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Cover photo courtesy of Michelle Reed.



If you are interested in contributing or nominating REALTORS® for certain stories, please email us at SWFL@n2co.com.

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Me and my mom, Kim Regenhard.

A NOTE FROM THE PUBLISHER

Dear REALTORS® and Preferred Partners,

October is Breast Cancer Awareness month. Breast cancer is a horrible disease that has touched the lives of so many in our community and our world. My own mother is a breast cancer survivor. She had it 24 years ago, was in remission, and was recently just diagnosed with it again.

My mother is a wonderful example to me in many ways, not the least of which being how she faces adversity — with courage and determination. She chronicled her own breast cancer story in a book she published, *A Survivor's Guide for the Breast Cancer Journey: An Organizer and Handbook for the Newly Diagnosed*, in an effort to support and help others navigate their own diagnosis. I couldn't be more proud of her, and am with her in this fight 100 percent. If you are moved to do so, please support breast cancer awareness and research in any way you can. One of the best avenues to do so is to donate to Susan G. Komen®, the nation's leading nonprofit fighting for the cure. They are easily found online, and we have a page dedicated to the organization in this month's issue.

In other news, we have another big quarterly event coming up in November at MarineMax in Naples.

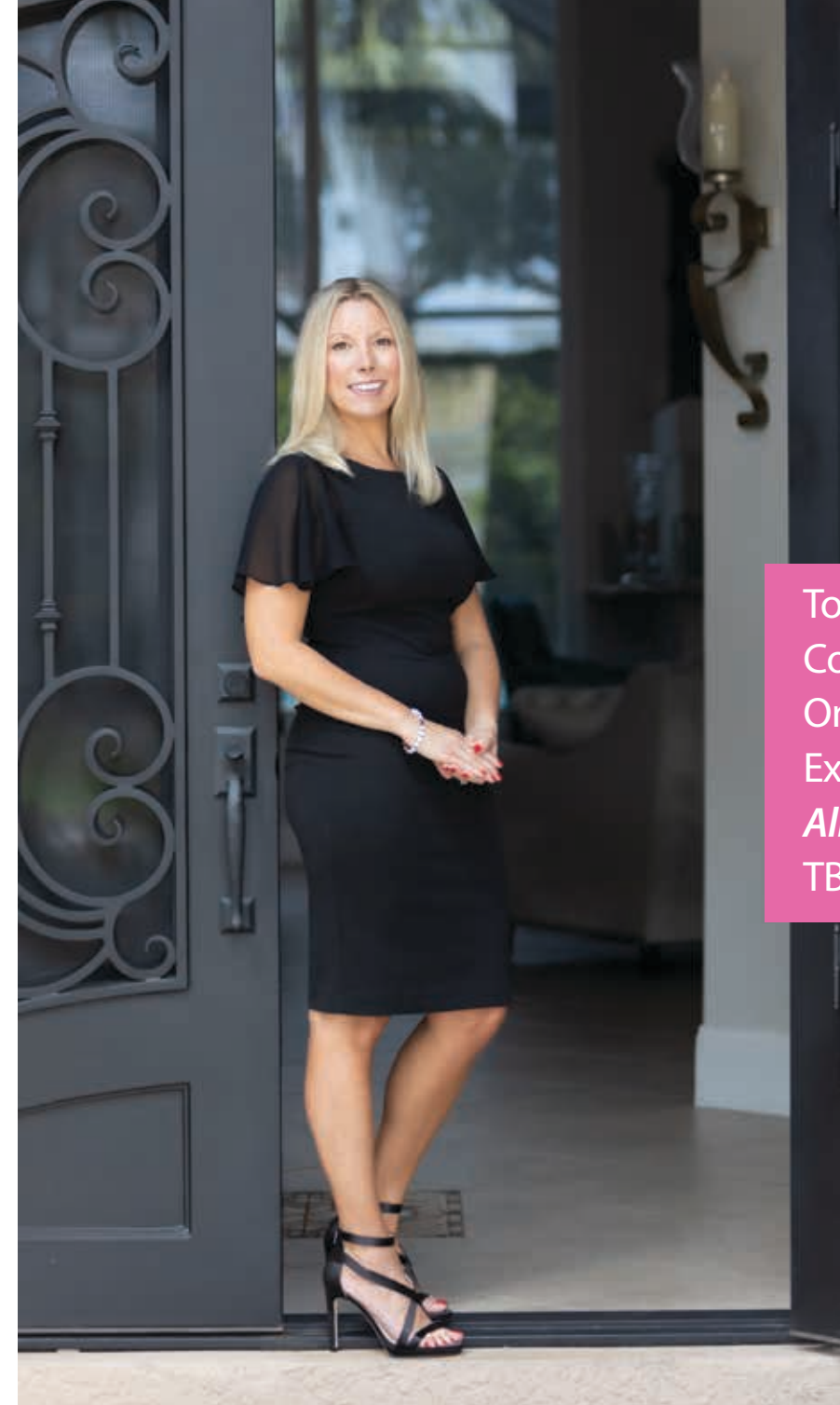
This will be the last large event of the year and we're in the planning stages now for it to be one of the best events ever! Plan to join us to close out another amazing year. Can you believe we're already heading toward the 2022 holidays?!

If you have any questions about this publication, including being featured or nominating someone you think we should feature, about attending our events, or being a guest on our podcast, *The RP Experience*, please feel free to reach out. I am always available and love connecting with this community.

Looking forward to seeing you all at MarineMax next month!

Very respectfully yours,

ANDREW REGENHARD
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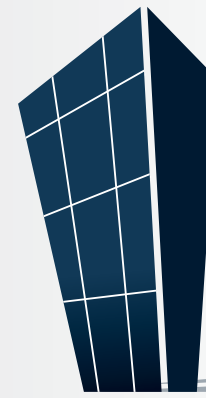
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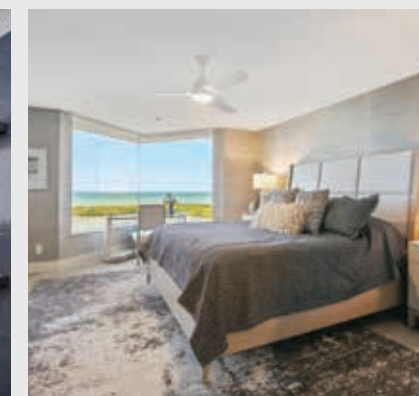
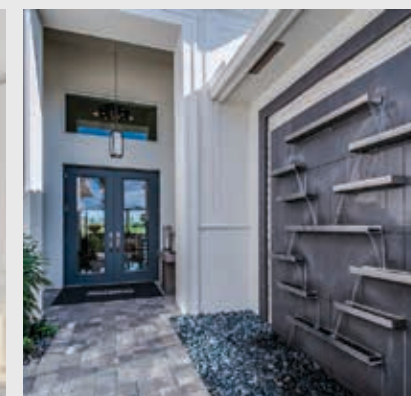
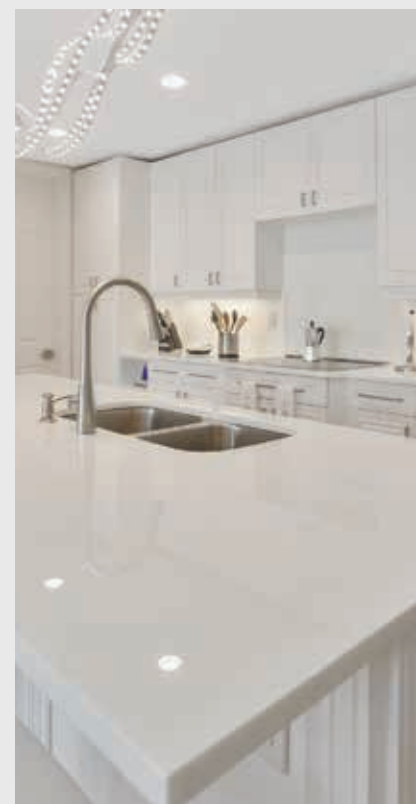
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Premier Sotheby's
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"It's not about a single transaction...
It's about building relationships."

