



## How a Holistic Realtor Can Protect Your Health

### Interview With Tori McGee

#### SPEAKERS

Tori McGee, Kendra Seymour

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Tori McGee

00:00

Smell is so important, and I know a lot of agents will tell their sellers, oh, just put some plugins in and that'll cover the smell up of the dog or whatever. And what a lot of agents don't realize there's families with chemical sensitivity. I had a buyer, the husband walked into the kitchen, it was during holiday season, and yes, it was festive burning that pumpkin candle and what they didn't realize is my buyer had to leave immediately due to the toxic, you know, overload that he experienced. His eyes started to swell. He started having trouble breathing. He had asthma. We didn't even get past the kitchen, and we had to leave. So unfortunately, that seller did lose out on a potential buyer that you know didn't even get to see the rest of the property.

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Kendra Seymour

00:48

Hello and welcome to Your Indoor Air Podcast brought to you by Change the Air Foundation. My name is Kendra Seymour. Our guest today is Tori McGee. She's a holistic realtor, certified in building biology, and she really specializes in helping buyers find homes that support their health, especially those who are maybe mold sensitive or have other environmental concerns. You should take a unique approach to real estate, going beyond just, you know, the square footage and the curb appeal and does the kitchen look nice? To look at factors like indoor air quality and moisture and potential toxins. So in this episode, we're going to talk about what it means to kind of take this holistic approach to home buying, some of the biggest red flags to watch for when touring our home, and how to navigate maybe disclosures and inspections and contracts with health in mind. So if you're on the hunt for a safe and healthy home, this episode is packed with expert insights that I promise you won't want to miss. So thank you so much Tori for being here.

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Tori McGee

01:44

Yo, thank you so much for having me. I really appreciate this, and it's so important to have this conversation.

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Kendra Seymour

01:50

Yeah, I'm so glad to connect with someone like yourself, because from the beginning of the home hunting process through once you're in, it like there's so many factors that kind of travel or kind of come together in this journey to, you know, live in healthier homes, and you are like that very first stop. So I'm so glad we're having this conversation, but before we jump in, I do need to take a moment to say a huge thank you to two of our sponsors, Celtic IQ and Mold Mentor LLC. Now we love partnering with companies like these, because it's their passion for safer and healthier indoor environments and homes that really make you know our work possible, and their support you know helps our education initiatives and our policy reform and even our research projects. So a huge thank you to both of those companies, and if you want to learn more about them, you can head on over to our website, at [ChangeTheAirFoundation.org](http://ChangeTheAirFoundation.org), and click on our corporate partners tab. So let's jump in Tori, because I, when I was putting together the questions for this interview, I think I had like 14, and that's a lot to cover in a short amount of time. So let's start with first, you know, how would you define like, a holistic approach to real estate, and how does it influence the way you help buyers find a healthier home? Because you are not a typical realtor. So talk to us about what that looks like and how you're different.

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Tori McGee

03:10

Oh, thank you so much. Yes. So basically, we, I, I like to look for, you know, what the client's needs are. And we all have different needs, and we're all dealing with different situations, so I'd like to have a conversation with my buyers, find out a little bit about them and what you know, what's been going on with them. And they usually will come to me and reach me and have their concerns. So we have conversations, you know? We have different, different needs, you know, I have children that have different, you know, special needs. I've got families that have EMF sensitivity, of course, the mold sensitivity, past clients and basically just, you know, having, having that information out there, you know, for them to find me. So once we start talking, it's just, you know, finding out a little bit about them,

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Kendra Seymour

04:05

Yeah, and what their priorities are right now. And we probably should have started with this, but like, you got into this field kind of for a specific reason, right? It was, like your own family's kind of journey and story. So can you talk to us about, kind of what made you shift into this field and in this way,

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Tori McGee

04:23

Yeah, so I was, you know, obviously, in the more health and wellness, you know, over the years, you know, with my own family's journey, my daughter at seven, ADHD, not really knowing, you know about that, and then realizing, Oh, I've got so many different chemicals and products in my own home, and what, what we're feeding, and what we're what we're doing for our own family. So after, you know, I started on my journey. We were looking to buy a house, and after talking to multiple agents, not really quite understanding what my needs were, you know, I decided to my husband and I were like, Okay, why don't you get your license so you can help navigate. For us. And so I did. And then once we, you know, went through the process, it was, it just kind of took off. People started, you know, finding me locally, and us having, you know, caring about what to look for in that process. And that's how I got started, was for my own journey, having questions that other agents didn't quite understand.

