

IMPACT MARYLAND MONTHLY

with Stacy Allgood-Smith

"HOW TO THRIVE IN EVERY KIND OF MARKET"

MAY 2018



My "Aha" Florida Moment

How a 1-Hour Massage Made me a Better Person (& Realtor)

"If you are tuned out of your own emotions, you will be poor at reading them in other people."

I've heard this quote in passing from time to time. And while I'm not entirely sure who said it, I'm sure it's someone who knows a thing or two about what really matters in life. And probably someone who would be pretty good at selling real estate.

People are what matters most. Their hopes, their dreams. Big or small, it's what we *feel* about our everyday lives that gives it meaning. That's something I finally realized after finding myself crying on a massage table in the middle of my Florida vacation a few years ago.

You see, it had been a pretty hard year for me and my husband - a hard two years to be exact.

But first, here's a little context. I grew up in Damascus, Maryland. My whole family is rooted here. My mother was born over the store at Cedar Grove, and most of my family were laid to rest in Methodist churches across the Damascus area - from Cedar Grove to Woodfield.

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At Impact Maryland Real Estate we live by the philosophy that "Stories are the Currency of our Society." That's why we say, 'We Don't Sell Homes; We Sell Dreams.'

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If you have friends, neighbors or family members who, like you, are a savvy homeowner who is concerned about how to maximize the value of your investment, and you think they would appreciate IMPACT MARYLAND MONTHLY, I'd be happy to make that happen...and, have it come as a gift from you. Here's how it works: Simply shoot us an email (subscribe@ClientProfitSecrets.com) with your name and the name and address of the person whom would enjoy this newsletter. I'll include a note explaining that it is totally free because you arranged for a free subscription.

I married my eHarmony match (boy, did they get that one right!), Rick, in 2005 and had a very solid, steady (or so I thought) job working for a pension fund. After 18 years of service — having worked myself all the way up from the role of file clerk — I was laid-off and sent home in a cab. Little did I know that stable job was not so stable; also, little did I know that being laid-off was not the hardest thing that would happen to me that year.

Just two years after getting married, my father had a stroke. He was then moved to a nursing home, where he struggled to eat well and had to be put on a feeding tube. While we were making visits to the nursing home, my husband's mother passed away suddenly. It was quite a shock. Unfortunately, it was not our last. Two months after I was let go of my "stable" job, my father passed away. Just six months after, we got word that my father-in-law had passed.

I don't know about you, but losing three out of four of parents in a two-year span does something to somebody. At first, it was devastating. But, as I later realized, it was a bit of an awakening for me too.

Soon, I landed a data entry job that paid the bills. But it wasn't exactly the career path for me. Then, my husband and I planned a much-needed vacation down in Florida. The plan was just to rest. Soak up the sun and a R&R. Back then, massages were a luxury to me. But I decided to splurge and make an appointment for one. It turned out to be one of the best massages I've ever had.

As I laid there, taking it in, I started to think about all the loss we had gone through. I allowed

myself to just feel it all. Suddenly, I found myself crying.

Once I got up from the table, I felt absolutely amazing. I felt refreshed — and a little massage drunk. It was such a good massage physically but also mentally and emotionally. Later, I learned there was a scientific term for what I experienced. It's called "somatic emotional release." In other words, it was my body's way of letting go of all the pent-up stress and anxiety.

There it was — my life changing moment. I looked my husband in the eye later and said, "I want to help people feel like this."



My favorite wedding photo - besides the one that shows us smearing cake on each other's faces, 5-14-2005

Six weeks later, I was in massage school. Three months after graduation, I was one of the first people in my class to get my license. I wanted to get out of that J-O-B as soon as I could. But it was about more than business freedom (although, that was a big motivator).

I also wanted to give people the same kind of satisfaction I had experienced in Florida. I wanted to give people the permission to feel what they needed to feel. Simply put, I wanted to make people happy.

Fast forward a few years, and I can gladly say that I have been able to reach both goals pretty well!

During the spring and fall (when most people make their massage appointments) I help countless people escape from the pressures of their everyday lives. I get to see them leave feeling refreshed, happy and renewed — ready to take on whatever comes their way.