"If I stay the course, I think my
business will continue to grow. Sure,
we're seeing shifts in the market, but the basics are always
true — staying in touch with people, making sure they are a
priority, and keeping them informed."



DINA SKINNER

Compass

"Everything should be done with
commitment and passion, but it also
should be encompassed with heart.
Anyone can have knowledge; you
have to have heart too."

Tagline: "Live in Happiness"

A Word from Our Preferred Partners:



AMANDA VAN SLYKE

Compass

"There are a lot of opportunities pre-
senting themselves; you just have to
find them. You have to be able to see
the trends and find the next oppor-
tunity. I use my network of collab-
orators to source properties before
they are known. I do extensive research — reading city/county
meeting minutes, newspapers, and property records."



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cultivate relationships. We're fam-
ily-oriented. We're dependable and
efficient." —*Brittany*

"What sets Moore Lending apart is the trust that
we're going to get your deal done. We're going to
work around the clock, and you're going to get that
hands-on approach from us." —*Tyler*



SEAN BARAKETT

Your Naples Realty

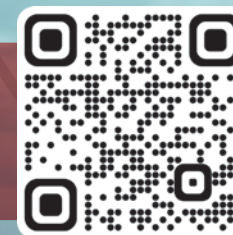
"Being the main [guy] in one area is
the easiest way to have a good, solid
business that will be consistent
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day or every year, I can be successful. The key is not to get
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Collier, FL
2 Loan Options

\$4,140 Annual Property Taxes
\$275 Monthly Home Insurance



35K Price Reduction

\$565,000
Collier, FL
1 Loan Option

\$4,140 Annual Property Taxes
\$275 Monthly Home Insurance

	REGULAR LOAN	\$9,600.00 SELLER BUYDOWN	35K Price Reduction
Loan Amount	\$480,000	\$480,000	\$452,000
Term	30 years	30 years	30 years
Down Payment	\$120,000	\$120,000	\$113,000
Rate	6.375%	5.5%	6.375%
APR %	6.561%	5.68%	6.575%
Annual Prin. & Interest (Year 1)	\$35,935	\$32,705	\$33,839
Monthly Prin. & Interest (Start)	\$2,995	\$2,725	\$2,820
Total Monthly Expenses	\$3,515	\$3,245	\$3,340
Total Annual Expenses	\$42,175	\$38,945	\$40,079
Closing Cost	\$9,000	\$9,000	\$9,000
Total Cash to Close	\$129,000	\$129,000	\$122,000
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	Fixed	Fixed	Fixed



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Against Breast Cancer

Almost everyone knows someone who has been diagnosed with breast cancer... Sadly, it is the second leading cause of death among women, and the numbers of lives affected are simply staggering. There are over 3.8 million breast cancer survivors in the U.S. alone and, on average, a woman is diagnosed with breast cancer in the U.S. every two minutes. It's estimated there will be 287,850 new cases of invasive breast cancer in women in the U.S. in 2022 and over 43,500 women will die from the disease. And it's not just women... In 2022, it's estimated there will be more than 2,700 new cases of breast cancer in men in the U.S. and over 500 deaths. Clearly, there's an urgent need for research that results in a cure.

One organization that has been making a huge difference in the fight to bring awareness and an end to breast cancer is Susan G. Komen®, a nonprofit organization founded in 1980 in honor of Susan by her sister, Nancy G. Brinker. Nancy made a promise to her dying sister that she would do everything in her power to end breast cancer forever. That promise became the Susan G. Komen® organization. Susan G. Komen® has donated more than \$3.3 billion for groundbreaking research and has programs in over 60 countries worldwide. Their goal is to continue their impactful work until the promise Nancy made to Susan those many years ago is fulfilled.

Interested in joining the fight to end breast cancer? You can help by donating to or partnering with Susan G. Komen®, or participating in or organizing a fundraising race or walk.

Another great way for top local Realtors® to contribute to the cause is to attend the upcoming *Fort Myers Real Producers* Launch Party on October 6th at The Club at Renaissance. All proceeds from this event will be donated to Susan G. Komen®. Did we mention it's a **PINK PARTY?** If you can, wear pink to show your support ... and join us for what is shaping up to be another amazing *Real Producers* event! If you haven't received your exclusive invitation, please reach out to SWFL@n2co.com.



For more information on how you can join the fight against breast cancer, visit www.komen.org.

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AMANDA VAN SLYKE

► featured agent

By Zachary Cohen
Photos by New
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IN IT FOR THE RELATIONSHIPS

Since beginning her real estate sales career in 2012, Amanda Van Slyke, a REALTOR® with Compass, has steadily risen through the ranks to become one of Southwest Florida's top agents. Yet, her journey didn't start as a high-flying Realtor. The inspiration for her current success was born when she began working as an assistant for a rental company in 2006.

"We moved to Naples in 2004 from North Carolina, and I had to find myself," Amanda reflects. "So I went with what was natural — people."

In her new role, Amanda discovered her love for serving others through real estate.



...





Amanda Van Slyke, a REALTOR® with Compass, has been recognized as a “Who’s Who” in luxury real estate.

...

“I learned on the ground, not for commission. It was very pure. I developed a mindset of care and attention. It gave me the best foundation for my business.”

Settling into Real Estate

At the time, Amanda’s husband ran a development company and in 2008, the shifting development landscape led them to Indiana. But they returned to Naples in 2011. It was then that Amanda decided to become a full-time real estate agent.

“It was a natural progression. I was more confident,” she says. “I knew the skills, and I wanted to elevate myself.”

In real estate, Amanda has effectively leveraged her experience and her

commitment to relationship building. She steadily grew her business year after year, moving into the luxury investment and commercial real estate spaces along the way.

Amanda considers herself to be a collaborative agent. With Compass, she works in partnership with other trusted agents locally and nationwide. These relationships originated from an intrinsic connection and an appreciation for each other’s unique approaches.

What started as an intuitive attraction has developed into a symbiotic exchange of skills that is furthering the business in profound ways. Amanda works largely with real estate investors, and many of her clients have bought and sold more

than 10 properties with her. She also works in commercial real estate, forming a balanced business model.

Amanda remains committed to relationships over profits.

“My business has evolved from selling \$100,000 condos to \$10 million properties in these 10 years, but all my clients... I see this as a partnership with them.”