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Kendra Seymour

05:21

And I think that can be it's really, I think, challenging sometimes, if you haven't gone through like, multiple chemical sensitivities or mold related illness, to understand why asking certain questions like upfront and eliminating certain homes or having certain concerns are so at the forefront of people's minds. Because I think, you know, when I was buying our one, our first home, many, many years ago now, I remember we it was a competitive market. There weren't a lot of homes available, especially in our price range, and when we found one, we fell in love. There was a bidding war. They picked us, and we thought we did everything right. We got the home inspection, and I remember they called us and, like, swing by after work. You know, they had found moisture in the basement. We negotiated with the seller to, like, open it up, and Lord knows, I think it was probably just like a handyman. And we swing by after work, and it's my husband and me and our realtor and their realtor and this Handyman in the basement with this open wall that we now know had mold and water damage, but there's no protections, no one's, you know, raising alarm bells. And I remember thinking like we wouldn't be standing here if this was safe, right? These are the professionals. And really, I remember the part that still stands out to this day is when their realtor overheard me say that and said to me, well, there are two other offers in this envelope who would love to see yours fall through. And I panicked. I was like, No, I already pictured brining my future children home here and sure, we'll take care of it. We later had to go back and readdress that area, but we won't get into that story. But the this

journey, I think, unless you're being really conscious about it when you're home, buying doesn't always give you the time and attention when it comes to some of these environmental things. So I love that you created the realtor that you wish you had had essentially Right,

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Tori McGee

07:17

Correct.

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Kendra Seymour

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Yeah. So let's then talk into then. So when you're going through a home with one of your clients, are there, like, certain things that you're doing with your buy, you know buyers to kind of help them assess a home's risk for maybe mold or other issues, like, especially when there are no signs or the red flags you look for. So I'm talking before you even put in an offer, how are you kind of eliminating homes? You know, from the get go,

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Tori McGee

07:44

What a great, that, that's a great question. I get that all the time, and I usually will talk to the buyers what the expectations are during our showing, just to kind of give them a heads up. You know, you also want to look at like when you first assess the home. Of course, pictures you're not going to be able to see a lot. So get out there. Look at the property. How is the drainage, you know, how is the grading? Is all the water going towards the property, or is it flowing away? That's the first thing you can see immediately. And then on the outside of the home, before you even go in, you can take a look for rotten wood. Are the gutters, you know, really secure. Are they over fully, over full with with leaves and debris? Could could that pose a problem for intrusion? And then, when you get into the house, I always bring a flashlight and shine it everywhere. Look at your baseboards. Look for staining. Look up, look under sinks. Just really assess for any type of like warped wood. Do you see staining? Is it on a slab? Go in the garage? And another important besides the visible, visible with, with that smell. Smell is so important, and I know a lot of agents will tell their sellers, oh, just put some plugins in and that'll cover the smell up of of the dog or whatever. And what a lot of agents don't realize. There's families with chemical sensitivity. I had a a buyer, the husband walked into the kitchen. It was during holiday season, and yes, it was festive, burning that pumpkin candle. And what they didn't realize is, my buyer had to leave immediately due to the toxic, you know, overload that he experienced. His eyes started to swell. He started having trouble breathing. He had asthma. We didn't even get past the kitchen, and we had to leave. So unfortunately, that seller did lose out on a potential buyer that, you know, didn't even get to see the rest of the property. So that's, that's a lot of of that as well. So those are important key factors.