However, never one to miss a chance to make someone's day, I've been on the lookout for another way to achieve that goal during the slower summer months. Enter Eric Verdi and Impact Maryland Real Estate.

A few years ago, I met Eric through a mutual friend and was even interviewed by Eric for Frederick Advice Givers. If you know anything about Eric, you know he cares a lot about making people happy, too. His whole business model is centered around his clients.

After reading his Morning Musings emails for awhile, the "Aha" moment struck. *I could do this, too. What about real estate?* Trusting Eric's opinion, I reached out to him to get his thoughts. "I'd like to get into real estate," I said. "What do you think?"

His response blew me away. He said, "Stacy, with your personality and the way you like to help people, I know you will be a great fit."

Just like it was with massage school, I just knew this was a path I had to follow.

Also, just as I set my mind to becoming one of the best massage therapists in town, I signed up for real estate classes right away. Once I got my license, I joined the team at Impact Maryland Real Estate. When you know



Showing off my uniform at the beginning of my education at Baltimore School of Massage, April 2010

something is right, you just *know*. And you must act on your instincts. Also, when you have a team who feels the same way you do about your clients, you don't let that pass you by.

Just recently Eric and I were touring a couple around to see a few properties. They had set criteria for their next home purchase, and we were searching for the perfect home that checked every box. And once we found it and they knew it was "the one" there is only one word to describe how we felt - euphoric.

It was that Florida massage table feeling all over again.

When they walked into the house and said to us, "Wow, yeah, this is the one," I felt a rush all the way up my spine and Eric and I fist-bumped. There just is nothing better. Not only do those buyers live in that home now, but they just hosted a wedding party there for their son. You see, their feelings were right. Their instincts were right, and I'm so glad that we were there to help them through.

Now, I am still a massage therapist and will never give that up. However, I am excited at the chance to help people feel that kind of joy year round.

Whether you are giving a massage to someone at the end of a grueling week or handing them the keys to their dream home, *people* are what matters. Their emotions matter.

Thankfully, I have a husband who gets it, too. Rick has supported me every step of the way, from massage school to this new real estate venture. An AV Tech for the Smithsonian, Rick loves people just as much as I do. In fact, he's even gone on a tour with me!

When you have the right kind of people around you, then you're going to have the support you need to really succeed in life. Because you'll have someone who "gets it" too.

You'll have your own Rick or Eric. Your own "Florida massage therapist" that lets you go where you need to go. Someone who will go to every house in Maryland if that's what's needed and who will feel that "Wow, this is home" feeling right along with you.

Is that the kind of realtor you want? Then, that's who I'll be for you.

Cheers,

Stacy

Don't Forget to Have Fun!!!!

May Quiz Question

Q: Where would you find the 'Sea of Tranquility?'

Everyone who texts, emails or calls in the correct answer by the last day of this month will be entered into a drawing for a \$25 gift certificate to Carabba's, Outback, Bonefish.

April Question & Answer

Q. What 2013 Sci-Fi Blockbuster starred Sandra Bullock and George Clooney?

A: Gravity

Congratulations: Anna Carroll

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Happy Birthday

Here are May Birthdays from our friends of **Impact Maryland Monthly**. If you have a birthday in May and don't see your name on this list, please email or call us so that we will include your birthday.

Jenny Brenzel	May 2 nd	Catherine Gilbert	May 11 th	Camryn Rawlett	May 22 nd
Jacob Martin	May 3 rd	Dan Wilson	May 12 th	Heather Fogelson	May 22 nd
Karen Kapust	May 4 th	Claire Purgason	May 13 th	Colin Haraway	May 23 rd
Leila Martinez	May 4 th	Kenny Barnas	May 13 th	Derek McCauley	May 23 rd
Lena Picha	May 5 th	Mike Haggerty	May 14 th	Bobby MacCracken	May 24 th
Grant Huffstetler	May 7 th	Linda Holifield	May 15 th	Megan Sutherland	May 24 th
William Huffstetler	May 7 th	Jim Steele	May 17 th	Andres Menocal	May 25 th
Leon Kaas	May 8 th	Brad Ranneberger	May 20 th	Brent Allgood	May 26 th
Steve Duncan	May 9 th	Garrett Goodwin	May 21 st	Jennifer Bobbitt	May 27 th
William Patterson	May 10 th	Michelle Bairington	May 21 st	Sherri Beachley	May 29 th
Abe Lopacienski	May 11 th	Raymond Wilson	May 21 st	Jeremy Bitler	May 31 st
Anna Elise Scott	May 11 th				

Be Sure to Wish these Friends a HAPPY BIRTHDAY if you see them.

