

## **Your Home Brand**

By Cat Henry

Dear Homekeeper,

I'm addressing the inner you: the homekeeper. I recognize your roles extend beyond the housekeeper or domestic engineer. I trust you are mastering those skills along with the other responsibilities of meeting financial, educational, physical, and spiritual aspects for yourself and possibly others. It's daunting if you think about all you do. The theme here goes beyond those things. It's about creating a sense of home that reflects your unique lifestyle brand for you and yours.

"Homekeeper" is the word I use to capture the deeper meaning behind this concept. It goes further than maintaining a house. It is curating the atmosphere in the house that transcends daily routine, creating a sense of home, the memories of, and identity. Homekeeping is an attitude extending to ambiance, or vibe beyond the brick, beam, and mortar. It reflects your life and can leave a lasting impression.

After a busy day (in and outside the home) I look forward to accomplishing my goals and coming home. BTW, society places a housekeeper's wage minus the nursing, teaching, psychology, referee, caregiving, and spiritual guide aspects, in addition to working outside the home, running errands, carpooling, taxiing, medical appointments, balancing the calendar dates, grocery shopping, or even going on vacations is \$22 an hour!).

Home is a sanctuary. It can be a favorite spot in my house decorated with tender loving care. I cull out small spots and spaces for relaxation and pleasure. It can be as simple as a collection of

tchotchkes, family pictures, creating a vignette display, collectibles, memorabilia, favorite chair to relax in with a drink or book, all presented in a simply stated way. It might feel a bit like eclectic decorating. It'll probably be a conversation starter when others come over or the stated reflection of values and specialness are showcased. It could be preparing food with others while fostering fellowship to remember later. It's embracing the idea of self-hospitality, which includes hospitality to family or friends, that is a respite against the dailies. It will be surprising what a subtle difference adding a small detail will make to your home and attitude.

I am not a professionally trained interior decorator chef, perfect person, or parent, much less an extraordinary cleaning lady. Do make a study of it to improve in those areas as I'm sure you do too. I can, though, chalk up some experience from my gained perspective. I've lived in 19 homes in my life thus far, raised four children, and pursued passions and careers, in and outside, the home environment. It's no less than a positive statement from me to say entering a home or personal workspace reflects the inhabitants.

The future content here will be about curating and sharing ideas for decorating, cooking, organizing, and nurturing. I keep budgets in mind. Often after inventorying what I have on hand around my home, repurposing or recycling items, reinventing them a bit, or refreshing a look, even removing them for a while keeps me on my budget when it doesn't allow for purchases.

Feel free to share your experiences with me in the ways you enrich your home life within this theme. Please email with the subject line "Homekeeper."

Until next time, warmest regards.

Cathenry.ch@gmail.com

P.S. A house is made of bolts and beams, a home of love and dreams.