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Kendra Seymour

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Yeah, I tell people all the time, like, this is true even of rentals. Like, you know. Bring a bag, or, if you have a purse or something, have a flashlight, you could even sneak in a moisture meter, do a pinless one, so you're not leaving little holes in their thing. And you can head on over to our website, [ChangeTheAirFoundation.org](http://ChangeTheAirFoundation.org), if you go to resources, we have a whole Free Download section, and there's the five signs of water damage. So you can, like, print that off. There's also, like, a diagram of where to look in a home. And you can, kind of, like, stealthily, like, you know, investigate now there. And we'll get to this, because I want to talk about, how do you not accidentally scare a seller off? And they'll be like, Oh, we're not going to pick your offer. You seem high maintenance. So we'll get to that. But sticking to, like, with, with the initial when you're going through, are there any like, red flags and listings like flips or homes sold as is, like, is there anything that kind of clues you into, like, maybe there's more going on to this home that we're just not even going to spend time on?

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Tori McGee

10:50

Yes, that's an amazing question, because I get that all the time, and then sometimes buyers will even forget about that. And that is so flips are a concern, and for multiple reasons, you usually don't have a disclosure. And I know a lot of a lot of that is so important to know the history of the home, and I know there's other ways that you know you can pull, you know, different reports and stuff. So that is a number one. And just having conversations with the listing agent. And I know a lot of states you know are buyer beware, so you know that's that's a huge, huge problem.

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Kendra Seymour

11:31

So let's talk about then, then just, we'll pivot for a second, because like getting, how do we get as much information about a property as possible, like what is covered. I know disclosures vary by state, so we're not giving, you know, any kind of, like, legal or official advice. But what, what do people need to know about disclosures? What does it mean when we say Buyer beware? Talk to us about all those things.

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Tori McGee

11:53

So, yeah, buyer beware is, you know, you need to do a really good job as as the buyer. You need to hire your real estate professional that can, you know, help guide you, give you different resources, different vendors to go out during your inspection period. And if we want to just hop, you know, go on and go on into that conversation. You know, make sure that your realtor does help you navigate through that process and

giving you enough timeline. And if it is a competitive market, you can still win the house and not giving up those important testing that is for the health of your family. So I would just say continue having conversations with your realtor. And for me, personally, I always, you know, have the home inspector come out, but I also suggest an HVAC company come out, open it up, see what's going on. You know, with your unit, have a roofer come out, because, you know, some days your home inspector on a rainy day, or maybe a day it's windy, they can't get the drone up there, and they might not climb on top of your roof to see, How is everything going with, you know, the sealed boots, possible, some flashing, you know, around your chimney. How does everything look? Are there any missing shingles? So that's so important because, because we really can't see that that's not something that we, you know, can, can take a look at. And also, I it's unbelievable Radon Testing. I mean, it is. I had a radon test this this week that came in. The family had been living there for maybe four years. You know? It came back as a nine. This family's been living there with levels of nine. And it just is. It's an easy test. It's a 48 hour test, get it done. Know your radon levels, and it is typical higher when it does rain. So I do like doing my inspections and starting Radon Testing in the rain, you know. So that's all. That's also good too, because sometimes when you do your home inspection during the rain, you can see where water is sitting and possible problems that could arise. So don't put off your home inspection just because it's raining. That's actually a good thing.

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Kendra Seymour

14:07

Yeah. And for those listening, we have a whole Radon 101, episode you can listen to that's super insightful, and I encourage everyone to do that, even if you think you don't live in an area with high radon. Those radon maps are very outdated, and your neighbor may not have a problem, but you might, and there is no safe level of radon indoors, but the government does recommend that you intervene. I think it's four picocuries, anything over that and and it is, it is a relatively, and I say relatively straightforward solution when it comes to radon mitigation, but we talked about that in that in that episode. So you're having, you're either doing a home inspector, an HVAC person, possibly a roofer. I mean, all of those things. Are those all coordinated on the same day, like when you're when you put in an offer, are you changing what you write in that contract so that you can allow for this? How do you navigate that so that you're even allowed to, you know, get your foot in the door and get your contract accepted.