'Stories From The Street'

Stories from the Street is a series monthly articles using real life examples, told in 'story' format to give you knowledge of what actually happens behind the scenes of a Real Estate Transaction.

Emotions...

Why Realtors are the Masters of 5th Grade Career Day

Fiddling to get the key out of the lockbox and struggling to find the 'one key' that opens the deadbolt on the front door. That's a picture of a real estate agent if I've ever seen one. Meanwhile, your clients stand nervously behind you wondering what is behind the front door. Is it going to be another 'dud' like the 6 other homes we just saw? Or, is it going to be 'the one?'

The anticipation of finding a home for your family is one of the most nerve-wracking experiences that you will ever encounter.

If you have ever bought a home, you know EXACTLY what I am talking about.

You start looking online at location, neighborhood, size of the yard, how close to the schools (or whatever you really want) and all of that is a great way to start a search. But there is no substitute for walking through the front door.

First impressions are everything.

The smell. The visual appeal. Your senses are at a heightened state, filled with the 'unknown,' and there is the even bigger unknown that comes from the anticipation of finding a new home.

Within the first 10 seconds buyers get an overwhelming emotional 'feeling.' Sometimes it's good, sometimes it's bad. Either way, they will talk themselves *into* or *out of* the home based on their first impression. Based on those ever important first 10 seconds.

This is why we never sell/push people on homes, because they know almost immediately.

Yes, we can point out the pros and cons of the house. The age of the appliances, the quality of the HVAC system or whether there is enough space for their California King bed or their wraparound couch. We can answer those functional questions, but one thing we can't help them with: their EMOTIONAL ATTACHMENT. It's either there or it isn't.

Believe it or not, that's why real estate is such a TOUGH business to succeed in. It is the only business I know where you have to 50% psychologist, 50% business owner, 50% technical expert and 50% marketer.

Yeah, Yeah.. I know that does not add up to 100%. But successful real estate agents don't work 40 hours a week, they work 80-100 hours a week. (hahaha)

No one grows up and says, I want to work 100 hours a week and 'sell homes.'

Remember Career Day in Elementary School? When all the kids say what they want to do when they grow up? You might have heard 'Teacher,' 'Fireman,' 'Doctor,' 'Engineer,' 'Entrepreneur,' or 'Nurse.'

Remember what you didn't hear? 'Realtor.' Chances are you didn't hear anyone say I want to 'sell homes.'

And don't get me wrong, it's not because it's not a great profession, it is. It just takes a LOT more than you might think to succeed in the long run. You see, when you're a kid, you want to do something you know you will do well at. And who could blame them?

And at Impact, we've been helping clients enough to know that a lot of those kids from Career Day have what it takes to be a great in real estate if they wanted to. It just might not be what you expect...

Believe it or not, it's not the Engineer or Entrepreneur who's going to automatically thrive in this business. Sure, they have an analytical mind. They're smart. They're motivated. But if you think for one minute that's enough to beat out stiff competition and help clients snag their dream home, then well...



...you've got another thing coming.

Why do we commit ourselves to working 80-100 hour work weeks? Why do we spend hours at night, after long days of touring homes, to tweak contracts and negotiate favorable closings for our clients?

It's not because we're so smart (haha). Although, there is quite a bit of strategy involved of actually winning negotiations and getting your clients contract accepted.

Nope, it's because we care. It's because one of the true joys we get out of those long hours and nights of playing part Perry Mason and part Mark Cuban is the satisfaction we see on our clients' faces. It's the joy we see when we tell them the good news: 'Your home is under contract!' or 'Your offer has been accepted. You have a CONTRACT!'

