

# The Student Spotlight

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Lexis+ AI™

## Staying Motivated and Avoiding Burnout in Law School and Beyond

Staying constantly motivated as a law student can feel impossible at times, and that's completely normal. Between coursework, moots, legal research, and extracurricular commitments, the pressure often feels relentless. As your schedule fills up, balancing the demands of law school and life can seem like a never-ending challenge, making it easy to lose sight of what drives you. The risk of burnout becomes even more tangible, but with the right strategies, you can maintain motivation and prevent exhaustion. Below are key strategies to help you stay on top of your game without reaching your breaking point.

### STAYING MOTIVATED

#### 1. REVISIT YOUR LONG-TERM GOALS

When the workload gets overwhelming, take a step back and remind yourself why you started. Are you aiming for a career in corporate law, or maybe the public sector? Honing your advocacy skills? Developing expertise in legal research? Reconnecting with your broader ambitions can reignite your drive. Keeping the bigger picture in focus will help you push through challenging weeks with a sense of purpose.

#### 2. BREAK TASKS INTO MANAGEABLE CHUNKS

Large projects—like preparing for a moot, drafting a factum, or working on an upcoming motion—can feel overwhelming. Breaking them down into smaller, achievable steps makes progress feel more manageable. Tackling one component at a time and celebrating small wins along the way can help you stay on track without feeling overwhelmed.

A great way to make tasks more manageable is by using tools like **Lexis+ AI** to streamline your workflow. Instead of getting stuck at the starting line, use AI to generate a case summary, structure your legal research, or outline key issues for your factum. By leveraging AI as a



starting point, you can reduce the time spent on tedious tasks and focus on refining your work—helping you stay productive without burning out.

### **3. CHANGE YOUR ENVIRONMENT**

A shift in environment can have a significant impact on your motivation. If you find yourself stagnating at your usual study spot or office, try relocating to a different setting—whether it's a local café, the library, or even a quieter part of your home. A change of scenery can refresh your focus and help you avoid the mental fatigue that comes from staying in the same space for too long.

### **4. CREATE ACCOUNTABILITY PARTNERSHIPS**

Accountability is a powerful motivator. Whether it's with a fellow law student, a mentor, or a colleague, having someone to check in with regularly can help you stay on track. Sharing your progress and goals with others not only ensures you maintain focus but also adds a layer of responsibility, motivating you to keep pushing forward.

### **5. VARY YOUR ROUTINE**

One of the best ways to avoid burnout is to maintain variety in your daily tasks. If you find yourself getting bogged down with one type of work, switch it up. Balancing administrative tasks with more engaging legal assignments, or alternating between different projects like moot preparation and legal research, keeps things dynamic. This variation allows you to tap into different aspects of your skill set, ensuring that you stay mentally engaged and energized.

## **RECOGNIZING THE SIGNS OF BURNOUT**

Burnout doesn't happen overnight—it creeps in gradually, often mistaken for normal stress. But left unchecked, it can lead to exhaustion, disengagement, and even serious health issues. Recognizing the early signs can help you take action before burnout takes over.

### **1. PERSISTENT FATIGUE**

Feeling constantly drained, no matter how much sleep you get, is a key sign of burnout. If you wake up exhausted and struggle to stay alert throughout the day, it may be time to reassess your workload.

### **2. LACK OF MOTIVATION**

Tasks that once excited you—whether it's mootings, legal research, or coursework—now feel like chores. If you find yourself struggling to care about deadlines or responsibilities, burnout could be the culprit.

### **3. INCREASED IRRITABILITY**

Burnout often manifests as heightened frustration. If small inconveniences—like a tough assignment, slow responses from colleagues, or even minor tech issues—start feeling unbearable, it could be a sign you're mentally overwhelmed.

### **4. DECLINING PERFORMANCE**

Even when you're putting in hours of work, you may find yourself making more mistakes, missing details, or struggling to focus. This isn't a sign of laziness but rather a symptom of mental exhaustion.

### **5. PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS**

Burnout isn't just mental—it can have real physical effects. Frequent headaches, muscle tension, digestive issues, or unexplained aches could all stem from prolonged stress.

### **6. ISOLATION AND DETACHMENT**

Withdrawing from social interactions, skipping events, or feeling disconnected from peers can indicate burnout. If you no longer enjoy activities that once energized you, it's worth checking in on your well-being.

