

# Discover your inner archetype

You may have heard the expression that a seller is really “motivated,” but have you ever heard anyone talk about a motivated buyer? Or even what motivates a buyer? As someone who has worked with lots of homebuyers over the years, I find that a homebuyer’s motivation can determine what kind of home he needs and in Santa Fe most homebuyers fall into four distinct types or archetypes, if you will.

My first archetype is one you may already be familiar with: The Banker. This homeowner is good with numbers and motivated by the financial possibilities of ownership. Rate of return, percentages of appreciation, and holding costs are as highly valued as the wall sconces, flooring, or the mountain views from the bedroom. Bankers find comfort in their home equity, like to watch Bloomberg, and can tell you today’s prevailing mortgage rates even if they are 10 years into a 30-year fixed. To be fair, most all of

us have some banker tendencies.

The Visionary is my second archetype. This one has pure architectural motivations. This is a passionate person who wants to be in the moment and experience the house as living art. Whether she builds a new home or renovates an existing one, she goes bold with color, wild with angles, crazy with curves, and generally leaves no corner untouched by her vision. Santa Fe is an obvious draw for visionaries with our diversity and creative freedom.

Next we have The Caretaker. This person is motivated by the historical significance of a home and understands that his role is to preserve its intrinsic value. Caretakers tend to be scholarly, able to lead house guests around like a docent leads a group through a museum. Each caretaker leaves his mark, becoming a new chapter in the life of that home. Caretakers are usually the opposite of

Bankers because most have no desire to sell, but would prefer to pass the home down to the next generation.

The final and most gentle is The Peacemaker. This spiritual pilgrim views the home as a sanctuary, a place of peace and solace. Peacemakers constitute the majority archetype and it’s no wonder since our founding families, who arrived by ox-drawn cart, named this place the City of Holy Faith. Today’s pilgrims can be seen arriving in everything from Volkswagen vans to private jets and evidence of their numbers can be found in the density of organic grocery stores and Starbucks outlets. Those seeking spiritual nourishment have lots to choose from in Santa Fe.

So take a moment and honestly ask yourself, “What am I”? It is very common to have competing motivations and you may discover that you are part Visionary and part Peacemaker. Couples who



MELISSA PIPPIN-CARSON

purchase a home together could benefit from knowing if one is a Banker and the other a Caretaker. But have comfort in knowing that regardless of whether you are motivated by financial, architectural, historical or spiritual factors, Santa Fe is the perfect place for you to find the perfect home.

*Melissa Pippin-Carson is an associate broker with Sotheby's International Realty. Contact her at 984-5128 or mel@pipstips.com with your questions or suggestions.*

## OurwaterQuality

# On testing private wells

Owners of private wells are responsible for monitoring their own water quality. Even though testing is not required, the Environmental Protection Agency recommends that private wells be tested prior to domestic use to detect any contaminants. This initial testing enables the owner to establish a baseline for tracking and comparing any future changes in water chemistry. The EPA also recommends that owners test wells annually for coliform bacteria, nitrates and other constituents that may be of concern in localized areas.

The most reliable way to find out what is in your well water is to commission a comprehensive test by an EPA-approved laboratory. Testing is particularly important if you live in an area of known risk for certain contaminants. If you are going to invest in well testing, use a company with expertise in collecting water samples, interpreting test results and explaining treatment implications (if any).

EPA standards for regulated wells serve as useful guidelines for evaluating the quality of water from unregulated private wells. Some common contaminants have only aesthetic effects (such as taste, odor or color) in drinking water and others are annoying (copper, iron and manganese staining) and may permanently discolor plumbing fixtures. High hardness levels may result in clogged plumbing and impaired operation of electrical devices that use water. In EPA-regulated wells, these effects are included under non-enforceable secondary standards.

Some contaminants with possible implications for human health may be invisible and have no characteristic odor. In EPA-regulated wells, the levels of these contaminants (including microorganisms, disinfectants, disinfectant byproducts, inorganic and organic chemicals, and radionuclides) are governed by legally enforceable primary standards and should be properly evaluated if contaminant levels exceed the EPA’s maximum

contamination level (MCL).

In areas where multiple contaminants are known to be present, laboratory testing can be costly. There are some (limited) options for obtaining reliable, free water testing by certified laboratories. The New Mexico Department of Health is conducting a statewide study of arsenic and metals in drinking water and urine. The initial phase of testing has already been completed in Northern New Mexico.

The New Mexico Environment Department, under its Liquid Waste (Septic Tank) Program, provides free and confidential testing of private domestic wells for fluoride, iron, and nitrate. The NMED also conducts periodic “water fairs” at which residents can get their well water tested without charge.

Because water quality in Northern New Mexico is changing as a result of drought conditions and development, consider testing the water (or acquiring a copy of recent laboratory test results) before you buy a house that is dependent on



STEPHEN WIMAN

water supply from a private well. It is also suggested that you gather information about nearby wells if you are buying undeveloped land and anticipate drilling a water well. The confidentiality of your test results is critical because the diagnosis of problem water, if not properly disclosed, can adversely affect real-estate transactions.

*Stephen Wiman has a background in earth science (Ph.D. in geology) and is the owner of Good Water Company in Santa Fe. He may be reached at 505-471-9036 and skwiman@goodwatercompany.com.*