

BIOPHILIC DESIGN

00;00;01;02 - 00;00;26;01

Karen Brown

Welcome to Real Life Renos: The Podcast. I'm your host, Karen Brown, and if we're just meeting, I'm an Aging in Place and Accessibility Strategist. Today we're bringing the outdoors in, or at least telling you why you have a basic, visceral need to see outdoor elements from wherever you work or live. Our guest is Linda Kafka. Linda is the principal of the Science and Design Academy, and she leads a team of experts in neuro esthetics, cognitive architecture and Biophilia.

00;00;27;23 - 00;00;46;05

Karen Brown

We are thrilled to welcome back today Linda Kafka, who is going to teach us a little bit about something that I'd be willing to bet not many of us know about. This is all going to be new to me or a lot of it is going to be new to me. So welcome, Linda. And if you could please tell us what Biophilic design actually is.

00;00;47;13 - 00;01;15;16

Linda Kafka

Well, I think we have to look at the term biophilia first. So bio nature and philia, love of. So it's basically that humankind's innate connection or love for nature. And so what we're seeing right now globally is a movement in designers that are really recognizing the importance of biophilia and bringing it into their design practice. And so now we have a whole new category called bio select design.

00;01;17;11 - 00;01;27;14

Karen Brown

That is fascinating. And it just when you mention environment and nature, it just sounds like it's going to be good for us. So can you explain some of the elements for us?

00;01;28;22 - 00;01;46;09

Linda Kafka

You know what? Yes, I absolutely can explain the elements. But I think what we want to we want to understand is this, you know, why? Why are we even looking at biophilia? You know, why is this important? And so before I give you the elements of it and and you can make that connection, I want to talk just real quickly.

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Linda Kafka

If you don't if you're okay with it, just on why this is important. Of course so. So what we're seeing is that, you know, and this is something I actually is not new. Biophilia has been being studied for a long a lot of many decades now. As a matter of fact, I'm going to use two examples. We had one professor, American professor, I believe was American professor in 1984, Professor Roger Oelrich, that was conducting hospital studies and he was looking at patient recovery and views to outside to nature, and not in that particular study.

00;02;22;12 - 00;02;50;27

Linda Kafka

What they were looking at or what they did was they had hospital patients that were in recovery looking at out a window that stared at a brick wall, whereas other patients were in a room looking out a window that had views of nature. And what they were finding was and what their studies concluded or the research concluded

was that those patients that were able to view nature had a shorter recovery time.

00;02;51;03 - 00;03;18;27

Linda Kafka

You know, their mood was improved. Their stress levels were reduced and so on, versus the ones that were looking at a brick wall. And so concluded from that, the whole idea of, you know, if we had views of nature, we had more of a connection to nature, that it would improve our health. Now, at the same time, in 1984, we were seeing coming out of Japan, high level stress in inner cities.

00;03;19;21 - 00;03;49;21

Linda Kafka

We were seeing high depression, unfortunately, suicide increase in suicide. You know, and so the researchers were questioning if we took people to the forests or out into nature, would we see a significant change in their physiologic responses to that to those environments? And so what we know today, as forest bathing was actually conceived in Japan as the title and the name that they gave is Shinrin- yoku.

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Linda Kafka

And it literally means, you know, going into the forest and bathing in not not physically bathing, but taking in, you know, the patterns, the sounds, the smells, all the senses that we, you know, that we have as human beings. And to this day, they still conduct research in the forests there, and you can go and be a part test participant.

00;04;11;03 - 00;04;41;24

Linda Kafka

But what they also found was that that exposure to nature was reducing the stress levels of the occupants. It was improving their mood, you know, with with improved cognition and creativity and so many other things. So the conclusion there again, was that connection to nature really has a positive impact on on us as humans. So that was that was and that and there was many more there was E.O. Wilson and many others that he was a biologist and looking at the humans and the relationship we have with nature.

00;04;41;24 - 00;04;51;10

Linda Kafka

And so those are just two examples of research that, you know, is relevant to the built, you know, to the built environment.

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Karen Brown

It sounds like the practice of grounding comes out of that practice of forest bathing. Is that true?