Amanda is tracking to have her best year ever; in 2022, she’s on pace to close north of \$70 million.

Staying Ahead of the Curve

Nationwide, the real estate market is shifting. However, Amanda is confident that her future remains bright.



“I’m not your typical Realtor. I’m not a salesperson. I have my people, my relationships, my clients ... and together, we work to navigate our ever-changing market.”

...



...

She believes there are still good opportunities available, especially with an agent as committed as she is in a client's corner.

"There are a lot of opportunities presenting themselves; you just have to find them. You have to be able to see the trends and find the next opportunity," Amanda explains. "I use my

network of collaborators to source properties before they are known. I do extensive research — reading city/county meeting minutes, newspapers, and property records. I am known for advising clients against a purchase if it's not in line with their goals. The clients that trust me are in a great position for the next new opportunity waves."

So as Amanda looks ahead, she continues to focus on serving her clients day by day. She forgoes sales tactics, instead favoring hard work, commitment, and care.

"I'm not your typical Realtor," she says boldly. "I'm not a salesperson. I have my people, my relationships, my clients ... and together, we work to navigate our ever-changing market."

BEYOND REAL ESTATE

Amanda Van Slyke spends many of her weekends in St. Petersburg, where her husband Brian, president of Kolter Urban's West Coast Division, works. Amanda and Brian have two children, Zoe (25) and Gabriella (22). Zoe is working towards their master's degree in special education at the University of South Florida. Gabriella is completing her degree in animal sciences at the University of Florida; she is pursuing a career in equine training and development.

In her free time, Amanda enjoys boating, traveling, and spending time with the family's dog, cats, and horse.

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By Zachary Cohen | Photos by Joya Diglio

Brittany & Tyler MOORE

MOORE LENDING GROUP

TWO'S
COMPANY



For as long as twins Brittany and Tyler Moore can remember, their father, John, has been in mortgage lending. He began his career in California, where Brittany and Tyler spent their formative years, and his career eventually brought the Moore family to Bonita Springs in 2001.

Brittany and Tyler were surrounded by all things lending early and often, but they each held reservations about following in their father's footsteps.

"I didn't find it interesting," Tyler says with a laugh.

"I never met one person who knew they would be in the mortgage industry," Brittany adds.

Yet, Brittany and Tyler eventually fell into the business in which their father had become so successful.

Coming Back to What They Know

Brittany and Tyler graduated from Florida

State University with business degrees in 2011. While the economy was rising out of a deep recession, exciting jobs were still hard to come by.

"My dad needed help, and I went and helped out, with the mentality that it wasn't a long-term play for me," Brittany reflects.

Soon enough, however, Brittany warmed to the idea of a career in lending.

"The more I did it, the more I realized how interesting it was to me. I like helping people. I like problem solving. And once I was in the business, I became hooked on every aspect of it."

Tyler was a little slower to come around. He didn't want to return to Naples to work for the family business, preferring to head to Fort Lauderdale, where many of his

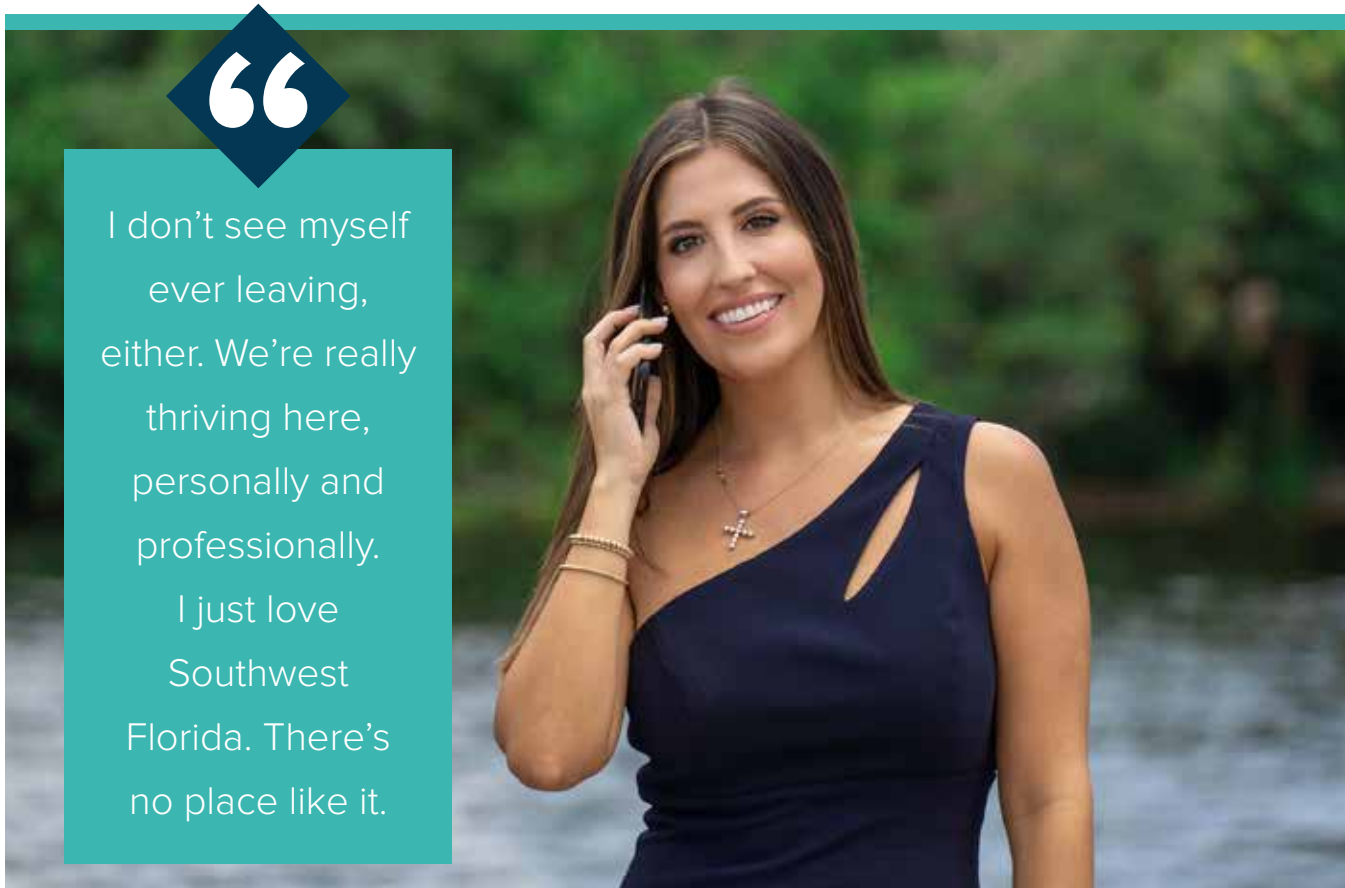
friends lived. He worked in liquor, wine and spirit sales for five years.

"It was probably the best sales training I could have received," Tyler reflects. "I was thrown out in the street to meet clients, feel rejection and learn."

Tyler imagined himself doing liquor, wine and spirit sales forever — until he caught sight of the commission checks Brittany was bringing home.

