

Commentary: Welcome to the Extra Mile Podcast for Bar Exam Takers. There are no traffic jams along the extra mile when you are studying for your bar exam and now your host, Jackson Mumey, Owner of the Celebration Bar Review.

Jackson Mumey: Well, hey everyone. Welcome to Episode 29 of the Extra Mile for Bar Exam Takers. This is Jackson and I am really pleased that you are with us today. This is a fun episode today because I got a chance to interview a student who just passed her Florida bar exam and her story is really remarkable. I am going to be talking with Jennifer Duclair today and Jenny took the Florida bar a couple of times unsuccessfully and then started working with us. On her first try, she passed the exam but what makes the story really interesting to me is that Jenny used our basic mentoring course and she used PhotoReading which is an element that we encourage to use when they are having difficulty on the exam. I think you are going to be absolutely fascinated with what she had to say about how she studied, what she did and the way that PhotoReading worked for her.

If you have been thinking about PhotoReading, or maybe you don't know anything about it at all, you are going to definitely want to stay tuned for this because it's really an extraordinary story and Jenny is a great example of what someone can do when they just follow the approach and really throw themselves into it and do the work as it's laid out for them. She did it as a single mom with a young child. She was working and she was studying for the bar so pretty impressive all the way around. I think you are going to want to stay and listen that interview.

Now before we get into Jenny's interview, I just want to let you know that on Thursday, I will be doing a live free Master Class called How To Make The Next Bar Exam Your Last Bar Exam. This is a 90 minute class in which I am going to be showing you the four steps that you must take in order to pass the bar. We will be looking at great detail at the steps and the things that we do that work for students and the things that people who fail just don't do and don't know to do in some cases. I think it's a session that you are really going to want to be part of. It's totally free but you do have to register for a seat. We keep the size of this Master Class limited. There are two ways that you can sign up for your free seat in the webinar. The first is to text the phrase 'next bar exam' to 33444. You can text 'next bar exam' to 33444 or you can go to our website at celebrationbarreview.com/webinar in order to register. That is celebrationbarreview.com/webinar to register.

The Master Class will be on Thursday, at 3:00pm Eastern. That's 2:00pm Central, 1:00pm Mountain, 12:00noon Pacific and some time in the evening in the UK. There you go. For our friends in Australia, and New Zealand, yeah you are probably going to watch later and I'm not sure you want to get up in the middle of the night for that but hey, we would love to have you if you are there. In any event, really think it will be a useful time for you.

I also want to invite you, if this is your first time into the Extra Mile Podcast, in addition to saying welcome, I want to invite you to subscribe. We do these

episodes twice a week and we're really glad to have you as part of the Extra Mile family. At the end of the session today, I will be explaining how you can join our private Facebook groups so stay tuned for that information but if you would like to get all of our podcast episodes, there are two ways you can do that. You can subscribe through Itunes, or you can to our website at celebrationbarreview.com and you will see the link for podcasts at the top of the page. Just click there and you will find all of the prior episodes along with the show notes and the opportunity to subscribe to the podcast series from there as well.

In the show notes, you will find lots of information about each of these episodes that we are doing. I would love to also have your honest rating and review on iTunes. We continue to be just really pleased and gratified at how many of you are actually subscribing and I think enjoying this time. I appreciate you taking the time to join us. If you are not a Florida bar taker, I don't want you to immediately dismiss this as not an important episode to listen to. It really is. What Jenny is going to talk about is not so much specific to the Florida exam, although that's the one she took and just passed but she is really going to help give you some insights about how to study, how to use basic mentoring if you can't afford a personal mentored course and really I think importantly, the impact of using a different approach to reading that we call PhotoReading.

I will put the links in the show notes for PhotoReading and for how we integrate that into our course. Sit back and enjoy this interview with a successful bar taker. I will come back at the end and tell you a little about how you can meet more successful bar takers through our Facebook group.

