

# Jed Kurzban

## THE DIFFERENCE MAKER

Robert Klemm Photography

**AALM:** When did you first know you wanted to become an attorney?

**Kurzban:** I first wanted to become an attorney when I watched my father, a plaintiffs' attorney go to trial when I was only 12 or 13. He made a brilliant argument as to why his clients deserved justice and how no jury should accept the injustice proffered or the minute value the defendants were placing on the plaintiff's injuries. The plaintiff was an ironworker who had his foot crushed by a crane ball that was dropped 50 feet. The defendants admitted liability midtrial and my father ended his closing argument by telling the jury not to accept the pennies that the defendants claimed the case was worth, and threw a handful of pennies into the air. I saw the pennies glimmer and catch the light in their coppery magnificence before they hit the ground. The judge yelled at my father. It was that moment I knew I was hooked and wanted to be a trial attorney, but to this day, I have yet to throw pennies in the air.

**AALM:** Do you have any mentors or professors that encouraged you along the

way? What is the best lesson they taught you?

**Kurzban:** The obvious answer to this would be my father. He was and is my mentor through law school, while I clerked at the law firm and after I joined the firm as a licensed attorney. My father is an old school aggressive plaintiff's attorney who encouraged me to find my own way. He gave me the opportunity to take on a broad range of cases. After several years of taking on smaller cases, I assisted my father with larger cases and eventually got my first medical malpractice client. I instantly fell in love with medicine and the cerebral learning necessary to discuss medicine with the doctors who had not followed their own standards of care and caused harm to the plaintiff. My father allowed me to find my own way and my own love for the law. Now, most of my practice is dedicated to medical malpractice and wrongful death on behalf of plaintiffs.

**AALM:** What experiences have taught you the most?

**Kurzban:** As much as I would like to say winning trials, teaching the litigation

skills course at the University of Miami, or giving seminars, the truth is, the two trials I have lost in my career have taught me the most. The experiences were gut wrenching, and I felt like I had let down my clients, my firm, my family and myself. It is one thing to be told how important it is to pick a jury; it is another to know you have done your best and achieved everything you wanted throughout the trial, but lost because you simply picked the wrong jury. I had to reexamine everything, I did and ultimately came to conclusions that I am not sure I would have reached without these terrible losses.

**AALM:** What do you find particularly rewarding about your practice?

**Kurzban:** My clients. I have never been one to worry about fame or the monetary gains of the practice. When I first began to practice, my father sent me to watch Miami attorney JB Spence in trial. I had no idea who the man was, but whenever I spoke to attorneys older than me, they spoke about the Titan. It made me realize the rewards of the practice, and the satisfaction you achieve when helping your clients. We put



their lives back together. People often ask me about tort reform and how I combat the changing attitudes of our jury, and I simply let them know that when people are catastrophically injured, like my clients, there is no other help. The government does not help; their families are unable to help them and insurance companies fight them. Their lives are destroyed, they are often destitute unable to pay the bills and without hope. I try to provide the help and the hope that they have lost. I try to achieve some semblance of compensation and justice for what a third party has wrongfully done to them.

**AALM:** What traits do you think make an attorney exceptional? What's the difference between a good attorney and an outstanding one?

**Kurzban:** Caring. It is a simple answer and needs no more explanation.

**AALM:** How would you describe the culture of the firm?

**Kurzban:** My firm is a boutique firm where each partner practices an area that is meaningful to him or her. My uncle is an immigration attorney, an area I have never really enjoyed due to the lack of a jury. Other partners in my firm do mental health and corporate law. I'm often asked, how I prepare my cases. My answer is always the same. I prepare a case to go to trial as I am looking to achieve justice. It is the cornerstone of my practice, and something I have taught to associates and law clerks throughout the years. Justice does not come in money alone, but in knowing you have accomplished something for your client. You give them a sense of closure and resolution. Justice comes in letting your clients know someone went to bat for them, sweated blood and tears with them and gave your best so their story can be told and their injuries addressed. The highest compliment any attorney can have in my opinion, is to have a client say thank you, we're glad you are our attorney and you'll be our attorney forever, and we thank you for coming in to our lives. I've always told my family, I wish I could be with them in every minute of the day, but if I'm not with them, I want to be doing something valuable in the world and helping those that need help. That's the type of firm and firm culture we have made in my law firm.

**AALM:** What do you enjoy doing outside of work?

**Kurzban:** I am a Miami kid, born and raised. I love Miami sports. I grew up in

the 1980s watching the Miami Hurricanes and couldn't wait to be a Hurricane, which is where I went to law school. I loved the Miami Dolphins and I have been going to Hurricane and Dolphin football games with my children since they were born. Although, I don't play as much sports as I used to, there was a time when I was a young lawyer and a group of young lawyers would get together and play basketball, softball and even flag football. I still love rooting for our local teams and, if there is a good baseball game going, I am still ready to swing my bat.

**AALM:** What do you most hope to accomplish in the future? Where do you see yourself in five years? In 10?

**Kurzban:** My future, I hope, comes with a continued record of verdicts for my clients and recognition from my peers for the work I have done by putting my clients first. I know social change can be made one case at a time, and I revel in knowing that my case can be the difference maker. I've had several cases written about, published articles and won recognition, and enjoy being part of the front line that is ever changing in the world of juris prudence.



## At a Glance

### Kurzban Kurzban Weinger Tetzeli & Pratt P.A.

2650 SW 27th Avenue, 2nd Floor  
Miami, FL 33133  
(305) 444-0060  
www.kkwtlaw.com

### Practice Areas

Medical Malpractice  
Serious Personal Injury  
Wrongful Death

### Education

Juris Doctor, University of Miami  
School of Law, 1995  
Bachelor's Degree, University of  
Alabama, 1992

### Favorite Quote

"It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat." – Theodore Roosevelt