



STORIES & INSIGHTS

## Meet Tracy Morris



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Alright – so today we’ve got the honor of introducing you to Tracy Morris. We think you’ll enjoy our conversation, we’ve shared it below.

**Alright, Tracy thanks for taking the time to share your stories and insights with us today. What do you think it takes to be successful?**

In the business world, you hear many refer to the concept of 'successful'. What does that mean? To most people success equals money, power & fame. Not necessarily in that order:) For me, success takes on a different definition. It includes the following: 1) Freedom: the ability to step away & do the things you love...without stress or worry.

2) Create Meaningful Relationships: Taking the time to cultivate client, vendor, family &

3) Balance: Striking the correct balance with your work & personal life. The goal is to make both as pleasant as possible.

4) Strength: Having the strength in good mental & physical health

5) Sleeping Well at Night: Not just because you are tired, but because you consistently do the right thing.

When I first started TMD, I worked myself to the point of illness. I had none of the above. It has taken years of trial & error to learn to incorporate the above principles into my daily life. I hope that by sharing a different view of success, another business owner can avoid my mistakes.







**Awesome – so before we get into the rest of our questions, can you briefly introduce yourself to our readers.**

I started TMD in 2003 with \$300 & an unyielding desire to help people create spaces that improved their lives. 20 years later, many clients, employees & vendor partners, I believe we are continuing to achieve that goal. Our specialty is taking a flat piece of land (or in many cases curved with large mountains:) & working with architects & builders to create a curated space for the most discerning of clients. In literal terms, work with our clients to select every aspect of the spaces from exterior materials to cabinets, tile, furniture & hanging the final piece of art. However, we feel our work goes deeper than just the surface items. We guide our clients to discover aspects of their personalities, they never knew they had (or had forgotten), with our design process. At TMD, we get to know our clients & ask specific questions to help us understand exactly what is needed in their spaces. For example, we had a client that, when touring us through his home, shared his collection of watercolors with us. He had completely forgotten he had taken the class in college. He said, "You know, I completely forgot about that part of my life & I loved it!". As a result, we were able to take an unused space & create an office/art studio for him. Now, he is painting daily. This is why I created TMD to allow a client to feel truly 'at home' in their spaces.

**We'd love to hear a story of resilience from your journey.**

Many years ago, when I was first married, I almost lost the business. I had been in business about 10 years & was having many personal issues; good & bad. I was having chronic health problems, planning a wedding, moved 5 times (his house, my house, a house together, my office etc.), managing a staff & office. Even as I write this, I have no idea how I made it through those hurdles. However, this is, as my grandmother would say, 'where the rubber meets the road'. 2 weeks prior to Thanksgiving, we returned from our honeymoon (we could only take 5 days because both my husband & I owned companies). In completing the monthly books, I added up the current/projected sales, deducted the expenses & realized I was \$81K in the hole. At the time, I was only a 3 person firm. This was a lot of money to me. A panic, like I have never felt, washed over me. I talked to my then new husband (he was questioning what he got himself into with me) & my father. Once I calmed down, I knew what I had to do. Hustle. If I was hoping to keep the business afloat, I needed to make \$81K in 6 weeks. With dogged determination, a great book of clients, & very little sleep, I closed \$61K in 6 weeks. This included giving my staff their promised time off of 1 week at Thanksgiving & 2 weeks at Christmas. The gap of \$20K was closed by my father & paid back in 2 months.



Having this experience made me realize the following:

1) You can complete most anything if you put your mind to it, keep your head down & connect with people who want to see you succeed.

2) I needed to dramatically change how I was calculating my margins. This combined with cutting my expenses has been a game changer for TMD.



### **Have any books or other resources had a big impact on you?**

There are many books that have helped me on my journey. Below are my favorites: 1) *The Alchemist* – Paulo Coelho: Made me realize the journey is important, but everything you think you want, you already have.

2) *Still, Small Voice* – Echo Bodine: Helped me understand the power of your intuition

3) *The One Minute Manager* – Kenneth Blanchard & Spencer Johnson: Helped me realize managing does not have to be such an arduous task.

4) *Start Something that Matters* – Blake Mycoskie: Allowed me to realize the fear of starting a business was normal & I could create something that was amazing for my clients & employees.

5) *Start With Why* – Simon Sinek: Made me dig deep for the reason I was getting up everyday. Allowed me to change my language with my clients, my team &, most importantly, myself.





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