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Tori McGee

15:07

So here in Georgia, we have something called due diligence. So we negotiate our our days. How many days do we need? Do we need seven days? Do we need 10 days? And here we, you know, we don't disclose, you know who we're having come out, I just recommend, and I do try to respect the sellers and try to get everybody out within one to two days of being close to each other. So I'm, you know, not every day bothering them with schedules. And you know, make sure you know, when it comes to this, you need to

make sure you're getting a mold inspection on top of, you know of that. And then, you know, are you on a septic tank or sewer? On my septic tanks, I do request the sellers to either get a clear, you know, service letter, maybe have it pumped in service and get a clearance letter on that. And then, when you're doing your home inspection, do check with your inspector and see if they offer a sewer scope. If not, you can reach out to your local plumber just make sure there's no roots or anything that could cause problems in that sewer line. So there are, you know, there are some inspections like the ones that I do that I want to make sure that my clients do get and make sure, you know, of course, rodent and termites. So that's, yeah, that's, that's a must,

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Kendra Seymour

16:24

Yeah, and I want to, I want to zoom in on something you said it was really important, because we there is a big difference between a home inspector and a knowledgeable indoor environmental professional, or an IEP, for short. And one of the ways I like to explain this to people is you can think of your home inspector kind of like your general practitioner. You know, you go to for your doctor, right? But if you end up needing to see like somebody for dermatology because you have a mole, and they suspect you're going to a specialist for that or or whatever the case may be, and so for your home, yes, and I'm not knocking home inspectors, but they're focusing on a lot of other things, and you want someone who really prioritizes and understands that mold and water damage is often hidden, right? And what we see is merely the tip of the iceberg. And so you want those thorough inspections in the attic. You want them looking in ductwork, underneath sinks, taking more detailed moisture readings than your home inspector might. And so I love this idea of these team of people, and I think a hard thing for buyers to wrap their head around is you're spending money. That is true, right? You're investing some upfront cost. But if you find out these issues ahead of time, you can negotiate, you can save yourself money. Maybe you choose to, you know back out of the contract, that that does happen from time to time, but let's talk for for a minute more about like disclosures, and again, knowing that it varies by state, is what are you seeing in Georgia, where you are like, are sellers required to disclose mold and water damage. Have you found, like, more often than not, in most states, it's it's up to the homeowner. Can you just speak broadly to that?

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Tori McGee

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So we do have a set of disclosures here in Georgia that does ask for, like, water intrusion. You know, have you had some sort of a leak, which is good, but you as a buyer beware. If it's not listed on there, that doesn't mean, you know, maybe this homeowner has only lived there three years. We don't know what happened in 1996 you know, with that homeowner that might have lived there seven years. So we do lose a lot of the history. It's only you know during that time. And so I would say, have your insurance company

pull a report and see if there's a history of of a leak, a flood, or something like that. I think that's a good way to, you know, to do that. I mean, then you know the history.

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Kendra Seymour

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Are you talking about a clue report?

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Tori McGee

18:57

Yes. It's called a clue report.

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Kendra Seymour

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Yeah, and that's something that you as the you know, person trying to buy the home can't request, but the sellers can. And it gives, my understanding is, and please correct me if I'm wrong here, is it gives kind of what has been reported in terms of, like, insurance claims on the home. Is that correct?

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Tori McGee

19:18

That is correct. Yes. And you know, a lot of, you know, a lot of buyers can call their insurance companies too, and, you know, say, Hey, we're going to be getting, you know, insurance on this home, you know. And see, you know, is this on a is this on a flood? Is this on a FEMA flood? Ask questions, you know, do it at the beginning before towards the end, because I've had people call and they've found out, well, I can't really get this house covered because it had two roof claims. You know, they'll, you know, the insurance company can give you some reasons why on what happened in the past, and maybe it wasn't disclosed, but you really need to do your research, and that's something that your realtor cannot do for you. I mean, you have to advocate for yourself as well. You know, your realtor can, you know, only do so much in that process and give you the information that they collect and ask for you. But you know, we're can't do it all.

