

Ep #212: Passing the CFP Exam with Brett Danko



NEW PLANNER PODCAST



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Caleb Brown

[*New Planner Podcast*](#) with Caleb Brown

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Welcome to the *New Planner Podcast*, where it's all about helping you successfully enter the financial planning profession and accelerate your financial planning career.

This podcast will help you understand the profession, become familiar with the various career paths available to you, and avoid the mistakes that limit your success.

Join your host, Caleb Brown, to explore the human side of creating a successful planning career through interviews, personal experience, and insights from the trenches.

Let's get started.

Caleb Brown: Welcome to the 212th episode of the New Planner Podcast. This is Caleb Brown, your host. My guest today is Brett Danko, who is the president of the Financial Planning Resource Center and managing partner of Main Street Financial Solutions. Brett joins the show today to share how his interest in financial planning have helped him build two successful companies. He shares what made him interested in the profession, how he entered the business and started his own firm, and how he began teaching CFP review classes.

He goes on to share his approach and philosophies to helping students pass the CFP exam, his course offerings, and how his style of teaching is different. Stay tuned to the end as well for inside information on why people fail the CFP exam, what study tips he recommends, and how the new test format differs from the older legacy exam formats. I hope you enjoy this episode with Brett Danko.

Hey Brett, welcome to the New Planner Podcast.

Brett Danko: Hey, excited to be here. This'll be fun.

Caleb Brown: Yeah, thank you so much for coming on. I mean, like, you are everywhere, and you're someone that I've known of pretty much my entire career, which started back in late 20–2002, excuse me.

And then early 2003. And just, I want to have you on just because I think a lot of people know you from the CFP review stuff and I want to get into that, but can you just start off by just telling us sort of how you got interested in financial planning and how you got into the business?

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Brett Danko: Yeah, I grew up in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and then I went to school at the University of Pennsylvania. And one of the things, I was always interested in the finance side of things. And I worked for a hedge fund and was a low level person at a hedge fund, and I realized I wasn't really happy there. And so in the late 90s, decided to go off, become a certified financial planner. I wanted to work with clients.

I wanted to work with people. I wanted to lecture. I wanted to teach. There were a whole bunch of things. And that really started in the early 2000s, passed the CFP. And then really I've been working with clients and lecturing and in teaching people to CFP ever since. So I've been truly, truly blessed and I'm honored to be on the podcast.

I always joke on these, like anytime I'm on one, I'm like, "Oh, so you ran out of other guests," and sometimes they're like, "Yeah, we did, we've done so many of them. We ran out, I ran out of guests, so we're going to have you on. So I will take anything you offer." So, thank you for having me on. It's an honor to be on.

And it's pretty fun. And how many of these have you done? You've done a lot of these.

Caleb Brown: Yeah. So we're over 200 episodes now. We just celebrated 200 episodes. So we're going strong. And maybe just talk a little bit more about that. I mean, I get it sort of, it's not like you created, I mean, now you've got sort of your dream career 'cause you're doing all these things, but talk to us about so did you set up your, cause you have an RIA firm, I think it's Main Street.

Brett Danko: Main Street Financial Solutions. Yeah.

Caleb Brown: Talk to us about how you set that up and then we'll move into the CFP education.

Brett Danko: Well, the first thing that came by, it's like became a certified financial advisor. I essentially realized that I wasn't super happy doing what I was doing. There were other things going on in my career that I said, "I want to take some time off and explore what I really want to do."

And I really wanted to work for myself. I didn't want anybody else having strings that they could pull me in any different way. And so my wife said, "Great, but we don't have kids yet. We're in our early thirties. You got two years." And I think she's really the guiding force through this. And she said, "Look, you got two years, you don't have to be making lots of money."

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It's not about the money, but we want to have children and we want to move forward. So that's going to do it. So we really just stripped down our expenses. And I went to work trying to figure this out. So she said, "After two years, if you don't find that it's fulfilling or you're not making a minimum amount of money, you've got to go back and work for somebody else."