"I got to a point where I was in a serious relationship. I wanted to tap my potential, and I realized I had the skills to really succeed in lending," Tyler says. "The things that made my dad very successful, and his talents, applied well to the mortgage lending industry. He answers his phone. He's outgoing and personable. He's fair and a hard worker. I know that's what made him successful, and I saw myself with a lot of the same traits."

...



“
I don’t see myself
ever leaving,
either. We’re really
thriving here,
personally and
professionally.
I just love
Southwest
Florida. There’s
no place like it.”

Brittany Moore is a producing loan originator for Moore Lending Group and runs all of the firm’s operations over several Florida markets.

In 2016, Tyler joined his father and sister in the lending business.

Moore Lending Group

Today, Brittany and Tyler are two of Moore Lending Group’s leaders. After several years in processing and several years solely originating, Brittany now runs operations for the entirety of Moore Lending Group. All processors and support staff roll up under her watch. She also continues to produce as a loan originator. Tyler is a producing branch manager, leading a team of loan officers. He, too, continues to produce.

“What sets Moore Lending apart is the trust that we’re going to get your deal done,” Tyler says. “We’re going to work around the clock, and you’re going to get that hands-on approach from us.”

“We’re a high-touch, relationship-driven mortgage company,” Brittany adds. “We cultivate relationships. We’re family-oriented. We’re dependable and efficient.”



Tyler Moore is a producing branch manager of Moore Lending Group’s office in Oakland Park, Florida.



Twins Brittany and Tyler Moore are both leaders of the family business, Moore Lending Group.

For the Love of Florida

Outside of work, Brittany and Tyler live family-centered lives. They both base out of Fort Lauderdale but often travel to Bonita Springs, where their parents still reside. Tyler and his wife, Carly, have a 3-year-old son, Lincoln, and another baby on the way in October 2022. When he’s not working or with family, Tyler enjoys a round of golf or watching sports with his friends. Brittany enjoys traveling, working out and spending time with her nephew, Lincoln.

“He’s my guy,” she smiles.

When Brittany and Tyler arrived in Florida from the West Coast at 12 years old, they were shocked by the differences. But 20 years later, Florida has become home.

“When we arrived here in 2001 — imagine going from a place that had all kids and your best friends to Pelican Landing in the middle of August, where there were no people and the average person is 78 years old. And then a hurricane came. We were way over our heads,” Tyler laughs. “But now, I call myself a Floridian. I think it’s the best thing that happened to us. I don’t see myself ever leaving Florida. I always say when we go on vacation, one of the best parts is knowing you’re coming back to Florida.”

“I don’t see myself ever leaving, either,” Brittany adds. “We’re really thriving here, personally and professionally. I just love Southwest Florida. There’s no place like it.”

For more information, please visit www.moorelendinggroup.com.





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WANT YOUR REAL ESTATE BUSINESS TO BE RECESSION PROOF? **PRIORITIZE CASH FLOW!**

When it comes to real estate, risk equals reward. Most agents understand that in order to become a top-producing agent, they must move quickly and be calculated decision makers. However, many agents fall short when it comes to making financial decisions that align with their goals of becoming a top-producing REALTOR®.

“
NOW THAT WE’RE FACING A RECESSION
AND A POTENTIAL DOWNTURN IN
THE REAL ESTATE MARKET, IT’S MORE
IMPORTANT THAN EVER BEFORE TO
PRIORITIZE CASH FLOW.”

Often, real estate agents check their bank account in order to make decisions about how to spend money. This strategy not only gives a murky idea of your company’s financial health, but it can also contribute to a pattern of prioritizing bank balance over cash flow. When this happens, your business becomes more vulnerable to ebbs and flows in the market and less sustainable overall.

Now that we’re facing a recession and a potential downturn in the real estate market, it’s more important than ever before to prioritize cash flow. Let me explain.

Agents’ income tends to fluctuate based on production, and these fluctuations can be even more extreme for top agents, whose high value properties may not move through the market as quickly. Because of this, cash flow is crucial. Regardless of whether you sell a property in any given month, expenses will persist. So it is important to plan for those months when expenses are high but properties aren’t closing just yet.

You can think of a recession as an extended slow month. During these times, properties may require even more marketing spend or maintenance in order to sell. But income will inevitably decline overall. Ensuring that you have enough cash to cover the necessary expenditures, plus additional funds to keep a consistent personal income, is

important as we approach a potential downturn in the market.

Here are some tips for managing your cash flow more effectively now and planning for the future.

Analyze Your Statement of Cash Flows

The Statement of Cash Flows is an amazing resource for Realtors who want to level up their cash flow and improve their business overall. This statement tells you how much money you have to “play with” in a given month. It is the best tool for budgeting and planning for the future. By analyzing your Statement of Cash Flows with a bookkeeping professional, you can gain valuable insight into how much you can afford to spend and save in the coming months.

Make a Budget

Even the most profitable business needs a tight business budget. Using the insights you gained from your Statement of Cash Flows, build a budget that includes your overhead, variable expenses, and some “wiggle room” for emergencies. Be sure to budget some money to go directly to savings. You should have three to six months of your overhead and variable expenses saved up for emergencies. Remember to look at the entire past year of financial data instead of just the past couple of months. When in doubt, overestimate your expenses and underestimate your income to be safe.

Prioritize Cash Flow

Now you’re ready to take some serious steps to prioritize cash flow! First, look at your calendar of income and expenses. Even if you’re a sole proprietor, you should set a regular payday for yourself. Choose times when cash flow is typically higher for these dates. You may also be able to negotiate other overhead payment due dates or pay a little in advance to get on a schedule that is more conducive for cash flow. Finally, work with a professional bookkeeper who specializes in cash flow forecasting to help strategize ways your business can respond in multiple different scenarios. This is truly the best way to weather a recession!



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SEAN BARAKETT

LIVING LIKE A LOCAL

Growing up in Naples, Sean Barakett watched his father build a successful real estate business. From the early '80s to the early 2000s, Sean's dad worked for a local builder. He then transitioned into general real estate sales, where he once again found success. As a kid and teenager, Sean had the gift of watching his father navigate the business. Some of Sean's earliest memories are in and around the real estate business.

...



Naples native Sean Barakett is a REALTOR® with Your Naples Realty.

“I literally grew up in sales offices,” Sean says, “but I never wanted to get into real estate. I saw my dad’s hours, and it seemed boring to me when I was younger.”

Like a fine wine, Sean’s perspective aged well as he got older. After graduating from the University of Central Florida in 2012, he bounced around sales and promotion jobs for a year before revisiting real estate as a potential career.

“I remember talking to my dad on the phone. I was working a job with Gillette where I’d travel in this bus and give out razor samples at football games. He told me how much he was making, and he said, ‘Whenever you want to move back home, I’ll help you get started.’”

In 2013, Sean accepted his dad’s offer. He obtained his real estate license, landed with Your Naples Realty, and began his entrepreneurial journey.

“I realized this is too good of an opportunity to pass up. I grew up around real estate, and I was finally ready to give this a shot. I moved back to Southwest Florida, got my license, and the rest is history.”

“
I REALIZED
THIS IS TOO
GOOD OF AN
OPPORTUNITY TO
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UP AROUND REAL
ESTATE, AND I
WAS FINALLY
READY TO GIVE
THIS A SHOT.