00;05;02;23 - 00;05;23;14

Linda Kafka

I guess we could say it's true. You know, I think what's most important is this we're all human human beings. And so it doesn't matter if you're talking sanctuary or you're talking, you know, biophilic design or grounding or connecting, you know, all of those things. At the end of the day, it's really about us being human beings and remembering, you know, 40,000 years ago, where did we live?

00;05;23;29 - 00;05;47;03

Linda Kafka

We lived in the forests, in the jungles. We came from the savanna. We came out of out of nature. And, you know, in the last hundred years, what have we done to ourselves? We've really exchanged nature for pavement and pavement and glass. And how do you expect to thrive in an environment that is so unnatural to what our bodies and as as human beings and what's in our DNA really evolved from?

00;05;47;19 - 00;06;00;25

Linda Kafka

And so we're coming kind of coming back. So, yes, to your point, the grounding, you know, people are going to use different words, but at the end of the day, it all more or less relates. It's all relatable.

00;06;00;25 - 00;06;20;13

Karen Brown

Right. And it's so interesting that they're studying this in a health care environment. I know that in Innisfil, which is in Ontario, there's a new hospital planned. I think it's going to be another eight or ten years before they put a shovel in the ground. But the plans definitely include Biophilic design, which was quite interesting for me to see.

00;06;20;14 - 00;06;22;24

Karen Brown

Knowing a little bit about your work in it.

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Linda Kafka

Well, you know, it makes sense because and we do have a wonderful examples in the UK, the Maggie's Center, Cancer Cancer Center, where, you know, everything is biophilic or

designed with the biophilia principles. And we'll talk a little bit about those, you know, in a few moments. But, you know, here you are coming into a hospital highly stressed because you've got either a progressive condition or an urgent need or whatever.

00;06;49;12 - 00;07;12;10

Linda Kafka

And the hospitals themselves obviously have to be sterile and, you know, and for for health reasons. But they also visually appear that way. And the elevate your stress and, you know, and you come into these buildings and you're already your body's already compromised or your mind is compromised and in whatever whatever reason why you're visiting the hospital and so what's happening is, is your stress levels are just going through the roof.

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Linda Kafka

And so that, as we all know, we've heard that phrase, you know, stress kills. And so what we want to do is we want to mitigate or minimize that and finding different ways to do that. And Biophilia certainly is playing a much bigger role in the hospitals and treatment centers like the cancer treatment centers. And you can put a link up to the Maggie's Center in your, you know, in your on your site here.

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Linda Kafka

But just to see how they're designing spaces differently, designing human centered design, dining for the human and really taking us and understanding the human biology. I mean, this was never taught in architecture school. My architect friends didn't learn this about human biology, you know, when they went

through through school and psychology. And it's now becoming more and more important as we look at evidence based design and creating that around.

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Karen Brown

Yeah, because there are many studies that show that people are worse off when they come out of hospital than when they went in. What they went in for may have been treated, but they've been stuck in a room, in a bed. There are no walking programs. The windows are looking out over spaces that are really nothing inspirational. Plus, they're eating food

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Karen Brown

they're not accustomed to it. It all adds up to leaving hospital in worse condition than they came in in very many respects. So this is definitely something that it sounds like is reaching to the forefront and putting people forward a good deal more than they ever were in the past.

00;08;43;08 - 00;09;06;25

Linda Kafka

Yeah, you know, in the past in architecture and design. And remember, I do work, I tend to work more in the residential design sector. But you know, we really looked at form follows function and that's kind of that motto that we all strive towards. That's a given. And I think where we've migrated or moved towards is form follows feeling, how do our environments make us feel?

00;09;06;25 - 00;09;36;16

Linda Kafka

And so when we look at and you know, look what Amazon is doing, look at Google. I mean, they're they're spending Etsy. They're spending, you know, millions of dollars not just in purchase of properties and but building, you know, new new buildings that are going to attract employees and help them thrive within those spaces. You might, if you would, listen to the well building standard presentation we did comfort in mind is one of the concepts of the world building standards and it focuses on, you know, how our environments make us feel.

00;09;36;16 - 00;09;51;21

Linda Kafka

And Biophilia design and elements are certainly playing a big role there. So we look at it in the hospital, we're looking at the at the workplace environments, we're looking at public environments, but we're not looking at it at it in our homes.

