



march inspiration... tough cookies

I have often thought about the personalities of Interior Designers. Get a group of designers together and the conversation quickly drifts to historic houses, the newest tag sale find, or who is in the latest publication of AD. These are people with more right brain dominance than left - no doubt about that. I see them as a specific personality type - creative, strident, energetic, enthusiastic and they have a healthy dose of self-confidence (After all, you want your designer to feel sure of his/her convictions, don't you?).

I was one of those lucky kids who always knew what I wanted to do. There I am at age 5, proud of the fact that I had single handedly decked the halls for the holidays. At the time, I didn't even know what an interior designer was, but who else I ask you, would put together a branch, an angel and Mr. Peanut in a vignette and be confident that it really worked?

Recently, an intern who worked in our office graduated with her Masters in Interior Design. She contacted me for a letter of recommendation. I wrote the letter and attached it to the following email. In my mind, I think it sums up what it takes to be an Interior Designer.

Dear S_____,

You should be so proud of your achievements! Only someone who has survived the torture of those "all night" design projects can truly understand what you have been through. Egads!!



Me at age 5.

Whoever decides to go into the interior design profession has to be one *tough cookie*! It is not for the faint of heart or the physically weak or the thin of skin. In school, you learn to defend your ideas, but at the same time be open to the opinions and the suggestions of others. When a client rejects your inspired presentation, you need to show a stiff upper lip and not take it personally. With a smile, you will agree to go back to the drawing board and rethink "their point of view".

Once in the working world, you will learn to be a shepherd, fireman, psychologist, marriage counselor, secretary, moving man, carpenter, and jack of all trades. Glue guns, staple guns, and magic markers will become your tools of choice.

You will hold your clients' hands when they are fearful and help them understand that *it is true*...sofa deliveries *can* take 20 weeks. You will have to be the person to break the news that the fabric they have been "patiently" waiting for just arrived with a flaw running down the middle of the bolt. You will look them in the eye and tell them *truthfully* not to be afraid, it will all work out in the end, and it will be more beautiful than they ever imagined... (you will be confident that it is true...***because....it is!***).

It is not an easy job managing clients' expectations, vendor's delivery schedules and hitting deadlines on time. In spite of all of the above, there is something that keeps us decorators going. *It is the work*. It becomes our *Magnificent Obsession*. It is part of our DNA...it is something that we just cannot *NOT* do. It is what makes us whole.

So here you are, one tough cookie, going out into the world to make it a more beautiful place. Head up, stiff upper lip.... ***You Go Girl!.....***

So, to all of you who know designers, have been designers, or are about to hire designers, remember, they work hard because they love the work and if they seem at times to be *tough cookies*...thats because, well....they are!

Hello Spring and Goodbye to *One Tough Winter!*

President

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A few tough cookie friends at Mario Buatta's book signing at the Mount.