So I think that was the guiding force is whether you want to be working under somebody, or I would argue it as a financial advisor, many people do operate their own businesses. They may work for a large company, but they really are entrepreneurs on their own kind of doing that. So it was sort of one of those things I realized I was like, "I'm going to go ahead and do this."

So started out, I was doing hourly financial planning for \$75 an hour. Because I'm a player, you know what I'm saying? \$75 an hour, making no money, of course, doing this, wasn't managing any assets. And so, I was in the early 2000s and I wanted to teach and wanted to lecture. So I was doing some of that. I was doing college lectures at a personal finance boot camp, which was wonderful.

Just going through the magic of compounding interest for you over years for retirement in investing, as well as your credit card company and talking to them about budgets and basic things like that. So doing that, but again, the teaching side is really what I got excited about. And I started to do more and more teaching.

And that really overtook everything. And then in 2007, 8, and this is going to sound terrible, but I had so many students who were so good, so qualified, and care about their students and really keep up with everything. And then, and I'm just going to say it, because I know you may not admit to it, but you'll probably agree to it, is that you have people out there who don't work very hard.

I don't know that they're very bright, and I don't know that they necessarily care about the clients too much. And they're making a lot of money too. And I was like, you know what? I think if you do it right, if you're with the majority of people and you do it right, this is something that would be fun. So I talked to a couple of students, or actually I mentioned it in a CE session with a group of people.

Somebody just asked me what I was going to do. And one of them said, "Hey, I'd like to, I don't have tons of assets, but I'd like to work with you." So he was our first advisor. We had a couple other people doing planning, and we just all joined. And that was 2007 is when we started actually managing assets.

And then we've gone from there, and over that time, I sort of, I was building the financial education business for the CFP and doing that and doing CEs and things like that. And

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then this business sort of grew out of that and it's kind of did its thing and we did the right things, but I let people kind of manage it as they wanted and we would bring on different advisors.

And then a couple of years ago, I realized that if we didn't, if we didn't really invest resources into technology, into getting more people, into having folks that were, that was their primary job, this business, our Main Street Financial Solutions business, was going to atrophy away. And at that time we had over, a little over a billion, billion and a half dollars.

So that was a lot of money, but it wasn't the primary concern of what I was doing. So we brought on somebody who was, as our president a year and a half ago, been wonderful. And now we're at about two and a half billion dollars that we manage, have over 30 advisors, and things are going well. And I'm also doing the teaching, but having other people help me with that.

So really, as both have grown, it's sort of managing that tug of war between the two. And there's also a happiness component. And I find that when I'm really happy about doing something, I'm sure you're the same way, you want to do more of it. But also the people in that orbit who are surrounded by that.

If you're teaching them or you're working with them as clients, or you're working with them as financial advisors and talking to them about different situations they have, then they obviously sense that like, "Wow, he's loving what he is doing." And they want more of that. And that gets more and more success.

And then that gets you happier and happy. And it's not just the money side, but it's also the side of being content. So what I realized was I wanted to be able to do this without spreading myself too thin. And that's really where we are now. So that's sort of a broad overview from the very beginning up until now. So I'll let you dig in as you see fit.

Caleb Brown: Yeah, and there's a lot to unpack there, and we'll do the best we can in the time that we have. But I guess I just want to go back to something you said earlier. You've said several times, "I wanted to teach, I wanted to lecture." Where did this desire to do those activities come from?

Brett Danko: I think because growing up, we didn't have tons of money. And there was—with things we always talked about were money and it, the end of the month doing breakfast for dinner and leftovers and doing different stuff. We weren't poor, poor, poor. But it was one of those things where money was always there.

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And it was always, meaning it was there that it was a topic. It was surrounding what we were doing and we didn't have tons of it. And what I realized was if we could talk to people, especially those folks, that's why it's named Main Street Financial Solution. Yes, we have a lot of wealthy clients, but it was really to help regular people deal with Wall Street.