### **7. FEELING OVERWHELMED OR HOPELESS**

A constant sense of being behind, no matter how much you work, is a red flag. If you feel like you'll never catch up or that nothing you do is good enough, burnout might be taking hold.

## **PREVENTING BURNOUT & WHAT TO DO IF YOU RECOGNIZE THE SIGNS**

Recognizing the signs early can help you manage stress and maintain your productivity. Here are key strategies to prevent burnout and restore balance:

### **1. GET EXPOSURE TO SUNLIGHT**

If you're not getting enough sunlight, consider spending time outside. Insufficient exposure to sunlight can lead to low energy levels and decreased motivation. A little sunlight can help boost mood and vitamin D levels, providing an added boost to your mental and physical health.

### **2. PRIORITIZE REST AND SLEEP**

The importance of quality sleep cannot be overstated. Sleep is crucial for cognitive function, mood regulation, and physical recovery. When the demands of law school and work intensify, it's easy to compromise on rest. However, sacrificing sleep in the long term can lead to decreased productivity and burnout. Schedule regular breaks, aim for at least 7-8 hours of sleep each night, and ensure that your weekends or free time involve rest and rejuvenation.

### **3. SET CLEAR BOUNDARIES**

As law students and professionals, it can be difficult to turn down opportunities, especially when juggling multiple responsibilities. However, one of the best ways to prevent burnout is by setting clear boundaries around your time and energy. Learn to say no when necessary, whether it's to extra work, social obligations, or tasks that don't align with your current goals. Protecting your mental and physical well-being should always come first.

### **4. TAKE REGULAR BREAKS**

Taking breaks is essential for mental recovery. Implement techniques like the Pomodoro method—25 minutes of focused work followed by a 5-minute break. If this method doesn't work for you, find a routine that incorporates break time which helps you stay focused and avoid fatigue. The key is to step away from work, even if it's just for a short time, to reset and regain energy. These breaks allow your mind to reset and prevent mental fatigue, keeping you at your best for longer.

### **5. FIND NON-LEGAL OUTLETS FOR DECOMPRESSION**

Taking time for activities outside of law is essential for recharging your mind and body. Whether it's watching a favorite film, going for a walk, or picking up a hobby like painting or playing a musical instrument, these non-legal outlets allow you to decompress and refresh your mind. These moments of relaxation improve your mental well-being, helping you return to your work with better focus and energy.

### **6. LEAN ON YOUR SUPPORT SYSTEM**

Finally, never underestimate the power of a support network. Whether it's family, friends, mentors, or peers, your support system plays a critical role in your mental and emotional well-being. When stress levels rise or motivation wanes, turn to the people who can offer encouragement, advice, or simply a listening ear. The emotional connection and reassurance from others can help lift you during tough moments.

### **7. WORK SMART – USE AI TOOLS TO MAKE TASKS MORE MANAGEABLE**

Working hard is important, but working smart can make all the difference in managing law school stress. AI tools like **Lexis+ AI** can help you optimize your workflow by handling time-consuming tasks more efficiently. Instead of spending hours manually sifting through cases or drafting summaries from scratch, you can use AI to quickly generate legal overviews, find relevant precedents, and even refine your writing.

Beyond research, AI can also assist in organization—whether it’s helping structure legal arguments, summarizing dense materials, or even acting like a classmate who helps you brainstorm to work through complex topics. By integrating AI into your workflow, you free up mental space for higher-level analysis and advocacy, allowing you to focus on strategic thinking rather than getting bogged down in administrative work.

The key is to **use AI as a support tool, not a replacement for critical thinking.** When used effectively, it can help prevent burnout by making tedious tasks more manageable, giving you more time to focus on the aspects of law that truly engage and motivate you.

Recognizing burnout early can help you regain balance before it spirals out of control. If any of the signs resonate with you, it might be time to step back and recharge. Staying motivated and avoiding burnout is an ongoing challenge that requires a balance between hard work and self-care. Small, intentional changes—like setting realistic goals, maintaining a varied workflow, and prioritizing self-care—can make a big difference. By breaking tasks into manageable steps, changing up your routine, and prioritizing your well-being, you can continue to thrive without losing your energy or passion. Ultimately, maintaining this balance will not only help you succeed in law school but also lay the foundation for a sustainable career in law.

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