00;09;52;10 - 00;09;52;23

Karen Brown

Right.

00;09;52;23 - 00;09;54;01

Linda Kafka

And that's important.

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Karen Brown

So to your point about the well, building standards, listeners who have not heard that podcast can go back. You won't have to go back very far and you can find the podcast that we did with Linda exactly on that topic, and you'll find it fascinating. So let's look a little bit about at residential and how the standards can apply there.

00;10;16;05 - 00;10;39;19

Linda Kafka

Yeah. So what we've got is this, you know, over the years and there's a biophilic hypothesis and there's certainly I mean, you just Google that if you Google the word biophilic design biophilia, you'll come up against fantastic information. There's been a lot of people that have, you know, have moved this movement forward and this information forward. I look right now at Terrapin, bright green.

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Linda Kafka

They happen to be Biophilic consultants. Yes, they work in the commercial sector. And but a lot of what we're seeing out there is easily transferable to residential. And, you know, and so so when we look at it in the residential sector, it doesn't change as human beings. It doesn't matter which whether it's the place you live, the place you work, the place you entertain, the place, your shop, whatever, the place you heal or you have health issues, it doesn't matter.

00;11;08;14 - 00;11;37;08

Linda Kafka

It's all about designing for the humans. So if we look at added Biophilia and the practice itself has six principles and then 15 patterns, and I focus more on the patterns right now as opposed to the principles. But we've got three categories that those 15 principles, or I should say patterns fall under. So what we look at as we look at the nature of the space and literally that that's what it's about, what is the nature of the space?

00;11;37;08 - 00;11;59;03

Linda Kafka

What are you using the space for? And then we look at nature in the space. And so those would be elements from nature that we would be putting into the space. And I'll go through some of the principles to give you an idea. We also look at natural analogs. So those are like natural similarities or equivalents. And so let me give you an example because it will make more sense when I go through them.

00;11;59;19 - 00;12;28;08

Linda Kafka

So if we were looking at Biophilia and the nature in the space, you're looking at things like, for instance, a visual connection to nature, views and elements, being able to see out those windows. Now think of somebody, for instance, that's in a wheelchair living in it doesn't matter if it's a retirement home or their own home and it's an older home and the windowsills are higher up, what are they getting views of?

00;12;28;08 - 00;12;49;16

Linda Kafka

They're going to get views of maybe treetops if they're lucky enough or mostly sky, but they're not actually really getting to see all of nature out there, like the ground, the streets, you know, the flower beds and so on. And so the windows and windows, proportionality and size is really important. You also under nature in space, you're also looking at a lot of a non visual connection to nature.

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Linda Kafka

So those could be auditory, could be all factory, you know, could be really what we're doing is we're tapping into our five senses

so, you know, our touch or smell or hearing or taste and so on. And so that's that's what we're looking at within that space. You also have non rhythmic type of stimuli in that you're looking at the thermal and the air flow.

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Linda Kafka

Again, part of the well building standards. As we look at, you know, our comfort levels, you're looking at the presence of water within that space. You might also be you definitely looking at the lighting, the diffused lighting or the natural lighting, the dynamic lighting that we have. And then you're also looking at a connection with natural systems. So that's more of those, you know, characteristics that are kind of healthy ecosystems and things like that.

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Linda Kafka

Now, remember, those are just, I think the first seven of the 15 that fall under that category of nature in space. But I think what's important is that you don't have to put all of them in there. You're going to pick and choose what's going to work best for you. Now, when you look at the other ones like nature of Space, we look at prospect, prospect and refuge.

00;14;01;11 - 00;14;26;05

Linda Kafka

I like to combine together and use an example. So for your listeners or your viewers, think back when we lived, you know, 40,000 years ago, where did we live? We lived in a cave. Our cave is our refuge, right our door, our opening to the cave didn't have closed doors on it. We were looking out on to, you know,

vast grasslands or mountainous areas or hill areas or jungle areas or whatever.