So I say that we actually are protecting our clients from the worst aspects of Wall Street, yet at the same time bringing them in on the best aspects of Wall Street. Because you do swim with the sharks so, and you can get to take advantage. So our advisors are out there saying, "Hey, wait a minute. These are all wonderful things that Wall Street offers. We're going to help you navigate the world to make sure that we keep you away from ways that you could be taken advantage of." So really for me, it was I wanted to help other people. That's what I wanted to do. And yes, somebody with 20 million dollars, can I help them planning wise? Of course I can. And you can as well.

But they're still going to be fine. Even if we kind of screw up a little, they're still fine. But that person who doesn't have a lot or has X amount of dollars and they're retiring. Man, good planning, good management of those assets and stewardship can actually not only hugely impact their lives, but impact the lives of their children and grandchildren.

Which is the big reason why I love working with clients. It's you can do the right thing and you can be successful, make money, but you're also doing good. You're impacting clients' lives for generations. And that, you keep doing that that's pretty darn fulfilling at the end of the day.

Caleb Brown: Yeah, that's a needle mover, isn't it? God, appreciate you sharing that. Okay. So you talked a little bit about how you built the business, which is a very nice RIA that you have now. It sounds like you hired some people and they're kind of running it and taking it to the next level, which is kudos to you for being able to see that and also delegate.

I think a lot of firm owners and entrepreneurs will see that and they just don't do anything. And to your point, they run it into the ground. Talk to us on the education component. Let's come back to that. So you were doing CFP CE or Ethics CE, and then did that turn into the review or how did the review and how did you become well known, I guess, in the CFP review space?

Brett Danko: Yeah, I had a mentor who taught review classes and I called him up after I passed the CFP exam and I had taken his review and I said, "Hey, I want to teach your review up north." And he said, "Thanks, but no thanks." Then I called him again. He said, "Thanks, but no thanks." This was two months later.

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Then I told him that I was going to be in his neck of the woods, well about two and a half hours away, two to two and a half hours away, for a wedding. And I said, "I'm driving over to your office." And he said, "What if I'm not there?" I said, "Well then I'll have a long trip home. But I am renting a car and driving there."

And I think he thought I was a little nuts, and, we met, and he said if you do this, this, and this in terms of looking at things up north, doing some classes, because he was doing predominantly in another part of the country, and I said, "You know what, I'll do all that, and I sent him all the information within a month." And he said, "How much time did you spend on this?" I said, "Well, I visited 42 hotels to kind of check out the lay of the land, talked to 60 plus, and here's all my recommendations." And he said, "Well, I'm not paying you." And I said, "Well, I know that."

So I really pushed it because I wanted to do that. And I worked with that person for a few years and then I just started doing my own thing. And then I just sort of took over completely over the last decade plus. And I've just been doing it totally on my own for material, as well as the doing everything on my own.

So for me, it was something that I saw that I wanted to do. And I wasn't going to take no for an answer because I had done my homework. I'd actually worked. I've seen the different programs out there and I said, "This person, I think, has really good material and I like their style and I want to work with them."

And then I just ventured off on my own from there, but that's basically where it all started on the education side.

Caleb Brown: And we'll link to all your stuff on the show notes, but can you just give us an overview, a general overview of your programs and your offerings for the CFP?

Brett Danko: Yeah. So we train people to be certified financial planners. So we do the education courses. So we do those. You can get your, there's seven classes. Some programs are six classes, six or seven classes for the education courses. You can get those through us. And then we do a review, which virtual or live. We have both, but some people prefer the live. And so we do that as well.

And that's three times a year for the reviews because the exam is given every March, July and November. And then we also do continuing education. So I try to do, I call it Real CE. So it's virtual. And we also do some live events or full day events. But I'll do five hours that we're really talking about concepts out there that people want to talk about.

