayScola.com
AI for ADHD: A Practical Guide to Starting (and Actually Finishing) What Matters, by Lindsay Scola
Podcast Episode 476: Executive Functioning Skills for Law Students with ADHD (w/Emily Haan)
Podcast Episode 498: Tips for Better Rest with Sleep Expert Lindsay Scola (Part 1)
Podcast Episode 499: Tips for Better Rest with Sleep Expert Lindsay Scola (Part 2)