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Kendra Seymour

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Yeah, and listen like there's no, like, foolproof strategy here. The idea is that you can collect as much information and data as you can and just to kind of zoom in on something for a moment, even with disclosures, because something like mold and water damage is not really regulated, even if they fixed it. And if you're listening on podcast, I'm using air quotes, doesn't mean they did so safely and effectively,



right? So they can say, well, we addressed that leaky window, and maybe they just, like, reset the window or something. They didn't bother removing the water damage and any mold underneath and things like that. Or maybe their form of remediation was to put a bunch of, I don't want to name, a paint on it that, quote, unquote, kills it, which it doesn't, folks, so you, you you want to probe more. So just because an issue was addressed doesn't mean it was addressed so safely and effectively, and it can still be an issue. That's why the history matters. And I think, too, one of the challenges. And I don't know if there's a strategy you have when people get ready to put their homes on the market, they often like repaint. And this is not even for flips. And the problem and challenges when you repaint is you cover up some of those signs of water damage. And so again, that's where you're you're really trying to be a detective. Here. You're looking for buckling, separating of materials. Ask, like, is it a red flag to you if a home was recently painted? Are you like, oh, maybe there's something going on here. Or are you thinking like, oh, maybe they're just getting it ready for market.

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Tori McGee

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Why? So it could, it could be, it could be both. But you that's where the investigation, you know, comes in, and that's where your inspectors come in, because, you know, they might get up in that attic and find an issue. You might not see it because it was freshly painted and and, you know, you do have to, you know, just do your investigations. And that's the important part, is having your team out there. And, you know, I love what you were, you know, just saying, so it's, it really is important to to have that,

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Kendra Seymour

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Yeah, and if you're, I just want to do a plug, too. If you're looking for a good IEP, whether you're looking to buy a home and you're in the inspection period, or just in general, because you're concerned about your current home. About your current home. If you head on over to [ChangeTheAirFoundation.org](http://ChangeTheAirFoundation.org), go to our resources, the very first thing you're going to see is our start here tab that takes you step by step through the inspection and remediation process. Step one is all about finding a good IEP that is a field that is not really regulated either. So not all people are good. We're not going to get into that here, but I promise you, if you're if you're looking for an inspect an IEP, please start there, because we give you all the red flags starting certifications, which are minimal starting points. But how you avoid those IEPs that are just going to take a few random air tests as opposed to doing the level of investigation that you need to feel a little more comfortable about what's going on in or possibly going on in the home. Okay, so when you you so let's say you've narrowed it down with your clients, they fall in love this house. They want this house. We've talked about you. You're going to bring in, you know, a variety of professionals during that period. What happens if you're under contract and you find a bunch of issues, is it better to walk away? Is it better

to have the seller fix it, or is it better for you to maybe negotiate money back and you fix it so you're in control? Do you have any thoughts about that?

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Tori McGee

23:38

I do. I have, yeah, lots of, lots of ideas and thoughts, and it happens all the time. You know, nobody's going to come back with this perfectly clean inspection report, but it really depends on, you know, when we go through them, what are those issues? You know, is it just a loose railing, or is it, you know, something minor, or did you inspect, inspections, your mold testing, you know what, whatever you're doing, what did it come back? What is the level of concern? And I always suggest getting if you want to move forward, and this is something that you feel like, oh, I can get this fixed. I feel comfortable with moving forward. It's not like a lot of red flags, you know, based on, you know, your the information you're getting, your mold, your roof, you know, your HVAC, but understanding that you've got good mechanicals and you feel like the home is in a good shape. And then you always ask, I suggest, ask the seller to give you the funds so you can hire the contractors that you trust, that you know and that you have control over, because you might ask them to fix something, and they could have, you know, somebody down the road, do it that's not, you know, to your level of expectations.

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Kendra Seymour

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Yeah, and I can't re-emphasize that enough, circling back to my original story about the first time we bought a home, we had them do it. We ended up having to redo that area to make. Sure that it was remediated properly and the actual moisture source was corrected. And so in hindsight, that was a lesson learned, because they're going to do it for as cheap as possible, right? The other thing, and I forgot to mention this when we were talking about disclosures too, is, I think sometimes you we that this assumes that the owner of the home is actually aware of some of these issues. And as I know you know Tori and we talk about all the time at Change the Air Foundation, a lot of these issues are just hidden. It's not like a burst pipe that's obvious to most people, but not if you're having condensation issues in the attic, or maybe interior ductwork that's behind walls or the flashing on a window. And so I know sometimes people are like, Oh, it's they lied and covered it up. I think a lot of the time, people just don't know, and that's because as homeowners, we aren't always, you know, we don't always understand the maintenance and some of these things in our homes that we should be doing. We don't always know that we should be looking for them. So there's, you know, even if it's not disclosed, there could still be issues. Again, don't ever skip that inspection period. I always thought that was wild when people would waive the inspection, and I get it in a competitive market, but you really are taking a gamble there that can end up costing you way more money down there,