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There's also so many talented people with experience on those calls. But I'm like, "Hey, I'm opening it up. You don't need to hear me talk about this. Some of you have forgotten more about the topic we're talking about than I even know." So I want to get that feedback back and forth. And then every quarter at least I do CFP ethics, which is two hours.

And for that, yeah, that's virtually. And we go ahead and talk about ethics and what the CFP board is looking for. So really all of those we're doing, I have a close, a small group, a close set of friends and small group of instructors that—very small, only a handful. And we do all the teaching and we teach all the topics.

So we sort of keep it small, but we've gotten bigger and bigger. And we have a fair amount of people that come through our review classes and our educational classes. We're very, very blessed by that because we've done it all by word of mouth. I wanted people to talk about us, say, "Hey, they heard about it from a friend, or they read it someplace."

That's really what I wanted to grow. I didn't want people saying, "Oh, I'm going to call people and get paid a commission if they sign up for our class." There's nothing wrong with that sales model, but I wanted to do incoming calls. I wanted to take incoming calls and say, "Oh, you're calling us about our program. Thank you." Somebody else told you to take it. Or to try it or to ask us questions. And that's what we, that's how we've tried to build it. We'll see going forward, since we've built up a nice critical mass, and we're fortunate for that, how we need to continue that either growth or staying where we are. So we'll see how that goes in the future, whether we do more sales type things, but we've sort of stayed away from that.

Caleb Brown: I think you said you and a handful of—or a small group of instructors are teaching, you're still doing some of the teaching or a lot of the teaching.

Brett Danko: Oh, absolutely. It's part of my soul. Oh man. And you know what? These are people, these are taking our classes. First of all, I'm honored that they're taking our classes.

They're entrusting us with that. Second of all, man, they're trying to get better. Most of these people, they're not taking it because, "Oh, I'm going to get, I'm going to get a bump in pay." They're taking it because they want to get better. They want to get better for their clients. They're successful. And they're saying, "Dammit, I want to get better. And so, and then how do I actually do that? Well, I take the CFP classes." So we're talking about, yes, on the topics for the exam, but we're also talking about real world things. So, "Hey, here's some planning ideas and telling stories." And that shows the topics. In its totality. So a story may, all right, oh, now I didn't get that concept, but oh,

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now I get it when you're telling a story on how it applies in real life with the client. Now I get it in its entirety and boom, boom, boom, bringing all the pieces together. So yeah, for me, of course, I think I'll always teach because quite frankly, my name's on the door. I should be teaching. I mean, I feel like that's not really fair to them.

And so, yeah, so that's kinda how I do that. And you have to understand, I have things that I'm good at, and there's things that I'm not good at. So what I try to do is I acknowledge the things I'm not great at and allow others to do those. One of the things I think I'm good at is that teaching side.

And I really get jazzed up by people wanting to do better. One last thing, I always wanted to teach. I always knew that was something I wanted to do. The problem is if I was a school teacher, and I'm just saying this now, I'm not saying this would happen, but hypothetically it could happen. If some kid in 10th grade and I was teaching XYZ subjects said, "This is dumb, why do I have to be here?"

There's a chance that I might throw him against the wall. And then there's a chance I could get fired. I'm not calling for violence, I would not throw him against the wall. But I would just say, "Get out then." That's what I would say, "I don't want you here." So when you're teaching people doing CE, well, maybe not CE so much, but if you're teaching people to become certified, they want to do that.

And quite frankly, they want to do the CE too because they want to keep their CFP marks. So for me, I love that. I love talking about it and you're dealing with people who are motivated and want to be there. And that's what's exciting for me. 'Cause I feed off of that energy as well. Even online, I feed off of that energy.

Caleb Brown: I can tell.

Brett Danko: I get excited about it. I'm passionate about it.

Caleb Brown: Oh, well, yeah. My students at University of Georgia, they—I'm guessing I'm caught in the middle. They mostly want to be there, just not at eight o'clock in the morning so.