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Linda Kafka

And so you were seeing the prospect or the opportunity of whether it was positive or negative, whether it was a prospect of a threat coming towards you or something that was more positive. And so fast forward to today. What is a prospect of refuge look like? It could look like a window where you've got a table or a nook seating area.

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Linda Kafka

You like to sit there, maybe drink your coffee and look out onto the street or out onto your backyard. It might be if you're fortunate enough to have a nice soaker tub, it might be a soaker tub where you've got a window that you can kind of see out. Maybe it's into your backyard, onto a private area. So we've kind of reformed or reshaped it prospect and refuge, what it means to us today.

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Linda Kafka

But we're still it still resonates with the with with our ancestral DNA from 40,000 years ago. So those are you know, that's one one example or is is most recent pattern. So an example would be the way you would feel if you saw a beautiful sunset or a sunrise and you can mimic that same feeling within your spaces.

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Linda Kafka

So could be, you know, like it might be artwork within your space, it might be the colors you've chosen within that space. It might be the whole environment that was created in that space, but that feeling of air is really positive. And so what we're trying to do here is create environments that are going to basically what the Biophilia does is, like I said earlier, it's going to reduce your stress, it's going to increase your your happy hormones, your your dopamine, your serotonin, your oxytocin.

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Linda Kafka

It's going to, you know, try to mitigate any of those stress stressors that we have in our life. It's really going to support health and wellbeing and expedite potentially, you know, your healing. If you are if you are not. Well. And that can include not just your physical, but it also includes your mental. It increases creativity. You know, there's so many your mood, everything.

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Linda Kafka

And so there's so many positive effects that come out of bringing elements into our spaces. But I just want your viewers and listeners to know it's not about bringing a green plant into your space.

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Karen Brown

That was an important thing. That's an important piece for people to know. And I couldn't help but think of condos, you know, high rise condos where they have rules and regulations about what can be on balconies. And many of them discourage growing a lot of plants. I mean, you can have a little some kind of little

flowering thing in the summertime, but they don't want you growing food, for instance.

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Karen Brown

And that would be just such a that would be an aww for me, being able to, you know, have a tomato plant or something.

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Linda Kafka

It's it's we're going to see the outcomes. I mean, I'm in Toronto and we have, I think, about over 200 cranes in the air right now building mostly building condos. We have more cranes in the air than all of the U.S. cities put together. Our city, Toronto, is is growing rapidly. We have a housing crisis in Canada as we all talk about through aging in place and promote aging in place.

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Linda Kafka

Because of that, you know, we we really have a problem as more and more of these condos are being built. I think my son's original condo that he first moved into was probably 600 square feet. And, you know, and so to your point, those rules and regulations are set there for safety reasons, maintenance reasons. They don't want to have, you know, people carrying soil up and down.

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Linda Kafka

And then how do you dispose of it? Because let's face it, if you're dealing with any kind of natural elements like greenery and growing things, there's going to be, you know, maintenance that needs to be taken care of. So those rules are put into place for

those reasons. But you're right. Like, it really takes away from us being human and in those places.

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Linda Kafka

And, you know, what are the outcomes of living in a 600 square foot or 900 square foot concrete box, ultimately with very limited views of nature? And as a matter of fact, when you live in a condo and you're looking at and this another research study, which is quite interesting when you're looking at parallel lines, it actually, you know, has has a physiological effect on us that actually causes headaches and stress and increases stress.

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Linda Kafka

So just think of that. You're in a condo, you're living on the 25th floor. And what are you looking at in a city like Toronto? You're looking at a lot of, you know, upright, oblong, concrete glass buildings that have a lot of parallel lines in nature. It's rare to find right angles or straight lines. You do find them, but they are rare and they can they do they do tend to cancel themselves out nature and the patterns of nature or cancel out those parallel lines so we don't have the same effect on our body.

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Linda Kafka

And I think architects and neuroscientists and researchers are really looking at human biology now and how our environments can really support, know not just to help us stay healthy, but help us when we have to recover from any health conditions.

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Karen Brown

Right. So as we age and where we become more interested in putting up bird feeders and maybe returning to gardening for our food a little bit more, we're actually following some pretty strong DNA patterns that are wanting us to do this.

