



## *The Power of Stories!*

Stories...what does this have to do with running a business? Though I have written about the importance of stories before, I recently had an experience that brought it to mind yet again!

While visiting our local Christian bookstore, I saw the item pictured above, the  **Holding Cross**, on a shelf. I had never seen this item before, so I stopped and read the story printed on the card that came with it.

Of course, it was very touching and personal about the couple who came up with the idea.

The woman, Carol, was a Hospice and nursing home volunteer and hubby, Jack, made wooden crosses as his own personal ministry.

One day, Carol realized that the "patients" she saw every day had a need for something that could be held in their hands that was natural, meaningful, comfortable and would bring comfort in a time of need.

At that time, most wooden crosses in the marketplace were too big and rough for people who had crippled hands or were sick to hold onto anything.

### **Thus the birth of the Holding Cross.**

Needless to say, I was touched and wanted to buy this product that I had never heard of before, yet now felt strong emotion towards it!

### **So what does that tell us about the power of stories?**

From the time we were children, most of us were read bedtime stories by our parents. Now, as adults, it is ingrained in us to sit up and pay attention when someone says, "Let me tell you a story."

And we feel pleasure and anticipation as well.

When you tell a story, you create visual pictures in the minds of your audience and they become more engaged in what you are saying/selling.

And people have a tendency to remember a story above all else and connect emotion to it. I know I do!

### **What does a good story do?**

**1. A good story helps create visual pictures in the minds of your audience.**

**2. A good story helps carry your message.**

**3. A good story engages the audience and maintains their interest.**

**4. A good story entertains, which is something that you need in your presentation, whether you are just meeting a client or doing their selection appointment.**

I use stories all the time in my sales presentations. They range in topics from personal experiences I have had that help me answer objections to advice that has been given to me to help a client over the hump in making a decision.

For example, if a client says, "I just don't have any more room on my walls to hang another large portrait," I tell them the story about my mother-in-law, a classy lady and great decorator. She had a very small home, was immensely proud of it, and loved decorating it.

When she told us she was putting a third couch in the living room we couldn't believe she was even considering it! There was just no more room...but guess what?

She found room and it was beautiful! I asked her the question everyone was thinking...and that question was,

**"Where are you going to put that third couch?"**

Her answer was priceless, ***"If you love something enough, you will find a place for it!"***

Now, I use her answer as my **story** when a client says they don't have enough wall space to hang another portrait! Using this story is non-combative and gives a great visual for my message.

Stories are one of the best ways to communicate and touch the hearts of your clients.

Think about what stories you might tell in your sales presentations-you may be surprised at how effective they are!