Brett Danko: Yeah, that's true. Although we moved them to nine starting, yeah. But, hopefully move on to nine because we started eight and then we moved to nine. So I don't know. Maybe you can move them to nine. Maybe that'll be—

Caleb Brown: Well, what, I mean, as my career has progressed, there's been more and more as the CFP has grown in prominence and I mean, there's more and more

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providers. So how does your program differ from some of these other providers out there?

Brett Danko: Yeah, first of all, I think all the providers are good. I've looked at all of them. I think everybody has a different way that they learn. So, primarily, we're going to be working with folks who are in the industry. Doesn't have to be, but they're in the industry because we're going to spend very little time on what a stock or a bond is.

I just, I think in our material—so now we have other resources you can use, obviously, if you want to learn more. But I got to tell you, we're actually concentrating on people who are in the business, so we can hit it hard. We can go to a high level pretty darn quickly. So hopefully we save some time for folks who don't need to be spending it on basic concepts.

So that's one thing. I think actually the passion that I bring to it, the passion of our other instructors, too, and as importantly, or more importantly, the people behind, the service team that we had. My brother is involved running that. His wife. Her sister. We have other people that are involved. And they are just fabulous.

And they work incredibly hard. And it's making sure that the student comes first. It's in our model, in our RIA at Main Street, it's what's best for the client, and here it's what's best for the student. So that is, we're not a dot org. Usually what's best for the student is it's free. Well we're not, we gotta pay the bills.

But I have to tell you, if you operate based on that, it doesn't mean you don't make mistakes. But it just means that's always the ethos. And we have an amazing team. We have a person who's running our sort of, it's not even sales, but just that side of it and marketing named Libby, who's fabulous and another person who works for a person named Jen.

And we just have so many good people. And Dawn Shannon runs, who you've worked with, runs our CE. I don't want to go on, but I just think having that culture and having people that truly care. 'Cause I could care a lot, but if they don't care, it's not going to come through. And I would argue that they're more of the success than actually just having me there.

I want to teach, but they are the magic. They're that, I'm maybe the straw that stirs the drink, but all the ingredients have to be in there for that drink to be good.

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Caleb Brown: Yeah. I'm just curious between both of the business, the RIA and the education, like approximately how many employees or team members do you have between both of those?

Brett Danko: For both of the businesses, including Consultant 1099s or upwards of a hundred, 70, 80 to a hundred.

Caleb Brown: That's amazing. Yeah.

Brett Danko: Yeah. Yeah. So, I mean, we have some folks for 1099s and we have some folks that are consultants, but yeah, I would say we're, yeah, we're getting up there. So that's pretty darn exciting. And daunting. So then as it grows, how are you then serving them so that they have a positive experience.

Caleb Brown: There you go.

Brett Danko: Because culture matters and it's art. And we spend a lot of time talking about that amongst the people that are running Main Street and also the people running the educational side. We're talking about that. How do we make it so that people are happy and that they're actually growing in what they're doing?

Caleb Brown: Let's go back to just some of the CFP specific stuff because a lot of our audience is taking or about to take the exam. Why do people fail? Why do people fail the CFP exam?

Brett Danko: Well, one of the things I'm going to, so any students of mine who are going to watch this, they're going to say, if he doesn't correct him, they're going to give me credit.

I'm going to correct you. You don't take anything. You pass the CFP. So when people call me on taking it in March say, I go, "No, no, no, no, no, no. You're passing it in March. There's no taking it." So I think there's a mindset and that goes right there. So one of the things that we try and do is get to the important concepts that we need for the review.

Get to the concepts that are important. If we can get 95 to 97%, I'm happy. There absolutely can be some concepts that could be on the exam we're not going to cover because then we would have to double or triple the amount of material. So we want you to get—that's the other thing is not memorizing questions.