Well, hey everybody. This is Jackson Mumey at Celebration Bar Review and I am really pleased that you are here with us today. If you have been following along, and know that I have been talking to successful bar exam takers, and this particular week is a really fun week because I have been able to talk to some people who just found out about their Florida bar exam results. In the last episode we talked to Andy Biggert who had a great story of passing after four unsuccessful tries but I think you are going to love today's story because the young lady that we're talking to has got a fabulous story of what she had to overcome, how she did it, the tools that she used and things that happened.

We've got with us today the newest member of the passing Florida bar exam club, Jennifer Duclair. Jenny I am so glad to have you with us. Thanks for being here today.

Jenny Duclair: Thank you for having me Jackson. I appreciate the opportunity.

Jackson Mumey: Yeah, yeah. Listen I would like to start by just letting you kind of tell our audience a little bit about yourself and your background and kind of what brought you to the point of taking the bar exam.

Jenny Duclair: Okay. I decided to go to law school after a short stint at teaching. I had a very young child at the time so going through law school, I was also in the Army Reserve. I graduated from law school with my child and my military duty and it was time to take the bar. Finding time and a way to study was hard but also the disconnection with the big box review made it even harder. I didn't really have the luxury of putting my life on hold to spend all day studying so I tried twice and failed twice which was very disappointing and discouraging.

Jackson Mumey: Yeah.

Jenny Duclair: I gave myself a year before I would attempt to try it again and in that interim, I ran across YouTube videos about how to pass the bar-

Jackson Mumey: Gee, I wonder who did those?

Jenny Duclair: It's amazing. I have heard other people found you through YouTube and that's how I found you as well and I am very grateful for the day I ran across that YouTube video.

Jackson Mumey: Let me just ask, how was your child when you took the bar?

Jenny Duclair: When I took the bar the first time in 2012, he was four.

Jackson Mumey: He was four so you had a four year old and having had a couple of children of our own, as well as some grandchildren now that are, well our oldest is just now almost four. Oh my gosh! What a crazy time, huh?

Jenny Duclair: Yeah.

Jackson Mumey: Trying to balance your time to study and in coming out of the military as well, and trying to get all of that put together, sounds like it was pretty rough the first couple of times through?

Jenny Duclair: Well yeah. I was still in. I remember going off to training with my bar study books. I remember staying up and on buses traveling to and from training sites, I would be studying.

Jackson Mumey: Mm-hmm (affirmative). I think we just lost your picture here so let's see if we, oh, there we go. Now you are back. Okay. Good. You are training. You are doing your military training and studying for the bar at the same time. What was that like?

Jenny Duclair: Yes. That was in some regards, it was okay because I was surrounded by, I was in a legal unit in the military so they understood and so that was good. I had support but it still wasn't enough.

Jackson Mumey: Yeah, yeah. You take the bar. You don't pass a couple of times. You sit out a year. What is your mindset when it's time to go back in and start studying again? You've seen my videos. What are you thinking to yourself at that point?

Jenny Duclair: Well the fact is, I was scared. I was scared of trying and failing again but I have this new approach. You encourage a full spectrum approach to studying, taking care of the mental, physical, spiritual and emotional as well as the academic rang true with me. It seemed to hit and say well this is something different from what I've done before. In addition, you recommended tools that harnessed the brain's power and that also encouraged me knowing that I-

Jackson Mumey: Yeah, let's talk about one of those because you used PhotoReading right?

Jenny Duclair: I did.

Jackson Mumey: Yeah. Now I have lots of people ask me about PhotoReading and they usually are like, 'does that really work?' Why don't you talk a little bit about what the experience was like for you of getting into PhotoReading, starting with it and then kind of ... I remember some conversations we had during the time, how did that work for you?

Jenny Duclair: Well, after you and I discovered that I was heavily weighted in the reading area as far as learning is concerned, and I was very grateful for that quiz, you recommended, I don't know if you remembered that I stopped everything and learned to PhotoRead otherwise the time that I was spending studying would almost be wasted since I really relied so heavily on the picture, the written word. I started to learn PhotoReading. I was amazed by the science behind it and it actually seemed pretty easy, almost too easy but I went through all the CD's and learned it. Then I started to put it to practice and to me, it was easy enough. It took me a few minutes to read an entire outline that would have taken me four hours just to skim. In fact I didn't know how to skim which is why I had to learn PhotoReading.