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Tori McGee

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And you can shorten that time, you know, you don't in a competitive market, you know. And I did a lot of real estate during the crazy during that crazy time, but we never sacrificed our inspections. And I made it very clear, and having that communication with the listing agent, you know, saying, Hey, I've got this family that has really struggled, you know, with with whatever. And I just want you to know that we're, you know, very serious. They really love this home, and we are going to come in and do some inspections, but we're going to shorten that down, and I can get people out, my vendors, you know, understand the necessity, and we can get out within a couple of days, so I can have that information back in less than five days. So there are ways around it, but I always say communication. You know, I don't think that we communicate enough on what's happening and and sometimes sellers and sometimes listing agents don't even know different concerns that can be out there. And I do get thanked a lot from agents that co-op with me and say, wow, Tori, you really showed me a lot, and I really appreciate that. I'm going to take what you've said and done over this process into consideration for my future clients. And, you know, having these conversations, because we never maybe thought about having some of some of this come out inspections and stuff like that,

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Kendra Seymour

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Yeah, and we say all this, and I know we make it sound simple, and I want to take a moment and recognize that it's not, and there's so much at stake, you know, not just financially, but emotionally and logistically. And I know too, like, if you find a house and you fall in love, right? Maybe you love the kitchen or whatever, you can sometimes have the blinders on and really what I think, and I don't know if you agree with this, when you go in and you're looking at a home, you really want to be not that. You want to keep the emotion out of it, because that is part of buying a home. But you want to try to really approach this almost like methodically and where you know, as tempting as it is to be like, fawning over the kitchen, like, make sure you're looking at those baseboards and under sinks and you're looking for ceiling stains and you can peek in the vents with your flashlight, because those things you know, after the newness of the wonderful kitchen or whatever feature you fell in love with, are going to matter. And so I know we're kind of talking about this like, Oh, it's just as easy. We know that there's a lot that goes into this and a lot of logistics, but I love that you started off our conversation with eliminating homes kind of right off the bat, before you even get down to the contract phase, because you can eliminate a lot, I think, when you know what you're looking for and the other thing. And then I promise I'll stop talking that I want to, like, recognize, and you said it before, Tori, was that there is no perfect home. So I've always said to people, if you get a home inspection and they find nothing, they weren't looking well enough, right, right? Like, what shortcuts did they take that they didn't find something so like? And I think people need to hear that too. Like that doesn't mean like that home isn't going to work for you or bring you healing and health. I would just rather

know like, hey, there's this area we know from my IEP, who is here. We think it's really localized. It looks like, you know, whatever it is you want that information, and then so you can take steps to to correct it. So again, there's no perfect home. And I always get a little nervous from like, oh, they found nothing. And I was like, well, what did that look like? Like? What what professionals were involved? And what were they doing or not doing if they didn't find a single thing, whether it's new or old, like, gotta find something. Right,

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Tori McGee

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Exactly.

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Kendra Seymour

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Yeah. So, okay. So what are some are there certain home features that you have found that tend to be more problematic, either from like a moisture control issue, like I always found, like bay windows and again, folks, I'm not basing this off any data other than my own personal experience tend to be a little leakier. Is there anything where you're like, oh, we want to be careful around skylights or whatever. Is there any things like that?