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This is not the Series 7 where you memorize questions and then you can see the same exact questions. You have to get concepts. The CFP exam is difficult. It's not impossible, but it's difficult. And they need you to understand concepts. That's one of the reasons why I respect the exam so much and the people who put it together.

Because they're looking at it and saying, "Hey, I'm going to go ahead and make sure you understand the concepts. I'm not going to give you layups. If you understand the concepts, you'll be able to pass the exam." That, and you're not trying to get an A. So many people are trying to get an A. Notice that I'm talking about the psychological side here.

"I'm going to get an A." Yes, for a client, you're going to get an A. When you took your courses as an undergrad or in graduate school, sure, you're trying to get an A. Absolutely. With this, you're going to study like you're trying to get an A, but you're going to know that you're not. And that's because you read the question too quickly, you go ahead and just, you're tired, and you just, it flies over your head, or whatever it is.

That's going to happen, but you can't get upset about that. So I would argue the psychological side, we spend a lot of time on the material side, making sure that it's together. And I believe the instruction. Having instructors who have years and years of experience of working with clients, understanding these concepts, and putting them into real life.

I am a person who learns best from stories. So somebody can present something. So our material goes, "Hey, here's a concept. Then here's an example, quote-unquote story, and then we'll put a question usually underneath it." And then we go to the next topic. We want you to be like, "Okay, so I got it academically."

So you might learn that way. Reading it and seeing it academically. Oh, here's a scenario. Oh, okay, now let's test you on that. And of course we'll have questions at the end of the material, but that's one of the ways it's been developed, that I'm a huge fan of, is having it taught in that way and also by people who have experience.

So when questions come about, boom, there's no such thing as a dumb question. I really believe that, because some people are like, "Oh, well, that's a dumb question." It's not a dumb question because there's 10 links that go along in that knowledge chain, and that one little bit that you may think is dumb for asking, or somebody else may think it's just that one thing, goes ahead and clicks it, and BAM!

Now, it's all solid. Now you have that concept. Now you get it right on the CFP, and now you pass the CFPs in. Sorry, getting excited again.

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Caleb Brown: I love you passion.

Brett Danko: I gotta tell you, it matters getting these people through, how much work you put into studying and a lot of our students that are professionals. So they have personal lives and family.

They actually are dealing with managing a practice or they're working. So we realize they don't have tons of time. We're not going to waste their time. This is the things that are important. So we try to really slim down the material for the review to get them to where they need to get to. Not everyone passes. But darn it, we get people through.

And that's also where the word of mouth comes in because if nobody passed, nobody would say take the class. So that's why we're blessed.

Caleb Brown: I do like how your website says, "When do you want to pass the CFP exam?" So you kind of caught me there. I appreciate that. I just loved how you framed it and the positive nature. Talk about the scheduling, talk a little bit more about that. So I'm a career changer or I'm in the business or I'm whoever and I'm thinking about taking the, whatever, July CFP exam. When do I need to start the review?

Brett Danko: Yeah. So you say to me, "Hey, I want to pass the July exam." Bam. We have a class that started in—for fast track, called fast track. So it starts in November. So there's seven classes.

You do a general principles in November. We do three and a half days. Now everything is recorded. Ideally you want to be as much as you can. We start at 9:00 AM and go to 6:00 PM Eastern time. And we go through three days. Now, you'll have the material ahead of time. You'll read it ahead of time. Then you come to class, ask lots of questions.

We'll do quizzes, etc. Talk more about, do case. And then you have a final exam, you have Saturday, we do a review in the final exam, and then we do extra sessions in between those classes until the next month, where we'll do sessions at night that are all recorded, and then you come in December and do the second class, and then January, and then February, March, April, May, finish up in May with Capstone, you'll have to write a case,, we'll review that case with you.