The Early Years

Sean struggled in his first few years. He was still in his early twenties and lacked the sphere of influence to jump-start his career.

“It was tough. I was lucky enough to have my dad’s help. I had a really good idea of how stuff works, but generating my own business was very hard because none of my friends were in a position to buy

places, and those were the people I knew. So it took a while. I joined a CrossFit gym, which was a great way to meet people. Also, just getting out and networking. And over the last few years, everything has just snowballed.”

By 2015, Sean averaged over 10 sales per year, and his business has continued to grow. In 2021,

he closed 44 homes (24 in Heritage Bay) for \$16.2 million, and in 2022, he’s tracking to have his best year ever; he closed 35 homes (24 in Heritage Bay) for nearly \$19 million as of the end of July.

**Finding
His Groove**

Sean has formed a niche working in Heritage Bay, the community he lives in. He’s focused his efforts on becoming a local expert, a strategy that has worked well for him.

“I moved to Heritage Bay in 2014, and that’s the community I farm and dominate right now,” Sean says. “I think I’ll have at least 30 sales in Heritage Bay this year. I was number 1 in here last year, I’m number 1 this year, and that’s the plan going forward. I have lived here for eight years. Outside of that, I definitely have other business, but being the

main guy in one area is the easiest way to have a good, solid business that will be consistent through the ups and downs of the market.”

Sean is all about creating win-wins. He is willing to do whatever it takes to make his client happy while still looking out for the needs of the client on the opposite side of the table. This strategy has helped



FUN FACT

Sean runs the naples_fl Instagram page, which has over 72,000 followers. The page features stunning landscape and architectural photos of Naples; Sean has also used it to feature listings.

Sean Barakett with his dachshunds, Sailor and Cola.

Sean build a reputation as one of the easiest agents to work with.

As a Florida native, Sean understands he’s selling lifestyle as much as he’s selling homes. He’s not the type of agent to wear a suit; instead, you’ll find him dressed casually, showing up authentically, and engaging with

a sense of ease. To him, that’s the Florida way.

Staying Hungry

Real estate has allowed Sean to live the lifestyle he desires. He’s a big football fan (especially of his alma mater, UCF) and often takes a few days to travel for games. He also loves to golf and travel internationally; he generally heads to Europe at least

once a year. Sean sees the ability to travel as one of the gifts of a real estate career.

“I’m more successful at a young age than I ever dreamed I’d be. My goal is to keep getting a little better every year. I don’t see any reason why I can’t continue growing my business. If I can get a little bit better every day or every year, I can be successful. The key is not to get complacent.”

“

I’M MORE SUCCESSFUL AT A YOUNG AGE THAN I EVER
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”



By Rachel Kerlek, Esq.

To Be or Not to Be... Claim for PROCURING CAUSE?

Have you ever felt like you were the procuring cause of a transaction for which you didn't receive a commission? How about received a claim for procuring cause from a REALTOR® you had no clue was involved? Confusing, right? Well, let's see if we can clear up some of the confusion that surrounds procuring cause claims in the State of Florida...

Attempting to find a clear definition of procuring cause is challenging, to say the least. Courts around the country have sometimes referred to it as the "sine qua non" of the sale. See, e.g., *Williams v. Enochs*, 742 S.W.2d 165 (Miss. 1987); Amend v. 485

Properties, 627 S.E.2d 565, (Ga. 2006). The literal translation of "sine qua non" is "without which, not."

The National Association of REALTORS® takes a slightly different approach, suggesting that a broker is entitled to a commission as the procuring cause "if his efforts are the *foundation* on which the negotiations resulting in a sale are begun."

What do these definitions mean in practice, and how can brokers and agents protect themselves? The courts have attempted to offer guidance in the form of several factors that are considered in determining who is entitled to a commission as the procuring cause of a sale. Those factors include:

- **Nature and status of the transaction**
- **Nature, status, and terms of the listing agreement or offer to compensate**
- **Roles and relationships of the parties**
- **Initial contact with the purchaser**
- **Conduct of the broker/agent**
- **Continuity and breaks in continuity**
- **Conduct of the buyer**
- **Conduct of the seller**
- **Other information**

These factors are non-exclusive, meaning they do not all have to be met. And the catch-all factor of "other information" gives arbitration boards and courts wide discretion in making procuring cause decisions. Still, there are some common occurrences and premises that should be known which can help to create best practices.

First, an introduction alone is *not* sufficient to establish procuring cause. On the flip side, having been the agent to make the introduction is not necessarily required if the agent made "substantial contributions" to the ultimate sale.

Next, a key fact to look for is continuity. In other words, was the sale the result of the agent's "unbroken efforts"? Questions that arise in determining continuity include whether negotiations were ongoing or whether there was an interruption in the negotiation or the buyer's interest in the property and, if so, who caused it. Courts may also look to the motive of the buyer, and whether a new, different, or independent motive behind the purchase caused the change in agent (as opposed to bad faith). The lapse in time between the agent's initial act (often, an introduction to a property) and the sale frequently plays into the procuring cause analysis. The

longer the lapse, the less likely an agent will be found to be the procuring cause.

Finally, the conduct of the parties matters: Was the agent "frozen out"? Did the parties use reasonable diligence to determine if an agent was involved? Can bad faith be shown by the purchase price, which evidences an intent to remove a commission fee, or by a straw sale to an intermediary? The answers to these and similar questions may shed light on a procuring cause analysis.

The above factors and examples provide guidance, but ultimately, procuring cause is a fact-intensive inquiry and the answer is often muddy. Listing agreements and buyer-broker agreements are the best way to protect your right to a commission. In any event, maintaining communication and following up frequently to ensure there is no break in continuity are critical.

As a final point, it should be noted that spending a lot of time with a potential buyer is not one of the enumerated factors. I often hear frustration from agents who spend weeks or months with potential buyers, showing them dozens of properties, only to be disappointed when the client purchases a different property — one that the agent did not show them — without using the agent. The agent is rightfully disheartened to learn that her hard work went uncompensated. But procuring cause pertains to the property, not the person. In the absence of a buyer-broker agreement, an agent who did not contribute any work to a particular transaction will likely not succeed in a procuring cause claim, even if the agent undoubtedly provided extensive services to a particular client.



Woods, Weidenmiller, Michetti, & Rudnick attorney Rachel Kerlek is the partner of the firm's litigation department and provides counsel to Realtors on procuring cause litigation matters.



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DINA SKINNER

▶ featured agent

By Zachary Cohen

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LIVE IN HAPPINESS

It was 2008 — just two years after Dina Skinner got her real estate license. Around the country, real estate markets began to unravel. The downturn would rock the economy at large and shake the bedrock of countless families.

Dina and her family didn't escape the recession unscathed. Her husband, a builder, experienced challenging times in his business. He and Dina were pushed to sell several of their investment properties. Dina's own real estate business was feeling the impact of trying times. Yet, Dina felt that there was an opportunity within the chaos. One day, she had a hit of inspiration that would reshape her future.

"I'm a pretty good fighter," Dina begins. "When the crash happened, I remember being in the shower, and I came out and said, 'I want to open our own boutique real estate company.'"