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Linda Kafka

Yeah, absolutely. And you know, and speaking of patterns, you know, look at look to nature, at the patterns. You know, we look at what we call fractal patterning fractals. We all, you know, as humans, we we seek those patterns out. They come for us. They make us happy. You know, there's a certain balance of them that we want within our within our built environments.

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Linda Kafka

We don't want to be over inundated with it, with too much patterns. We need that organized complexity within our spaces. And so if you're in environments that have too much in it that can cause stress, what's the right balance? And so we looked at professors like Dr. Richard Taylor out of the University of Oregon. He specializes in fractal patterning and most recently, one of our well-known carpet manufacturers.

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Linda Kafka

They primarily do commercial, and I believe they do do some residential, but they just created a new type of rest. I want to call it rest and relax carpet with the perfect amount of fractal patterning. So fractals, for those of you that are that are not familiar, they would be repetitive patterns like a fern leaf where you've got, you know, a repetitive pattern that might decrease or increase in size.

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Linda Kafka

We also have natural organic fractal patterning, like the flames of a of a fire, the waves on a beach. These are all things that captivate us. And, you know, think think of yourself, you know, what's your favorite? If I was to say to you, where is your favorite place in the world, how would you answer.

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Karen Brown

Mine is Positano, where, it's in Italy, where I can look out over water and and actually an organized pattern of housing as it goes up and down the mountain.

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Linda Kafka

Yeah. Yeah. And so most people will reference like, you know, oh, my favorite place is going to the beach or on the lake at the cottage or you know, I happen to be a forest person, so put me in a forest and I'm like, wow. I mean, I won't say no to a beach vacation, but my happy happiest place is in the forests.

00;21;52;13 - 00;22;04;26

Linda Kafka

And looking at the textures and the smells, sounds like they're just so much. You just. It just engulfs you. I'm looking forward to going to Japan to do a forest bathing experience.

00;22;04;26 - 00;22;17;12

Karen Brown

That will be exciting. Yeah, I'm one of those people who likes to be by water, but not necessarily on water. But by water is very soothing. It must be for you too.

00;22;17;22 - 00;22;39;21

Linda Kafka

Yeah, it is, very much. And that's one of the elements, the presence of water, having that experience and you know, and so it's not just seeing it, it's hearing it, it's touching it, it's smelling it, too, because water, especially natural streams and you know, they really give off that earthy kind of smell with the with and the fresh smell to it.

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Linda Kafka

So it's got that combination of of of sense that you're picking up. We can mimic this in our homes, having water fountains, small water fountains, just being able to you can mimic it digitally, too. You don't it doesn't have to be the real deal. And so this is what we call bio-inspirational, not to be mixed with biomorphic. Biomorphic is really when we talk about, let's use the example, taking ideas from nature and solving human problems.

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Linda Kafka

So the most well known bio. I'm sorry, I shouldn't say biomorphic. I made a mistake there. It was biomimicry. That's what I meant to say. It should not be mixed with biomimicry. Biomimicry is taking information from solutions, from nature to solve human problems. So the most famous one would be Velcro. So biomimicry. So this is where mimicking something from nature.

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Linda Kafka

So you look at those birds that would stick to your clothes when you're walking through, you know, fields that the little hooks on those they mimic those in Velcro. And so now we have that same effect using Velcro. So that's biomimicry. Biomorphing or bio-inspirational is taking shapes from nature or taking, you know, maybe it's wallpaper with leaves on it or photographs of the ocean.

00;23;59;11 - 00;24;19;24

Linda Kafka

And so what we're doing is we're inspiring us with images from nature and we're putting them within our spaces. And so so those what we're seeing is, like I said, you don't always have to or you can't always put the elements of nature in your space, but you can find things that will inspire you. So think of like the roundness of our bodies, right?

00;24;19;24 - 00;24;42;22

Linda Kafka

We're all kind of know that rounded so we can see that in furniture. We might see that in decor pieces, we might see that in accessory pieces within our space. What we want to do is we want to minimize those right angles, those sharp edges, and balance it out with, you know, bio inspirational biomorphic shapes that are a gentler and kinder to us.