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Tori McGee

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Those are two very important, very important features that we do see a lot of you know, either condensation, moisture during the inspection period, what the professional what they do find. But another thing is interesting is the spray foam. I mean, you know, when that gets wet a lot of times, you know, it's not able to be found right away. So that's a big feature. And I know a lot of new construction, you know, builders do want to use that. So I would say, do your research on a spray foam. You know what that looks like, and do your own, you know, just have your own information on that. But from what I found, that is a concern,

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Kendra Seymour

31:08

Yeah, and for those listening, spray foam can be used in different ways. Sometimes it's like the entire installation, like, you know, and you can see it like in an attic, right? You probably couldn't see it behind, like walls and you're in a room. But sometimes it's just used to, like, close up, small penetrations, maybe where wires are, and it's very localized. But the type of insulation does matter, and we'll have to have a whole episode. I think I'll have to do at some point on spray foam and insulation. That's it's on my docket

of things that we want to cover, because there's, there's some pros and cons to the different options out there that people need to be aware of. Okay, so those are, those are three helpful ones to kind of think about. So are there some mistakes you see buyers making, just in general, when it comes to buying a home, when they're being kind of health conscious?

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Tori McGee

31:55

Yes, I think that, you know, we, we really just focus on, you know, a lot of it, not that it's a bad thing, but neighborhoods and, you know, they they will sometimes, and also they'll maybe not be as concerned, or some people are as concerned with maybe different power lines, power plants. You know, is there a factory nearby? You know, there's come, you know, conversations that we need to have on their concerns. You know, environmentally, 5G towers, is there a stream or a creek? Is there a dump site nearby? You know? So there are conversations to have and things to be aware of when you are in this process. You know, it's not just necessarily, you know, the floor plan of the home, you know, it's really a whole package that you really want to consider when you are looking

KS

Kendra Seymour

32:46

Yeah, I'll tell a quick funny story about that. I had a friend many years ago, and we live just outside of Washington, DC, and it's very densely populated, expensive area, and real estate's of a prime and he got a nice location that was close to a metro stop, and he he went into the contract to rent the home in the winter, well, come summer or even late spring, he didn't realize that they were less than a quarter a mile from like a water waste treatment plant. The entire area reeks of like sewage. And this is a, this is a prime area to live in during the hot, humid summer months of DC, and you can smell it in the whole area, no matter where you are. And I like, you know, he was a young guy, and he didn't care as much. But like, looking back, it's like that might have been something good for him to know prior to moving then. And hey, in the summer, right down the road, there's this plant, or maybe if you're near a highway or certain power lines, these are things to pay attention to as well,

TM

Tori McGee

33:40

Exactly. And there'll be so many times we'll be out either on the back deck, saying, Okay, do we hear do we hear the highway? Do we hear the road? It's just, you know, go out and just really hear the environment. Look around, look up, look you know, do you have a lot of tree limbs, possibly during a storm? Could that pose a problem? You know? I mean, there's a lot of things to really look at in the home buying process.

KS

Kendra Seymour

34:05

So as we kind of bring it to a close, are there two or three just tips you could leave our listeners with right now, of things to keep in mind, if they're whether they're mold sensitized or multiple chemical sensitivities, or EMFs, whatever they're they're paying attention to, are there like two or three of your top tips,

TM

Tori McGee

34:22

Yes, I mean, don't, don't panic, don't stress. I see so many people that are really, really stressed, and it's understandable, because it is, can be a very stressful, you know, time in buying a house, but, you know, really talk to a realtor and work with somebody that really understands you and hears you. I think that is really, you know, putting your team in place and having that advocate for you that understands and that can go, you know, to the seller, to the selling, listing agent, and say, hey, this is the concerns that you know we have, and this is the information we need to get. Or, you know, maybe that realtor can really vet a lot of the vendors for you. So that's that's really a good, a good way to, you know, approach it and to start, start that process. So, and there are, you know, a couple other things that you know they might want to do, you know, during the process. And, you know, do they want basements, you know, having conversations about crawl spaces, because we do know, you know, during, you know, with the whole moisture, and that could be a concern for families, and finding out just, you know, how that looks for them. And then just, you know, just doing, doing your research on, on everything you know, how everything looks for you?

KS

Kendra Seymour

35:41

Yeah, well, that's a good segue into my next question. So how would somebody find, like, a holistic realtor like yourself? Like, is there a network? Is there a certification? Is there a website, like, how do, how do we, how do we find people like you to help us with the home buying process?