Dina's husband understandably pushed back. He reminded her that the real estate market was crashing, but Dina persisted.

"I said, 'No. I have a gut feeling. This is what I want to do.'"

Creating Culture

In 2008, Dina and her husband,

Adam, founded Meritage Realty Group in Arlington Heights, Illinois.

"There was no business plan. It was strictly done from my gut and my heart," Dina explains. "It was a place people could go with their children and dress how they needed. It was a safe space for someone to come as they are to get the work done and be there for their clients."

Dina's husband, Adam, became the managing broker. Together, they created a culture that was unlike anything else in Illinois. Dina ditched cubicles in favor of an open floor plan.



Photo by New Frame Photography



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Dina Skinner with her French bulldog, Daphne. (Photo by New Frame Photography)



EVERYTHING
SHOULD BE DONE
WITH COMMITMENT
AND PASSION, BUT
IT ALSO SHOULD
BE ENCOMPASSED
WITH HEART.

She brought in old couches, chandeliers, and antiques to create a warm, welcoming vibe.

“It was the coolest office,” she reflects. “So eclectic. It was fun. It was a great space.”

Dina and her husband ran that brokerage for 10 years. She eventually sold it to Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices and helped transition the company to the new brand. She then helped bring Compass to her area, opening a new office in Arlington Heights.

New Beginnings

By 2018, Dina and her family had been vacationing in Florida for years. On one trip to Fort Lauderdale, she remembers looking at her husband with another bout of inspiration.

“I said, ‘We’re going to go to Naples after this and rent for the month. I really want to do this.’ And we just did it, and then we kept coming back for months and months.”

Dina began building a business in Naples. As she traveled to the area more, her business grew, as did her affinity for Southwest Florida. Two years ago, she and Adam picked up and moved to Naples full-time. Their three adult children gratefully joined them.

In 2021, Dina had one of her best years to date, but the statistics don’t tell the entire story. Dina is most excited about how happy she is to be thriving in Florida.



Photo by New Frame Photography



“My husband and I met when we were 16 and 17 years old. He was a checker and I was a bagger at the local grocery store. We have now been married for 33 years and have known each other for 40 years.”

Dina Skinner and her husband, Adam, ran a brokerage for 10 years in Illinois before relocating to Southwest Florida.

“My tagline is ‘Live in Happiness.’ Here, I’m really happy. Our children came with us; they are now 25, 27, and 29. We’re a strong family together. Here, I can walk outside every day and meet people. There is a quality of life that I love.”

Real Estate with Heart

Dina prides herself on her professional knowledge, but she believes her level of care makes all the difference.

“Everything should be done with commitment and passion, but it also should be encompassed with heart. Anyone can have knowledge; you have to have heart too,” Dina says. “So I do have knowledge, I do have passion, and I encompass it all with heart... My clients know I really care. They can feel I really care.”

Dina’s care has allowed her to thrive in real estate and will continue to be the pillar of her business. She remains optimistic about her future as the economy shifts once again.

As Dina reflects on her journey to selling real estate and living full-time in Naples, a sense of joy rises to the surface. As her tagline suggests, she is truly living in happiness.

“One thing is certain — I’m not leaving Naples,” Dina says with a big smile. “We’ve met so many wonderful people. I keep learning



Photo by New Frame Photography

every day. Our kids are now here, and our daughter is getting married in September. Right now, our life is really nice.”

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STUDY, LEARN, MASTER, TEACH

As a leader, as a coach, there's a certain ingredient we must master to get the best out of ourselves so we can get the best of our clients and our team. There's an old phrase that I was taught a long time ago: "Study, Learn, Master, Teach." Those are the ingredients of teaching others to be great. As a coach, anything I ask my clients to do cannot be a hypothetical. It has to be real. I would have had to have studied those certain strategies, I would have had to have learned those certain strategies, I would have had to have mastered those certain strategies, and only then could I actually teach those strategies. If somebody's using a hypothetical and trying to teach you something to master that they haven't mastered themselves, it just doesn't work. It's unauthentic. There's no congruency there.

As a leader of an organization, when we're teaching our team and asking them to step up or do certain things, we have to be asking them to do things we've done ourselves because we know it works. Everything I ask my clients to do, I have done. I've studied it, I've learned it, I've mastered it, and I teach it to them because I know it works. The systems are proven. Anytime you're speaking to somebody, if they've given you instructions and haven't yet mastered them themselves, it's really

a worthless exercise because they cannot teach you something they, themselves, haven't mastered.

Think about yourself when you're trying to get the best out of others. Think about what you're teaching them. Think about what you're telling them. Have you mastered those traits or is it coming from a hypothetical? Is it coming from you having read a book or heard somebody else say it? Or is it coming from your authenticity, that you've actually studied it, learned it, applied it, and mastered it?

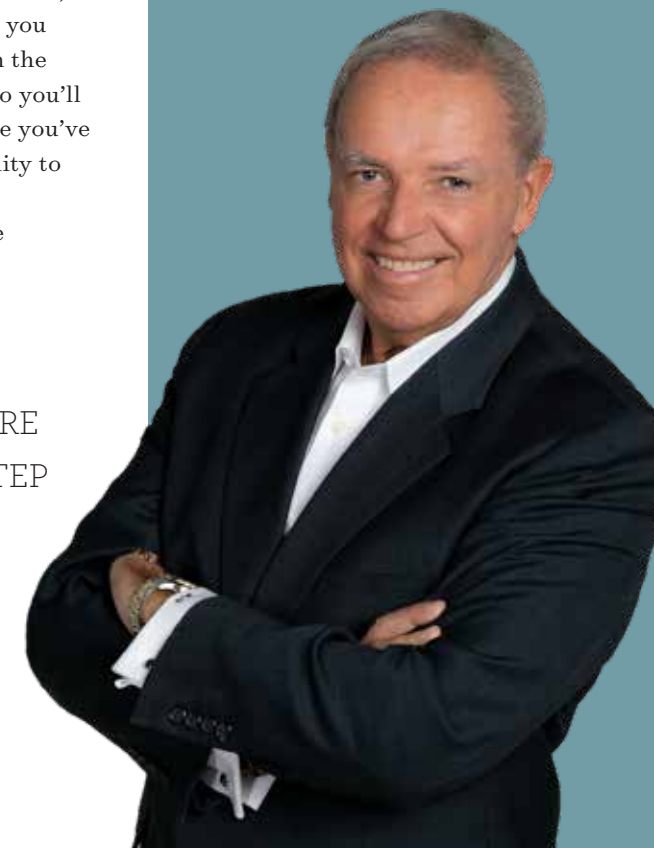
When you've applied these principles, you know it works for you. With that, your authenticity and congruency infuse your conversation that becomes a guide on how to follow and apply these traits to get more of themselves to get better results. It's as simple as that.

Remember, if you want more, you need to learn more; if you want to earn more, you need to learn more; and to get results in yourself, you need to study the traits, learn the traits, and master the traits so you'll get more out of yourself. Once you've done that, you'll have the ability to teach others to do the same. And that's how we all become great together.

