

GMSB 327

[00:00:00]

[00:00:05] Hey, it's Antony here, and welcome to today's episode of the Grow My Salon Business podcast. And whether this is your first time or perhaps you are a regular listener, either way, thank you for tuning in today. This is a short solo episode today because at the time of recording, it's less than a week before Christmas, and I know that you're busy, or at least I certainly hope that you are.

[00:00:28] So let's get straight into it. I've often said that your clients are not your friends, they're your clients, and as such, you'll be friendly to them and they'll be friendly to you.

[00:00:41] But first and foremost, you have a professional relationship with them. And so it's important to remember the boundaries around that relationship, which are that you want to be respected like a professional and they should be respected like a client. And over time with familiarity, sometimes those unspoken rules can slip and perhaps we start to take those clients for granted.

[00:01:07] However, I also know that, especially at this time of the year and the lead up to Christmas, that when I was behind the chair, I realized that with many of my clients, there was a special bond, a warmth that went beyond most professional relationships. Maybe it was because of the close physical proximity we have to someone when we're doing their hair.

[00:01:30] Maybe it's because doing someone's hair involves a degree of trust and respect, which can result in a more intimate relationship being formed between the stylist and the client.

[00:01:42] maybe it's a culmination of visit by visit that you can't help but form a closer, more intimate relationship with them. Where you and your clients would share stories with each other about your respective families and where you would go for Christmas day and the gifts that you'd bought for the people in your life and the weird family dynamics that exist in most families.

[00:02:05] People often ask me if I miss having a salon or if I miss doing here. And in all honesty, as much as I loved it at the time, I don't really miss doing here, but I certainly miss the people. Not all of them, but certainly some of them. In hindsight, they meant far more to me, and I meant far more to them than perhaps I realized at the time.

[00:02:29] Maybe that was because a deeper human connection had developed over time, and they had in fact become my friends as it's a couple of days before Christmas. Let me indulge myself for a minute with a couple of clients' stories to illustrate the importance of those relationships. One client who I'll refer to as Ms.

[00:02:52] White, not her real name, but for the sake of respecting her privacy. Anyway. Ms. White would always call me Mr. Whitaker. She'd never call me Anthony, and she was disliked by everyone on my team. I could never find an assistant to shampoo her hair as they were all hiding, so I'd typically have to do it myself.

[00:03:14] Now, to be clear, I didn't really like her either. She was probably in her seventies or eighties, and although she was financially very well off. She was cantankerous, abrupt, bigoted, and angry with life in general. She was also estranged from her family and she was lonely, and it really wasn't hard to see why, but I remember one day just before Christmas when she came in and she thanked me for the Christmas card that had been sent out on mass to all of our clients.

[00:03:49] I sometimes feel uncomfortable. Receiving compliments, and perhaps I was a little dismissive of her thanking me, which was unintentionally very rude of me. And so she grabbed my arm and she thanked me again. And when I looked at her, there were tears in her eyes and the pain of regret etched into her face.

[00:04:12] And she said it was the only Christmas card I got. Now here I am 30 years later with a lump in my throat thinking about the important role that I played in her life and the lives of some, not all, but some of the clients in my life. I always think that the people in your life are sent to you for a reason.

[00:04:33] There's a lesson to learn from all of them if you're receptive to it. Ms. White was my real life. Ebenezer Scrooge, another client. His name was Bruce. He walked into my first salon within a month of it, first opening from the minute he walked in. Bruce was, and still is, the most charming, kind, bright, funny, intelligent, and generous man you could ever wish to meet.

[00:05:03] We are very similar in age. Okay. I might be a year or two older, but Bruce has become like a brother to me, and I already have four brothers,

[00:05:12] but from his very first haircut, we have been the best of friends, and he's also been the most incredibly supportive and loving godfather to my two

daughters who are now in their mid twenties. And although he lives on the opposite side of the world, myself, Melinda, my wife, and my daughters scout and Indigo absolutely adore him as part of our family.

[00:05:36] He was a client we met in my chair for a haircut 35 years ago, and we're so incredibly blessed to have him in our lives today.

[00:05:46] So especially at Christmas time, I think it's important to think about the people in your life and realize the role that you play in the lives of others. So before I wrap up, I just wanna thank you for being a listener. Thank you for the support throughout the year and as one hairdresser to another.

[00:06:06] I hope that you are lucky enough to have met the clients in your chair that I had the privilege to meet in mine. It can be a very special relationship and it's easy to take it for granted. So over the Christmas period, travel safely, take care of yourself and be kind to each other.

[00:06:24] So from my family, and that includes Bruce to yours, wherever you are, have a happy Christmas.