



Celebrity Realtor Yawar Charlie Never Takes Anything For Granted

The star of CNBC's 'Listing Impossible' shares his path to finding a creative career in real estate—and the importance of taking a step back to listen to the wind in the trees.

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Yawar Charlie has sold hundreds of luxury properties around Los Angeles over the last 12 years—including to celebrities like Randall Park and Orlando Bloom. And with his July 25, 2019 debut on the luxury estate show “Listing Impossible,” he’ll become the first openly LGBTQ+ series regular on CNBC.

ESTATENVY had the pleasure of chatting with Charlie to hear about his journey pursuing a career in both acting and real estate, his philosophy on gratitude and why budding realtors should focus on forging their own individual paths.

On finding a creative career in real estate

“We all have our individual stories of how we ended up in real estate. Usually, people get into it in a unique, unexpected way,” said Charlie. “That was certainly the case for me.”

Charlie’s grandfather, Noor Mohammed, was an early Bollywood film star and physical comedian. Often referred to as “The Charlie Chaplin of India,” he became known as Noor Mohammed Charlie, adopting the surname he later passed down to his own children—and grandchildren—along with his love of performing.

“I think if you ask any creative person or someone in the arts, there’s no real reason why they do it—besides that they have to,” said Yawar Charlie. “It was never a question for me.”

After studying psychology and earning his MFA in Acting, the San Francisco native moved to Los Angeles to realize his dream. However, he quickly found that the “business” side of show business presented systemic barriers that were difficult to break through.

“My one dream wasn’t working out as I had planned. There’s a big difference between being an actor outside of L.A. and being one in L.A.,” Charlie said. “Working onstage is often a colorblind situation, especially if you can act, sing and dance, which I did. But I wasn’t getting work here because there weren’t a lot of opportunities. I decided that I wanted to do something responsible with the money I had made, so I bought a house.”

To make the most out of his investment, Charlie ended up doing a lot of his own research. In fact, he had such a knack for house hunting that he soon began setting up deals for friends and family. “My partner at the time said, ‘Hey, you are really good at this. Have you thought about turning it into a career?’” he recalled. “I decided that I could do this while still pursuing my dream of acting.”

Within a few months, Charlie was the top agent at his first office. Real estate became the primary focus of his career. He had found something that combined his science-based education, charismatic performance skills and ability to genuinely connect with others.

“As a realtor, you play psychologist and therapist. The performance aspect of your personality always has to be on, even if you’re having a bad day,” he mused. “Your responsibility is to be present, focused and ‘there.’ It is so beautiful that, as a creative person, I ultimately found creativity in real estate. There’s something so rewarding in finding the perfect house for someone.”

Over the last 12 years, Charlie has sold several hundred listings in the greater Los Angeles area and has earned numerous [awards](#)—yet one thing that grounds him is the memory of his own homebuying experience. “I remember the excitement I felt when I got my first set of keys like it was yesterday,” he said. “I was so thrilled about it. I remembered how hard I worked to save the money to get that house. I always try to take that enthusiasm with me to each transaction.”

On bridging television and real estate with “Listing Impossible”

With the reality show “[Listing Impossible](#),” which highlights the [Aaron Kirman Partners](#) team’s

readiness to be blatantly honest with even the wealthiest clients, Charlie has the opportunity to play the role of a lifetime—a down-to-earth real estate agent.

“Our show is realistic. You see the ups and downs that happen,” he said. “I started off as an actor, and that went aside, and now I have been able to come full circle and apply the skills of being on camera with the real estate expertise I’ve gained over 12 years. It’s an amazing moment.”

As the first LGBTQ+ series regular on CNBC and an Indian man, Charlie is now personally breaking down the barriers that had stymied his transition from theater to Hollywood decades ago. “Things are very, very different now,” he said. “I’ve been here for 20 years, and even just in the last 10, things have changed dramatically.”

Charlie is certainly no stranger to sharing who he is with the world. He married his partner, Jason Miller, in a mass wedding ceremony on the 2014 Grammy Awards, after all.

“I got married in front of 150 million people,” laughed Charlie. “I don’t want to hide this. I wore a traditional South Asian outfit. And I think it’s amazing—we got emails from countries I didn’t even know existed and where being gay is a crime. People said, ‘To watch you get married gave me hope that someday that’s something I could have.’ That changed my life.”

Charlie looks forward to using his growing platform to spread this message of love and self-acceptance. “If someone can hear my story and get anything out of it—inspiration, the courage to come out, to live your truth, to pursue one of the hardest industries on the planet—I feel like I can represent our community well, so I’m all about doing it,” he said.

On advice for budding real estate agents everywhere

Charlie certainly didn’t choose acting or real estate in pursuit of a path of least resistance. “I joke that I should have been an accountant instead of pursuing two of the hardest careers,” he laughed. Because working in real estate is certainly a crowded and challenging field, Charlie offered some sage advice for those looking to grow their businesses.

“My biggest piece of advice for anyone whose real estate career isn’t at the level they want is to take a big step back,” he said. “You get out of it what you put into it. You are 100% your own boss and your own brand. You need to figure out your niche. What will set you apart and get you established?”

Pursuing an acting career has taught Charlie to follow his own path. “It’s easy to look at someone else’s success and wonder how they got where they are,” he said. “But that fosters negative energy. There are so many variables for how your own success will happen. You can control your behavior, preparation and state of mind. I learned early on not to compare myself to other people.”

Instead, he recommends celebrating others’ successes, big and small. “When I see an agent send a ‘SOLD’ email, I will go out of my way to write back ‘Congratulations!’” he said. “When

they have success, I can have it too. There's enough for everybody. As soon as you can change your state of mind from an envious place to a place of gratitude, abundance is on its way. It takes a huge weight off your shoulders."

And if you're personally in need of a boost, remember that one is always right at your fingertips. "There are wonderful motivational speakers and business coaches that specialize in real estate," Charlie added. "And every single one has a YouTube channel. You can get the inspiration you need without paying hundreds of dollars."

On stopping and smelling the roses

Just like careers, life comes with many ups and downs, and Charlie has learned some of the hardest lessons firsthand.

"When I was around 18 years old, I was in a musical called 'Working.' It is an ensemble piece that weaves stories about people from different industries together," he said. "I had an amazing emotional connection with the cast members."

After the show closed, four of his castmates drove to L.A. together for an audition. Tragically, two of them were killed in an automotive accident. "It was 20 years ago, and I'm still emotional about it," said Charlie. "I'd never experienced loss on that level."

Out of that darkness, he was able to find plenty of light and love. "The one piece of solace I had was that each of them knew how I felt about them. There was nothing left to tell them. That gave me great peace," he said. "Because of that, I never take things for granted. I'm one of those 'stop and smell the roses' people. I'll listen to the wind in the trees, as crazy as that sounds. I'll take time for the simple things, and to appreciate the moment we are in."

While he may not have ever expected his career to take the turns it has up to this point, Yawar Charlie is grateful for the ride. "I got the best of both worlds: A creative outlet and a career that's stable and lucrative," he said. "I found something I could excel at, and at which, if I worked hard and focused, I could really be at the top of my game. I'm fortunate that all of this has happened for me."