TM

Tori McGee

35:59

So right now I have created, like, a little, small, little network. I've been trying to reach out to different agents around and have a conversations with them. You know, for me, I decided, you know, to get into building biology. I wanted to have a certification behind me and the education so I can best help. You know, my clients, some agents might call themselves holistic. So you want to ask them, you know, what experience do you have, or what certifications, you know, what is your knowledge of this? You know, you don't want to just work with somebody that's calling themselves that you do want to, you know, interview them, and it's okay to ask questions and have that conversation. I just think it's, it's really important to

have. But there are different, you know, there's different, you know, ones out there in different states that I have, you know, really vetted and really tried, but there's no, you know, certification for us. I am working on a small one right now. Hopefully I can, you know, bring some more education to this field of more wellness in the real estate market, because it is so important to have this knowledge. And I want to be, I want to be more educated than my buyers. So it's important that you know us as professionals are more educated and knowledgeable of them, so we can, you know, help guide them.

KS

Kendra Seymour

37:17

Yeah, and you know, I'm a big fan, if you listen to the podcast before, of vetting anyone, you hire well, and you you can do it in a way that is respectful of their time, and, you know, shows kindness and stuff. But you can say things like, have you worked with families who, have, you know, children with autism who may need to be more concerned about X, Y and Z? Have you worked with families who have someone who's immunocompromised and needs to be, you know, particularly conscious about moisture and mold or whatever it is, and have those conversations up front. And I know people think, well, then they're going to reject me. Maybe, yeah, that's true. They might, but that means it wasn't a good fit, whether it's the realtor or the person selling the home, or the IEP or their mediator. You know, if you do that upfront and they reject you, it probably wasn't going to work out to your benefit anyway. And so don't lose faith there. I love that. I know you're networking and you're building with working with other realtors and other areas to do this, but that's amazing. So my last question to you is, if people had follow up questions for you, though, how could they get into contact with you? How could they find you?

TM

Tori McGee

38:27

They can check me on my website. You know, they can sign up for my monthly wellness real estate newsletter on there. It's, it's [Atlantaholisticrealtor.com](http://Atlantaholisticrealtor.com) and they can also follow me on Instagram, [holistichomeexpert](https://www.instagram.com/holistichomeexpert). And so I always, you know, share information out there about wellness, real estate, you know, just different little tips, and reach out to me if you have any concerns or want to find maybe a professional in your area that I can help connect you with. I am so happy to do that, because this is really a passion, and it's so important. And I feel like I see people on different groups, Facebook groups, all the time, just needing somebody to listen to them and help, you know, give them the information and vendors and connect them in the right direction. You know, you're just starting out in this process. So don't stress, but get your your team together and ask for, you know, different reviews or references, and just make sure you speak to the person that you're working with, because I get calls all the time. Well, I bought a house four months ago from a friend of mine. You know, her best friend just got her real estate license, and now I've got this, you know, all this going on, and you really want to catch it before it become, you know, before

you move forward to the closing you really want to either walk away or, you know, just really take care of the issue prior.

KS

Kendra Seymour

39:56

Yeah, that's helpful. And we'll link to all of that in the show notes. And also, if you're listening. I believe it was in 2023, we had a series on tips for buying a home, and we had an IEP Michael Schrantz, he did two episodes things that to consider from an IEPs perspective, we have a builder who gave his perspective on tips for buying and renting a home we also had a home inspector, and so we have other resources that we're going to link to in the show notes, as you kind of do this deep dive to prepare. One of my mottos is research before you react, because I think it will save you a lot of time and stress and frustration down the road. So thank you Tori, so much for being here. We really appreciate it. No thank you, and for everyone listening. If you found this information helpful, if you want to see more resources like this, free downloads, other expert advice and tips head on over to [ChangeTheAirFoundation.org](https://www.ChangeTheAirFoundation.org), and sign up for our newsletter.

TM

Tori McGee

40:41

Thank you for having me. I appreciate it, and love everything that you're doing.

KS

Kendra Seymour

40:41

No thank you, and for everyone listening. If you found this information helpful, if you want to see more resources like this, free downloads, other expert advice and tips head on over to [ChangeTheAirFoundation.org](https://www.ChangeTheAirFoundation.org), and sign up for our newsletter.