The hardest part for me was when I needed to learn to trust that I knew all that information and just answer the question. As you said, the less time I took thinking about it, trying to pull it from the pre-frontal and just trying that good instinct, the more I got them correct. The fact of the matter is that I finished questions much sooner than anybody else in the room because I was going off of my gut which is what I had to learn to practice to do in my practice sessions at home.

Jackson Mumey: Yeah. For those who don't know what PhotoReading is, let me just explain just briefly here. PhotoReading is a program that we incorporate into our bar review course for students and it allows you to read and use your whole mind, not just your pre-frontal cortex as Jenny said but it uses your sub-conscious and pre-conscious brain. It puts all that information in there so you are able to read four

or five hour outline in ... what would it take you Jenny? Probably 15 minutes, 30 minutes to do that?

Jenny Duclair: Exactly 14 to 15 minutes.

Jackson Mumey: Then when you are ready to use that material, instead of having a photographic memory, you've really got just sort of this intuitive sense right of what the material is and what the information is. Then on the bar exam, what happens is that you start answering questions based on instinct more than analysis. Is that a fair way of putting it?

Jenny Duclair: Right. It's become of me. The information has. To the point where I don't have to think about it. I just have to let the right answer out.

Jackson Mumey: Yeah. Instead of struggling to get everything done in three hours, you are actually going through it pretty quickly. Obviously, your multi state scores went up. I think we can say that. Safely, we can say that your multi state went up. What did it do for you on the essays when you were PhotoReading?

Jenny Duclair: Well, what I found is that once I started writing, I would just let the information pour of me as opposed to trying to figure out what to say next. I would just write and it was very interesting that I compared my written answer to the answer supplied in the materials. I had gotten every single important point. I was amazed by that because I had not expected that at all. I didn't know that I knew it like that but the results spoke for themselves.

Jackson Mumey: That made you feel pretty good, didn't it?

Jenny Duclair: And confident yeah.

Jackson Mumey: Yeah. Yeah. If somebody were thinking whether or not they should use PhotoReading to study for the bar, what would you tell them?

Jenny Duclair: You have nothing to lose and as a matter of fact, PhotoReading is a skill that you carry with you for a lifetime even beyond the bar. I use it every day now.

Jackson Mumey: Yeah. Yeah. It's a game changer I think and you know, I think particularly when you've taken the exam and not had success, I love what you say. You have nothing to lose. I mean you know, try it but one of the great things is that you really embraced it. I mean you really jumped in and you said okay, I am willing to try this and do it. Now one of the other reasons that I wanted to chat with you in particular is that in many of these hangouts, I am talking to people that were in a personal mentoring course. That is they sent me their written work and we conferenced about that. You chose the basic mentoring course and I thought it would be important and useful for people to talk to and hear from someone who was in that course, where you weren't getting my feedback on

the written work and you still passed the exam. What was that process like for you?

Jenny Duclair: Well, you know sometimes you run into budgetary constraints and you have to do what you have to do but you gave me tools and insight into how I learn. You gave me this outline. If I followed it step by step, I would pass. I was able to hold myself accountable. If I know I hadn't done a certain number of assignments per week, I knew that I was sabotaging myself so I held myself accountable and the PhotoReading when I applied it through answering questions and writing essays, I followed the instructions you gave which was to work through the outline and check on your answers in the essay yourself because that was another step of learning. I just had to really listen to what you said and do it. I knew that once I did that, I would pass.

Jackson Mumey: Yeah. Yeah. I think that's really important that you were very disciplined and you were following the study guide, following the order of assignments, doing the work as it was there. You and I talk still pretty frequently in study conferences, right? Even though I wasn't reviewing your work, did you feel like you were alone in this process?

Jenny Duclair: I didn't. I knew that you were there and if I emailed, I got an answer, a response. Your people are very responsive. That is on point and also I got to communicate with you and even if I felt like there was nothing I needed to really talk about once we got on together, things did come up right away and applied them right away. Got good guidance. I could tell you what kind of answers I was coming up with and you would give me feedback. I would know where to go from there. You were very accessible. There is no other bar or city course like that.