00;24;44;05 - 00;25;02;24

Karen Brown

So I'm thinking in my mind of people moving into a home or wanting to redecorate a home, whether it's a high rise condo or just a regular house. And you're actually speaking to a lot of the

elements that most of us can do in order to make our homes and environments far more relaxing.

00;25;02;24 - 00;25;35;18

Linda Kafka

Mm hmm. Absolutely. And, you know, and sometimes and so what we're seeing out there also is the colors of your spaces. Now, think of nature. I mean, there's hundreds and thousands and thousands of of I want to say probably colors in nature. It's not just limited to our paint palettes that we see at the at the paint store, but a lot of people right now are assume that, you know, putting blue into our spaces or having more green paint in our spaces or brown in our spaces is mimicking nature.

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Linda Kafka

But really, again, when it comes to paint, it's going to be very personal. It's going to also relate to your experiences with those colors. If you've had a bad experience in your life and and and green is a reminder of that, you might not want to put green into your space. So when it comes to paint within your spaces, I want you to think that there's not one palette that's going to say, this is a biophilic pattern.

00;26;02;03 - 00;26;17;23

Linda Kafka

You're going to get companies, paint companies that are going to promote these might be better or might lend themselves better to a biophilic design. But I don't want you to think that if you happen to love the color fuchsia, that you couldn't use that on a feature wall or inside a closet, or maybe in a in another area.

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Linda Kafka

Because think of the flowers in nature, right? So whatever excites you and really it's quite personal, but you're going to see a lot more coming out and a lot more marketing and coming out there and kind of trying to sway your consumer behavior to certain brands by promoting biophilic design or elements of biophilia. But I think what's important is it's that understanding.

00;26;41;03 - 00;26;49;10

Linda Kafka

We came from nature, we're connected to nature, and we want to have more of that natural elements around our environments and whatever that looks like for you.

00;26;50;04 - 00;26;53;14

Karen Brown

Right. That's an important point. Whatever it looks like for you.

00;26;55;06 - 00;27;19;17

Linda Kafka

Yeah. Part of that too is texture. I mean, think of nature, you know, just the grass itself. Moss, you know, Moss was here long before grass. The textures of bark, the wood grain research has already identified that just viewing woodgrain, whether it's real or bio inspirational fake in laminates will reduce your blood pressure by five beats per minute.

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Linda Kafka

So adding those elements in there into your space can certainly contribute to a more relaxing environment. And that's what we want to achieve. We want people to be in that parasympathetic, you know, you know, feeling where it's kind of rest and digest as

opposed to your sympathetic, which is your fight, flight, freeze. I got to get out of here.

00;27;39;26 - 00;27;40;14

Linda Kafka
Environment.

00;27;41;07 - 00;27;57;17

Karen Brown
So it took me a long time to realize how important texture was to me. But now I have recognized it and I really make great efforts to make sure that there's texture that the room isn't overloaded with texture, but that there is texture.

00;27;58;01 - 00;28;24;18

Linda Kafka
Well, we need the tactile, we need it, we feel it. And so, you know, I go to I know you know this. I go to the furniture market in High Point, North Carolina, twice a year, October and April. And when you observe the interior designers and the retailers that go there to buy furniture or discover new trends and new furniture, you're never short of watching people touch the fabrics, touch the grains of the table.

00;28;24;26 - 00;28;46;04

Linda Kafka
You know, they're touching. They're constantly touching. And so, you know, there's that wonderful, beautiful feeling of just touching texture that just resonates with you really. Well, I mean, of course, there's going to be textures out there that are not like, I don't need a splinter in my hand by, you know, but but there are a lot of a lot of beautiful textures and we are drawn to that.

00;28;46;17 - 00;28;58;14

Linda Kafka

And, you know, and so I think that's really important. Part of fun of of biophilic design is is looking at all the senses and and including them in your space in one way or another.

00;28;59;02 - 00;29;17;12

Karen Brown

It brings to mind watching people in stores shopping. If they're shopping for clothes, how often do people go through the racks and they're touching something until they find something that feels right and it's maybe the right color, too. But those two elements go together before they'll consider taking a hard look at an item.