This is especially true in the market we're in today, where buyers are jumping on good interest rates while they can. Where a house sees 8-10 offers just hours after it hits the market. Where everyone is looking for their first home or next home and are often willing to invest over-market dollars not to lose out.

Now, back to Career Day again.

Which kid do you think is going to make the best agent in this situation? The Teacher or the Entrepreneur? I can tell you from experience the answer: IT'S BOTH.

You have to have a solid strategy and expert negotiation skills to keep your clients from losing out. And this is ever evolving. The strategy used last year is now outdated as others have 'borrowed' our strategy so we recently came up with a NEW strategy for getting our buyers' offer accepted.

And guess what? It's worked recently with 4 different clients! We've developed a solid strategy of our own for buyers in this market. Our buyers submit with a really strong offer but put a tight deadline on the offer. We don't give sellers the time to 'shop around'. Is it risky? Sure, the seller could just walk away or balk at the deadline.

It keeps more power in our buyers' hands. Winning in Negotiations is all about having the upper hand, and in today's market sellers have that upper hand, what we are doing is trying to flip that script and get our buyers

the upper hand. And it's helped us get 4 recent buyers their dream home in this hot, competitive sellers' market.

However, when it comes to managing expectations or knowing when to fight for your client, being an Entrepreneur will get you nowhere. *I repeat, nowhere.*



You have to *care* about your clients first. You're not going to negotiate anything well if you aren't motivated to help get them the home they really want. You might think to yourself, '*They'll just buy the next one.*'

We have learned that the two best professions that provide excellent real estate agents are nursing and teaching. It doesn't mean other can't succeed, just that teachers and nurses have an innate sense for helping others and being empathetic to other's emotions.

Why? Both nurses and teachers know what it's like to work under pressure. They know how to manage the emotions of their

students/patients/colleagues to do what really needs to be done. Some of our best agents have come from these professions. And they are the ones who do best at keeping our clients from getting too excited before that offer agreement is signed. They'll also be the first ones to pop a bottle of champagne with them, too, at the closing table.

To really succeed in this business, you have to have the emotional strength of a nurse and the analytical mind of an entrepreneur.

You have to be able to handle high-emotion situations and know how to manage the negotiation and business side of things. No one is good at both of these things to start. And I'll tell you right now, one is a whole lot easier to teach one than the other.

When I'm fiddling with that lockbox or waiting for an offer to be accepted before the deadline, my 'business sense' is not going to keep me going. It's my emotional side (the side that really cares about the client) that pushes me on to do what needs to be done.

At Impact, we'd rather hire the nurses and teachers and give them the business skills later on. It's much harder to do the other way. You either care, or you don't. You can either emotionally connect with your clients, or you can't.

Back to 'winning negotiations,' we are always thinking 'outside the box' to get our clients' offers accepted. The offer deadline has work, just ask the McArdules, the Reddings, the Follands, and the Colemans, who recently got their offers accepted on new homes, we had to go above and beyond to get their offers accepted. But it was all worth it when we saw the look on their faces, the hugs, the tears, the sheer raw emotion when we told them they're getting their dream home.

Now, that's a story we should share at next year's Career Day. Maybe we'll have a lot more kids raising their hands to sell houses. *What do you think?*

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Testimonials from recent 'IMPACT Maryland Monthly' Members

We LOVE our clients and work tirelessly to get Superior Results when you hire us. We realize that your home is your most important investment we treat the entire experience knowing that it is YOUR family and YOUR life that we are involved. We don't take this responsibility lightly. The following review is of one of our Partners and is taken off our Facebook Page. If we have worked with you, we'd love your feedback. www.facebook.com/impactmarylandrealestate

-Have hardly been on Facebook lately so I'm sure I'm way behind the news. Happy everything to everybody! We are selling/buying/packing/downsizing. Have't gone to settlement yet so don't want to jinx anything but will post pics and info later! I will say, though, we are working with a great Realtor and team [Impact]! - Brian and Patty M.

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