Jackson Mumey: Thank you. That's very kind of you. Tell me now what it was like going to Tampa for the bar exam Now you are going back in. It's try number three. What are you feeling like? What's that like? Share that if you would.

Jenny Duclair: At the time I didn't know it, but right after when you sent out the email about something akin to PTSD.

Jackson Mumey: Yeah. Yeah.

Jenny Duclair: That rang true. I didn't know how much of this I was under while I was there. I didn't know that I was running on adrenaline for the last six months. Even though actually I started studying almost a year before the July bar because I needed to space it out that long because of the amount of responsibilities I had. The last six months I was running on adrenaline because I was coming home from work and studying for hours and going to sleep and waking up and doing it all over again. When I was at the bar itself, I was still running on adrenaline. I didn't know it at the time but I was very calm because quite frankly, at that point in time, there is nothing else that you can do but trust what you've learned up until then.

I understood the people that were still running last minute. It's scary to be at the moment of truth but throughout the study course, I had to keep telling myself that the outline, the PhotoReading, even my answers on the practice exams, have shown you Jenny that you've got it. I just had to keep that air about me. The most difficult part was probably the fact that I would finish after about an hour and some minutes and then I would like, this can't be right. This can't be right. I said, you have to trust yourself. This is the results that you got on your practice exams that you went over with Jackson so you just have to trust. This is what you should expect. This is what you got in practice.

Jackson Mumeey: Yeah. I tell the story sometimes that when I took the exam, and finished very early, the proctor came up to me. I said, 'I am going to leave. I am done.' The proctor looked at me and said, 'Oh Honey. Don't quit.' So that's a little weird. PhotoReading does kind of change that picture. You took the exam and now you are waiting for results and then on Monday, the results come out. Share that moment, what that was like for you finding out about your results.

Jenny Duclair: Okay. Know that my self esteem and everything took a great beating with the two go arounds that I failed in so when I went to check my results, first of all they weren't out at 9:00 and I was like, oh these inefficient people at Tallahassee. What are they doing? Anyway, when they finally loaded, I looked for the page with my bar number, now mind you this is three years after the first time I took the bar. My number was not with everybody else's number. Everybody was in the four thousands. Mine was still in the three thousands and so I looked at that page and I scrolled down. Honestly, first of all I was disheartened to see a long list of fails but then when I reached my number, it said pass and I said, 'wait a minute. Am I sure this is my number?'

I said, 'Well Jenny. You are the only women up high in these numbers where everybody else, the majority is in the four thousands. That's clue number one and if you really don't trust it, go check your email. You have documents with your numbers on it.' When I was finally assured that it was my number, and that I had in fact passed, I allowed myself to breathe at which point I started bawling and I was in the middle of work.

Jackson Mumeey: How cool.

Jenny Duclair: The office celebrated with me because you know they've been watching the hard work all this time and it was a celebratory moment for us all. I was just bawling quite frankly. I was relieved. I had finally reached the end of this long road. It was finally over and I, in large part, had this course to thank. Thank you.

Jackson Mumeey: Thank you. The reason I do ... I mean I share this a lot but the reason I do what I do is just for moments like that. I mean really that's the most fun that a teacher can have. I am so proud of you and what you've accomplished. It had to be an unbelievable moment for you to know that you had set this goal, you worked for a year at this. I mean you were really diligent. You started early. You

followed instructions. You did what we asked you to do. You took on this new style of learning, this new approach and you killed it I mean you know. By the way, in case you don't know the pass rate in Florida was 68% for all bar takers, but for repeat bar takers, the pass rate was something like 25% so you just beat every odd, every bit of the odds. That's huge. That's just huge. After the party at the office, you went home and what did you tell your son?

Jenny Duclair: You know what? My son still doesn't know.

Jackson Mumey: Really?