00;29;18;00 - 00;29;37;01

Linda Kafka

Yeah, yeah, you're right. You know, we're human. And so and, you know, we don't want to like we want to engage all of our senses. And, you know, in sometimes certain senses are going to be engaged more than others. And so it's really important when you when you are creating that space and adding the biophilia in there and oh

00;29;37;01 - 00;30;05;15

Linda Kafka

by the way, all of this is really for free on the Internet. You can just Google Biophilic design what are the principles and look at your own space, but you want to be able to add elements into that space. And so I'm not opposed to modern modernism or modern design that's actually I want to say for great part of my life, very much my favorite design, but I have certainly moved away from it, recognizing that I need more in my space.

00;30;05;15 - 00;30;26;24

Linda Kafka

And by the way, my office is not a reflection of biophilic design. It is what it is. It's a working space that I need to spend some time and make it and make it prettier. But, you know, work comes first. But but the rest of the house is. And so, you know, you want to look at, you know, how can I incorporate these elements into my space?

00;30;26;28 - 00;30;55;12

Linda Kafka

Like things like modes of mystery, you know, another I can't remember which one it is. You know, I think it's some 13th principle of biophilic design. But but the point I'm going with here is, is that I'll give you an example. Motive, mystery would be like walking down that path in the forest and the path starts to curve and wondering or the river starts to curve and you're wondering, ooh, I wonder what's down there like that as human beings, we, you know, we seek that.

00;30;56;04 - 00;31;19;20

Linda Kafka

And so you can create that in your own home. Most homes probably already have that where you've got a long corridor or you got a hallway that leads off to bedrooms, you know, at the end of that hallway or something. But it's that mode of mystery. And so you may want to have artwork or something really interesting and intriguing at the end of that hallway that's going to kind of pull you down and make you think about who what what's that?

00;31;19;28 - 00;31;30;26

Linda Kafka

You know, what's down there. And so those are elements. And I think like that the 15 elements are really or I should say patterns, they're easily achievable by anybody, really.

00;31;31;21 - 00;31;36;29

Karen Brown

I love the expression modes of mystery. It just sounds so intriguing.

00;31;36;29 - 00;31;37;23

Linda Kafka

But I think as human

00;31;37;23 - 00;32;05;02

Linda Kafka

beings we are we're curious. We're social beings. We're curious beings. You know, there is mystery out there and it's so alluring. You know, I think the mystery or the feeling I get, you know, early morning when when it's, you know, just the sun is coming up and you see, you know, the mist out there along the, you know, on the on the ground and the feeling that it gives you, it's kind of mysterious feeling.

00;32;05;14 - 00;32;38;14

Linda Kafka

And so we like we like these elements. We're human beings. And like you said, you might not like all of them. You might not need them all in your space. But we are seeing a rise in in need. And more and more designers are becoming biophilic certified or biophilic design certified. And even at the Science and Design Academy, my company, we have modules on Biophilia and

helping the designers understand what it is and why it's important and how to incorporate it into a space.

00;32;40;04 - 00;33;07;11

Karen Brown

It's also fascinating, you know, and I'm thinking about, oh, my mind is going in so many places listening to you speak. But I think of aging seniors who are perhaps by themselves. And I also thought of my sister-in-law who always said we eat with our eyes first and how important it is then to get a mix of colors and textures on the plate that are pleasing so that you will be encouraged to eat.

00;33;08;08 - 00;33;13;17

Karen Brown

All of those so many things in our lives are just popping up in my brain as you're speaking.

00;33;14;06 - 00;33;43;16

Linda Kafka

Well, think about that. That's a really good example. If we have a if we have as a human reaction towards just like you described and you're talking just something as simple as well as complicated as eating and having those things on your plate, why would that be different than our built in environment? You know, why would you know what what you just described, references, you know, the foods that we eat and creating that excitement and that on that mystery that's on our plate, you know, what is this?

00;33;43;16 - 00;34;04;07

Linda Kafka

And the textures and the feeling and and the senses. And we should be able to deliver that same, you know, excitement or feeling into our spaces and create environments that are going to do that same thing for us. There's no reason why. We just haven't thought thought about it. We haven't really focused on bringing nature into our spaces.