“

AS A LEADER OF AN ORGANIZATION, WHEN WE'RE TEACHING OUR TEAM AND ASKING THEM TO STEP UP OR DO CERTAIN THINGS, WE HAVE TO BE ASKING THEM TO DO THINGS WE'VE DONE OURSELVES BECAUSE WE KNOW IT WORKS.

Coach Michael Dill is an award-winning certified business coach, global speaker and published author. He is a proud Action Coach Franchise partner, as well as the president of Power & Ice Wealth Creation, a strategic leadership company that works with business owners, leaders, teams and entrepreneurs to develop a systematized and structured organization while accelerating their mindset, efficiencies and effectiveness to grow, both personally and professionally, to achieve extraordinary results. He brings more than 40 years of business and entrepreneurial experience in his leadership, team training, and mentoring practice. BusinessCoachMichaelDill.com





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Photo by Michelle Reed

► cover story
By Zachary Cohen

AMY NEASE

EVOLVING WITH THE TIMES

When Amy Nease started her real estate career in 1992, Southwest Florida looked quite different than it does today. Amy remembers Bonita Springs and Naples as sleepy towns. The area was just beginning to be discovered, with development kicking into high gear in the late '90s.

Over the ensuing years, Amy ushered in a new generation of Southwest

Florida residents. She became an integral part of the development of Bonita Springs and North Naples, spending 16 years at Mediterra and several years at Bonita Bay, The Brooks, and West Bay Club.

In 2016, Amy took the next step in her career, leaving behind her work in custom home construction to build a business in general real estate. Over the past six years, she has effectively

leveraged her skills and sphere of influence from her decades in new construction to become one of the area's top REALTORS®.

The Road to Real Estate

Amy was born and raised in the suburbs outside Detroit, Michigan. Her family relocated to Tampa when she was 17, and Florida has been home ever since. After several years in



Photo by Michelle Reed

retail management, Amy began her real estate career working for a small community builder in 1992.

From 1992 to 1997, Amy sold production homes. In 1997, she moved into the custom home arena, and her business began to truly take flight.

“When building a custom home, the world was my oyster,” Amy reflects. “It was all about how we could create the perfect home. I was able to participate in communities from the ground up, on a bigger scale. The experience allowed me to expand my knowledge about construction and design.”

In 2003, Amy began working on neighborhood development on a larger scale with London Bay Homes. All told, she spent 19 years working in on-site, custom home sales.

The Winds of Change

By 2016, Amy sensed a shift on the horizon. The development she worked for was 95 percent built out, and she’d been selling new construction homes for over two decades.

“It was time where I decided to throw caution to the wind and go out on my own,” she says.

Amy’s leap of faith has paid off. Although it took her about a year to find her footing in a new role, she has found her way to the top of the local real estate rankings.

Today, Amy is a solo agent with Premier Sotheby’s International Realty. In 2021, she closed 37 transactions for over \$64 million; in 2022, she’s tracking to surpass her 2021 sales volume.

As a Realtor, Amy is all about exceeding her clients’ expectations. She understands that real estate is, above all else, a relationship business.



Amy Nease is a solo agent with Premier Sotheby’s International Realty. (Photo by Michelle Reed)

“It’s not about a single transaction. It’s about building relationships. When I’m working with people, I don’t focus on it being just a transaction. This is about assisting my customers through the buying or selling process and building long-term relationships.”

Staying the Course

Amy’s extensive new construction experience has allowed her to bring a luxury experience into the resale market. When clients work with Amy, they know her focus is on their needs and goals.



Photo by Michelle Reed



Amy and Steve Nease with their German shorthaired pointer, Bay, and Cavalier King Charles spaniel, Katie. (Photo by Sandy Windham)

“They know I’ll be professional, that they are my priority, and that they can trust me,” Amy says. “That’s how I work. Building trust is a priority so my customers will think of me for their future real estate needs and can trust me when referring their friends and family to me.”

Amy recognizes that the real estate market is shifting, but she’s not changing her strategy going forward. She’s committed to what has worked for her over the past 30 years — dedication to her clients, integrity, and grit.

“I remember somebody saying to me, ‘Just stay the course.’ I will continue to do that — to focus on my customers, focus on providing them with the information they are looking for. If I stay the course, I think my business will continue to grow. Sure, we’re seeing shifts in the market, but the basics are always true — staying in touch with people, making sure they are a priority, and keeping them informed. I’m going to stay focused on that.”

A LOW-KEY LIFE

AMY AND HER HUSBAND OF 27 YEARS, STEVE, LIVE ON THE WATER IN BONITA SPRINGS. AMY ENJOYS SPENDING TIME ON THE BOAT OR PADDLEBOARD, HANGING OUT WITH HER DOGS, AND COOKING.

“IT’S A PRETTY NICE LIFE,” SHE SMILES.



Photo by Michelle Reed

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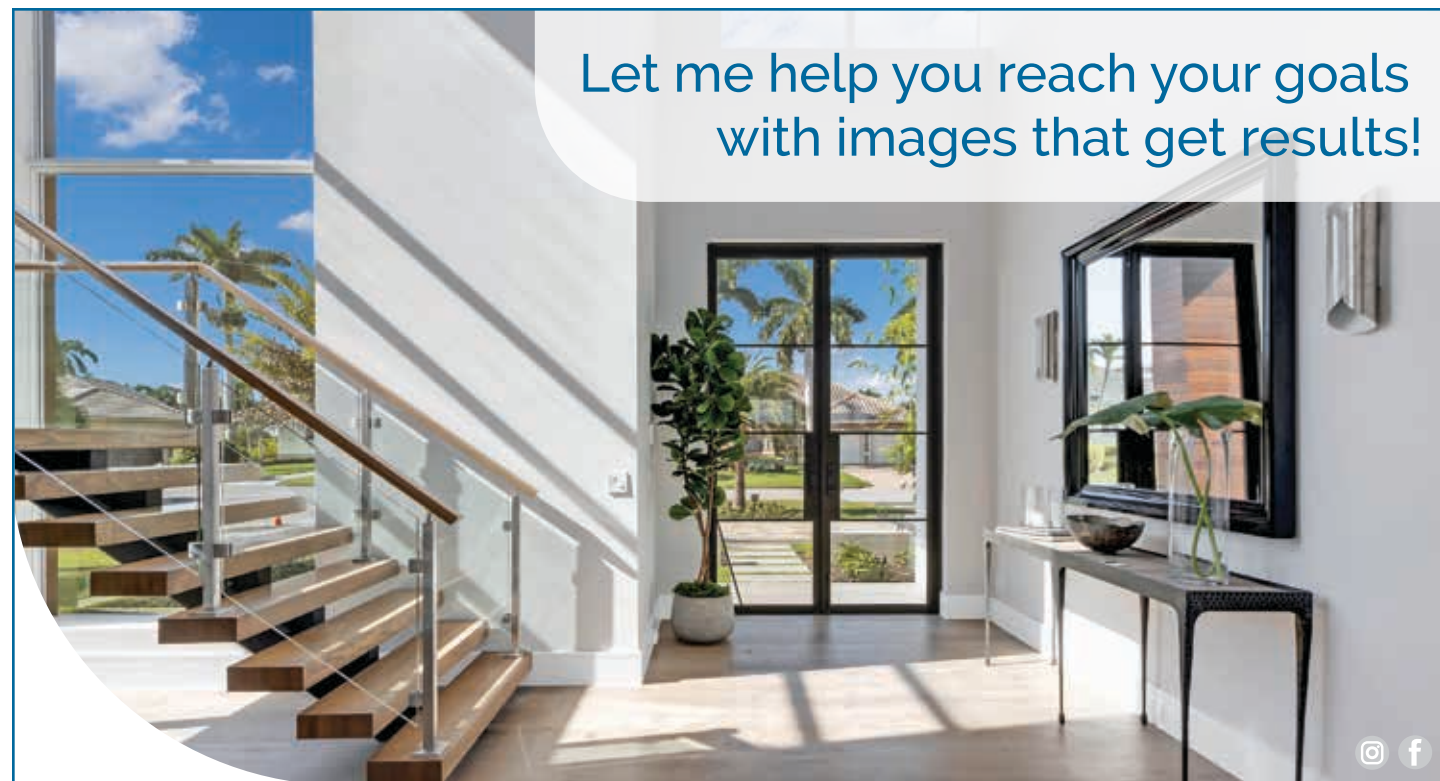