And then in June, you take a virtual or live review. And in July, you what? Pass the exam. So what we do is we start classes for each exam cycle because we want people shooting for a specific exam cycle. Look, most of the people in our industry have some

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version of ADHD. I don't mean that in a bad way. You get to the office, you have five things you had to do, and you only do two of them by lunchtime.

Yeah, four other things came up and you accomplished those, that things came in. So our thing is keep you on a schedule. So the, and some people are able to do a self study program. That's awesome. And there's nothing wrong with it. That's why our program isn't perfect for everybody. But I got to tell you, it keeps people on track and you also have a community.

We do a Facebook page where people can interact, obviously can get a hold of all of us on our side. And our services, I would argue, is really good. So you call us on a Sunday afternoon, there's a decent chance my brother or his wife or her sister or Libby or somebody picks up. There's actually a decent chance of that happening.

And I gotta tell you, that matters. It really does. And it's like, "Hey, I'm having, I have a question on this." So we try to be, do as much online as we can. We have a profile page where you can go on as a student and you find all the videos and everything there. But then when you have questions, reach out to us and we'll talk to you.

Caleb Brown: So I got to ask, 'cause I think you took the whole school exam, like me, the two day, 10-hour, 285 questions. 'Cause—in the snow uphill. So, where I'm going with this I had this big pack on my back and I was just like, "Oh, they're weighing me down. I had to use a scantron."

Brett Danko: Did you complain? No, you didn't complain. But go ahead. Go ahead.

Caleb Brown: Is this one easier, the new one easier than the old one?

Brett Danko: I think it's different. I think it's different. I think it's more of a practitioner exam. I really do. It helps to be practicing. So if you can do that, I think that helps you. It doesn't mean that you have to, but I think it would be harder for somebody coming out of college now to just go and take it without experience.

I think experience really matters now. I think it's easier in—the only reason I think it's easier is that you don't have to go home at night on the first night and try to go to sleep without having every question run through your head, because I didn't sleep much and every question ran through my head that I had taken that I didn't know.

So for me, I think that's a little tougher than you got to—it's four hours, then you come back for six hours the next day. So I like that you can do that. I'm old, so I would rather have paper and pencil rather than on the screen, but I've grown accustomed to that. So

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when we come back, we have our education classes and then we do our reviews in June, virtual or live reviews around the country or virtual. And with that, then that is, so we have students who have, many more of our students have taken other programs. So then they're coming in taking other wonderful programs, but they come to us and say, "All right, what is it that I need to know for the exam to get through this?"

And they'll say to us, "Well, I have all this other materials." It's not bad. It's all good stuff. I would sort of concentrate on what we're doing, do the questions and all the stuff that we're doing. The cases that we're doing. Go ahead and work on our things and we send them out, information for that.

So we have people who take all the education classes and the review with us, and then we have people who just take the review with us, which is a larger group. And those are done every cycle.

Caleb Brown: I got to tell you, I just love the enthusiasm and the passion. And look, I could talk about this all day long, but we're running low on time. So is there any final thoughts or comments that you'd like to share before we close out?

Brett Danko: No, I mean, regarding the CFP, I think it's if you want to become a CFP, we'd love to work with you. If you go through another program, that's great too. Regarding our RIA, what we're trying to do is have folks who want to run their own practices, but don't want to have to worry about the nonsense out there.

We're not private equity backed. There's nothing wrong with that, but I never wanted to sort of have somebody join and then say, "Wow, in three to five years, somebody else will own you." I just didn't want to do that. And so I self-fund that. We fund it within the owners ourselves and sort of people who want to be independent yet have folks that they can talk to from the practice management side, as well as the education side and understanding different concepts that come up with your prospects and clients.

So that's sort of it. I feel really, really blessed that I get to do all those things.

Caleb Brown: Thanks for coming on, Brett.

Brett Danko: Thank you. Take care.

Thanks for joining us for this episode of the New Planner Podcast. If you are ready to discover the top career paths for financial planners and see which track is best for you, we created a free guide to help you.

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succeed.