00;34;04;07 - 00;34;34;18

Linda Kafka

It's really about the outside in. It's a good term outside in. So, you know, the textures that that we find in nature, the colors we find in nature, the smells, the the the feeling that it brings, there's no reason why we can't bring that in and really open up. Look at we saw huge rise. And when I ran the design center in Toronto back in them, I think it was back in 2012, we were really talking about the kitchen, the kitchen going outdoors.

00;34;34;27 - 00;34;44;29

Linda Kafka

You know, there was no more wall between the kitchen and the outdoor patio.

00;34;44;29 - 00;35;09;05

Karen Brown

That's a wonderful idea. And we see that in so many countries where they don't have the seasons that we have here in the Northeast, really, where their kitchens are outdoors or they'll have a separate kitchen outdoors for taking on certain tasks like canning tomatoes or whatever they're doing. I see that a lot in European countries in the in the South.

00;35;09;26 - 00;35;35;20

Linda Kafka

You know, eating outside, having that harvest table, that family meal outside together. You know, what we're seeing also in the backyard is we're seeing the backyards. If you're fortunate enough to have a backyard in a big city, what we're seeing is, is the backyard broken down into zones. So you've got those zones where there's more family activity and gathering, but now you've got zones that might be more a getaway, a peaceful, a kind of Zen moment in your backyard.

00;35;35;20 - 00;35;58;19

Linda Kafka

And so, you know, areas in your space, whether it's inside or outside, that really are a support your health and well-being and help you to thrive and just, you know, you know, increase your or create a more positive mood and so on. We have enough to deal with whether, you know, whether it's our own stresses that we create.

00;35;58;19 - 00;36;20;28

Linda Kafka

It's work related stresses, health related stresses, you know, economy, political, all those things that we've we're bombarded with. And so we need that place to escape to. And so how does your home become more of a sanctuary and how can you look to nature and biophilic design to bring more peace to your life and that that could be in any environment that you work in.

00;36;21;15 - 00;36;22;00

Linda Kafka

So.

00;36;22;26 - 00;36;45;18

Karen Brown

Right. Well, Linda, I think you have given our listeners so much information to explain why are they're doing the things that they're doing or also, on the other hand, how to bring more pieces into their own environment to increase their health and well-being that they didn't even think of. Are there any last words you want to leave our audience with?

00;36;46;09 - 00;37;10;05

Linda Kafka

Yeah. You know, as always, it's really personal. It's about yourself and what you feel comfortable with. Like I said, you know, it's bio inspirational. Might be the direction that you go. You know, you might, especially if you're a senior and aging, you might not be able to maneuver around and water all your plants. And so there's nothing wrong with having artificial plants within your space if that's going to make you feel good.

00;37;10;15 - 00;37;37;18

Linda Kafka

And I think that at the end of the day, it can't be ignored. We really need to look to nature to to really bring those elements into our spaces, to really create environments that really do support us as human beings and and human centered environments that are going to allow us to thrive and to just, you know, really help us from a mental and physical perspective.

00;37;37;18 - 00;37;56;18

Linda Kafka

So I think that it's biophilic design is here to stay. It's not going away. Everybody's going to pick up at it at their own pace. And I just your listeners and your viewers to pay a little bit more attention to it because there's such an uptake on this is such an

opportunity to really look at your spaces and to see how you can improve them.

00;37;56;18 - 00;38;05;28

Linda Kafka

And ultimately, that's what we talk about here on real life rentals is how we proofing our lives. What are the the renovations that we're doing to really make a difference in our life?

00;38;06;17 - 00;38;29;00

Karen Brown

That's right. And renovations don't always mean picking up a hammer and and hammering nails. It's all the stuff. Yeah, right. Well, thank you so very much for joining us again for our our listeners, this is the third podcast that we've done with Linda. They are all equally fascinating and. I will post links in our show notes for some of the things that Linda has talked about.

00;38;29;19 - 00;38;31;25

Karen Brown

Thank you so much, Linda. I appreciate it.

00;38;32;15 - 00;38;33;27

Linda Kafka

I look forward to coming back.

00;38;33;27 - 00;38;58;01

Karen Brown

Oh, for sure. Any time. Well, thank you very much to those who have joined us today, and I look forward to seeing you again on the next episode of Real Life Renos: The Podcast.