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3 EASY WAYS TO BOOST PERFORMANCE AND **FEEL GREAT**

By Carlene Murray

Life as a REALTOR® is fast-paced, multifaceted, and demands the ability to work under pressure day and night. Even with steely determination, expert savviness, and honed skill, at times, sacrifices abound. A day carefully planned often drastically pivots, sacrificing personal and family time, self-care, exercise, and even eating. When on-the-go and without preplanning, many times our go-to food choices are fast and convenient, or we simply skip a meal. Skipping breakfast, grabbing a burger and fries midafternoon, powering up with a soda, or eating just a big lunch or dinner directly impacts our blood sugar levels, affecting not only our body but greatly impacting our thinking, performance, and our mood.

Have you ever felt yourself in that foggy, “food coma” state after a meal? Then you’re familiar with the lethargy and maybe even the

irritability that follows. If not, maybe you’ve witnessed this in a family member or coworker suddenly feeling “hangry.” Feelings of fatigue set in; a nap is in order, our thinking, memory, and processing are not as sharp, and often we may feel agitated and maybe even anxious. This is the result of delaying our body the fuel of food and then overloading it with foods that cause our blood sugar to spike then crash.

A spike occurs when there is too much sugar in our blood. It occurs when we’ve eaten too many calories and/or carbs in a meal. In this state, usually one to two hours after a meal, our blood sugar elevates and the body stores

►► health & wellness

fat. Often, in this stage, we feel tired, experience “brain fog,” and sometimes even depression-like symptoms.

A crash occurs when our blood sugar is too low. This occurs when we skip a meal, restrict calories or carbs, and/or exercise on an empty stomach. In this state, our blood sugar drops and our body begins to burn muscle, holds onto our fat, our energy crashes, and cravings increase. In this state, symptoms are often irritability, anxiety, mood swings, and “hanger.”

Ideally, to maintain optimal energy, maximize cognitive functioning and problem solving, sustain emotional stability, maintain memory and, ultimately, balance mood, it is essential to stabilize blood sugar levels throughout the day. In this optimally functioning state, our body releases fat, protects our lean muscle, eliminates cravings, increases energy, and elevates our mood.

All this to say, “Eat better to feel better.” With just a few simple changes in our food choices, meal timing, and understanding of how and when our body requires nourishment for optimal performance, we can stabilize our blood sugar and enhance every function of our body, our mind, and how we navigate life.

Here are 3 easy ways to maintain blood sugar throughout the day:

- 1. Eat in threes.** At each meal, combine one portion of a protein, one portion of a carb, and one portion of a fat. (In my coaching, I refer to the size of your palm as a way to measure out a serving size.)
- 2. Eat within 45 minutes of waking.** Yes, even if you are not hungry. After an overnight sleeping “fast,” eating breakfast signals to the body that it is not starving. It regulates blood sugar, and the body can then begin to release fat and not hold on to it. This one change can dramatically improve metabolism and blood sugar levels throughout the day.
- 3. Eat every three hours.** Shoot for timing meals: morning, midmorning, lunch, midafternoon, and dinner. If you are on-the-go, grab a low-glycemic protein bar, a handful of almonds, an apple, or pear until you can again eat in threes within three hours. Out to lunch or dinner? Select chicken, fish, or lean beef and a low-glycemic vegetable like asparagus, broccoli, or salad. Skip the coffee, with added sugars like sweetener, and dessert.

These simple shifts and changes to implement throughout the day, along with managing stress, sleeping well, and drinking enough water (half of body weight in ounces) can really move the needle on our overall health and mental outlook. Keep it simple. Eat in threes every three hours as a guide, and you will maintain good “glycemic control.” This has been associated with improvements in mood and overall mental and emotional wellbeing. With so much going on in our world, so much of it out of our control, one thing we can control and find strength in each and every day is how we choose to care for ourselves and best serve our clients, coworkers, colleagues, and those we love.



Carlene Murray is a Certified Health/Wellness & Life Coach, Nitro Nutrition health pro, and owner of

Board30 Naples, a unique full-body approach to fitness specializing in HIIT resistance band training. Also a Florida REALTOR®, Carlene brings her passion to *Real Producers*, serving her clients and community to help others achieve optimal health and wellness of mind, body, and spirit. Carlene offers both private, one-on-one coaching programs, as well as group/corporate team coaching and instructing sessions at her Board30 studio, located at The Shoppes at Vanderbilt.

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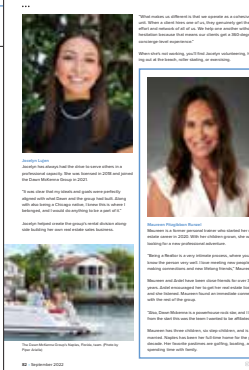
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Home Organization Tasks for Fall

Fall is upon us, and with it, this season brings *change*: changes in leaves, changes in temps, and changes in our routines and activities. We're trading our sun-soaked summer days for sweater weather and hot cocoa. As we transition to this coziest of seasons, let's take a look at **three fall organization tasks** that will prep your home for the chilly days!

1. Swap Out the Closet

Time to trade those strappy sandals and tank tops for cozy sweaters and boots! Use this time to put your hands on each piece and ask yourself whether you've worn it in the last year and whether it still brings you pleasure. Donate items you're finished with to your favorite charity or consignment shop.

2. Organize the Garage

Start by pulling everything out into the driveway and cleaning the floor well. Next, get rid of anything you haven't used in two years, that you no longer want, or that is broken. Then, organize what's left by use, such as tools and sporting equipment, using hooks and wall shelves to lay everything out suitably for your family's needs.

3. Prime the Kitchen for the Holidays

For many of us, the kitchen is the heart of the home, and many of our fondest holiday memories revolve around time spent cooking and eating with family and friends. Now is a great time to organize and swap out seasonal appliances and linens and move the dishes you'll use most, such as mugs and roasting pans, to convenient locations.

While these tasks may seem overwhelming, the sooner you get them done, the more time there will be to sit back with a hot toddy and enjoy the season with those you love!



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