

## **Vision**

Allow me to offer two pieces of advice that sound contradictory but really work together in allowing you to select your new home. First, try to see beyond the surface appearance of the seller's furniture, style of décor, and taste and imagine how your own design sense could transform the space. Use your imagination to cast the rooms in your favorite colors. Transform rooms, knock down walls, add crown molding, and peel away wall paper. A diamond in the rough can be cut, polished, and set into an exquisite piece of jewelry.

Second, don't ignore your first impression. You may need to question it, but often our "blink" reaction, to quote bestselling author Malcolm Gladwell, to a property is dead-on accurate, without analysis. If you immediately feel ill-at-ease upon stepping into a house, then no amount of new appliances and hardwood floors can overcome it. However, just because you feel good in the home, you shouldn't romanticize the reality of fixer-uppers. A house that needs new plumbing, a roof repair, or an updated kitchen will require more than positive energy to turn it into a sound investment.

Try to find a balance between your vision for what this home can be and the reality of where it is at present. Moving can be such an exhausting process that most people don't want to have to do major remodeling during their first year's residence. You will want to make some improvements to make the home your very own. This will likely increase its value, as well, so your money will return to you when you decide to sell. Bathrooms and kitchen remodels always add considerable value. However, don't choose a home that **MUST** have improvements made right away unless you walk in with your eyes wide open to this reality.