Why it’s time to put a little soul back into real estate

In our real estate world where social media, glossy eight-page brochures and fancy videos are our primary tools to attract clients, I want to challenge you this season to add the element of soul to your business.

The reason I’m focused on the “soul of real estate” is that truthfully speaking, I think our profession can use a little more sensitivity. (And yes, I say that in light of being a character on Bravo’s new series, “Real Estate Wars.”)

As a 30-year veteran in the industry, I’ve realized that despite the generous commissions and the freedom we experience in our profession, real estate agents are entrusted with a mammoth responsibility: the selling or acquiring of a person’s most valued possession — his or her home.

As industry professionals, it’s important to remember that though the seduction of the commission can entice us all, real estate is more than just a way to make money.

While our livelihood is moving from one transaction to the next, our clients are often investing their life savings.

While we are looking at the art of the deal that will close in a matter of weeks, our clients see their home as the place where they’ll make family memories.

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While we are looking outward to find the next client that will make us our next commission, they will look back and remember us as the ones who helped them find their home.

A real estate transaction is not just about the transfer of bricks and mortar and the hardline details in the contract. It's an intimate interaction where we must never forget the "soul" of the transaction, which means the mind, will and emotion behind every deal.

To inject "soul" into the heart of every deal, consider these three points:

1. **Be mindful of your client's needs and limitations:** Have the maturity to remember that behind every transaction is a real person, and our job is to meet his or her needs as though they are our own.
2. **Respect their will, which is their power and freedom of choice:** As we all know, some clients move quickly. Some do not. Some know what they want, and some need to see every last option on the market before they can decide. Our job is to have patience and respect for our clients' individual timing and to ride that wave as long as they need.
3. **Honor your clients' emotions:** As my wife always says, emotions "are not up for negotiation." As soul-sensitive agents, we must remember that there are certain things in the deal that we cannot control or change. One of those is how our clients feel about the process. As professionals, our job is not to judge how our clients feel. Our job is to find the deal that will make them feel good about working with us — all while making their investment of a lifetime.

Home is where our clients will raise their children. Home is where they will create a lifetime of memories. Home is where they will get their first pet or broken arm, lose a loved one or where the next big idea might be born in their garage office.

I want to challenge you this season to add the element of soul to your presentation packages because in this competitive market, where all the pomp and circumstance of promotion is available to every agent, it's the word-of-mouth and personal referral that will put your name in front of all the rest.

Here's to a prosperous season, and may the "soul" be with you.

Spyro Kemble is a Realtor with Surterre Properties/Relegance Group *in Orange County, California. Follow him on* Instagram *or connect with him on* LinkedIn*.*

Email Spyro Kemble.

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