Jenny Duclair: Really. Okay. Once the exam was finished, I poured myself back into giving him the attention that he hadn't gotten all this time. He made as huge a sacrifice as anybody else in this picture and maybe even the biggest sacrifice because he had to give up his mommy for so long. The spotlight is off of my now and I've been doing everything I can to pour into him and you know, I have been asked that question a few times, have you told your son? How does he feel? I am thinking we are going to sit down and talk about it. It's one of those things that I am still even digesting on my own.

Jackson Mumey: In case people don't get this, I mean it's just a couple days since Jenny got her results so this is ... we are catching her right in the midst of all of this. You know I think one thing that might happen Jenny is that when he is older, and he's faced with some discouragement and some setbacks, you are going to be able to share this story with him and it's going to mean an enormous amount to him. I mean more than you can possibly imagine that he will be able to say, 'you know what my mom had to really overcome some pretty amazing things. I mean failing the exam, raising a child, coming out of the military, working, studying, putting it all together and not giving up.' Frankly a lot of people would have given up. I think the fact that you not only didn't give up, but that you persevered and you succeeded, will be a role model for him.

I know it's a role model for a lot of bar takers. I know there are a lot of people who are going to be listening and watching who are going to go, 'Wow. If that can happen there, maybe it can happen for me.' I mean if you could talk to some of those repeat bar takers who are feeling pretty discouraged today, what would you want to say to them?

Jenny Duclair: I lost you for a minute but I think you asked me if I could talk to some of the repeat bar takers, what would I say to them?

Jackson Mumey: Yeah, exactly.

Jenny Duclair: It's possible, more than possible that with this bar review this time, could be your last time having to take the bar so forget all [inaudible 00:25:45] and zero in on what's in front of you, your outline, your resources and Jackson, the person that you can talk to when you need direction or some [inaudible 00:26:02] in your

studies. Focus on that and just do what you are supposed to do every day. Today, focus on today. Get to tomorrow, get tomorrow done. You will be successful.

Jackson Mumey: Yeah. That's great. Thanks. No what are your future plans besides pouring into your son, which I think is awesome, what are you planning to do with this bar membership? Do you have anything on the horizon for yourself?

Jenny Duclair: Well, it's still a little bit new but it's taken so long that my application went stale some people might have experience with but once it's done and I am licensed, I am going to pick up and continue going with the plans that I have always had. I really thought that I would have to reroute my life with the bar failures but it was just wrinkle because I was able to get back on the road that I had been routed to so you know, you will see me with my real estate law and real estate investments and all of the other fun stuff that I had always dreamed about doing since graduating high school and I am grateful for tools and people that have come along that I can keep going along on my road to my plan.

Jackson Mumey: You know I have no doubt Jenny that you are going to be enormously successful. Your perseverance, your dedication, really your intelligence and effort, all of those combined are going to make you a very, very special member of the bar and it's really a thrill to be able to part of that journey with you. I know that everyone in the audience probably is ... there are some tears in the audience I suspect, people hearing this story. It's pretty amazing and really exciting. I think we all share in that for you and your family and the opportunities that this is going to provide for you and your family over the years.

Thanks for letting us be part of that ride. Thank you personally for letting me be part of the ride and for trusting me and trusting what we could do together. I hope that for those of you who have been kind of watching and/or listening today, that you get the idea that you can accomplish these things, a step at a time. You know Jenny didn't buy the most expensive course we offer but she took advantage of every resource. She did what we asked her to do and the result is as you see, a very successful grade and passing. Man, does that feel like a weight off your shoulders? Probably does.

Jenny Duclair: Yes.

Jackson Mumey: I so appreciate you being here today and sharing your story with us being open and transparent about that. I know it will inspire a lot of people and we really wish you all the very best in your future endeavors and look forward to seeing you do great things in the Florida bar. Thanks for being with us today and to our audience, we are just delighted that you could be with us and we will be back again in another few days with some more exciting stories of successful bar exam takers. Thanks everybody. Bye bye.

Well that wraps up today's episode. Thanks so much for listening. If you would like to be part of our Extra Mile for Bar Exam Takers private Facebook group, just check the show notes. You will find a link in which you can request an invitation and we will see you along the Extra Mile.

Commentary:

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