

featuredagent

magazine

Mark
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Often, it's our earliest experiences and memories that end up shaping our lives in the most profound ways. That's definitely the case for long-time Seattle-area REALTOR® Mark Warren. He recalls an idyllic childhood in Bellevue, Washington, where everyone knew everyone and took pride in owning their homes. Sadly, that scenario was interrupted at the age of five when Mark's father passed away, and again at age 11, when he lost his mom, too. But in the midst of that unthinkable loss, he recalls a gentle soul who made the transition process of leaving the family home easier — their REALTOR®. "I don't remember his name, or even really what he looked like, but I remember how he was a stand-up guy who just quietly took care of everything, and that calming presence has stuck with me, even to this day," Mark says. "Creating that feeling of security for people is something I've tried to emulate in my own career."

With a track record of more than two decades in the business and a client base that is almost entirely repeat clients and referrals, it's safe to say Mark has succeeded in giving his clients that secure feeling. For many agents, that would be enough. But Mark takes things one step further to ensure his clients actually have fun throughout the home buying or selling process. However, he is quick to point out that the fun can only happen if all the rules are being followed behind the scenes. "It's about combining the fun with the nuts and bolts of real estate; crossing the T's, dotting the I's, and making sure the contract and everything else is in order in my clients' favor."

For many years Mark's dog was his constant companion and unofficial real estate mascot, accompanying him to listing appointments and greeting guests at



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open houses. When she passed away earlier this year, he found the outpouring of support he received from clients past and present to be a true comfort. “Many of my clients have become friends who feel like family,” he says. “They miss seeing her, too.”

A strong sense of honor and an old-fashioned work ethic also define Mark’s way of doing business, both of which he credits to his grandparents’ influence. “They were raised during the Depression and spent most of their lives as farmers in North Dakota,” he explains. “They were from a time when you’d sit and have a cup of coffee and a piece of pie with your neighbor and it wasn’t just about me, me, me. They were very down to earth and I’ve never forgotten

that way of life. What it really comes down to is: if you say you’re going to do something, do it. If you promise to be somewhere, show up.”

His grandfather’s advice also ultimately influenced which career Mark chose, and it’s advice he in turn gives to those who may be thinking of starting their own real estate adventure. “My grandfather told me to first and foremost, enjoy what you do. Don’t choose a profession based on income or status,” he says. “Always care about providing a job well done and don’t focus on rewards or recognition,” he adds. Mark also offers some wisdom about the business that he’s learned on his own. “Many people choose real estate believing there’s a sense of freedom and



a flexible schedule. But really you have to be there when the client is ready to move; regardless of when that is,” he says. And there’s one more lesson he shares, courtesy of a more seasoned agent back when Mark was brand-new to the business. “I would always show up in a suit, trying to look the part,” he recalls. “There was an older agent who was always in shorts and flip-flops who would give me a hard time about it. I realized what he was trying to tell me was not to be afraid to be myself. There’s definitely a time and a place for a suit, but it’s more important to be authentic and true to who you are.”

Staying true to his grandfather’s advice, Mark doesn’t spend time chasing industry awards or competing for production stats. Instead, he focuses on what

matters most — his clients’ satisfaction. “One of the things I’m most proud of is a book of handwritten cards and letters from clients over the years, letting me know they are happy in their homes,” he explains “There’s nothing I’m more proud of than that.”

Going forward, Mark holds a characteristically Zen-like approach to the future. “I never thought I’d be in the business this long, and I want to continue to experience and enjoy the journey,” he says. “Real estate has become woven into my lifestyle. I will always enjoy watching the people, the process, and the market change.”

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