Introduction to Healthy Architecture

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When you guys were living on the boathouse and the kids were getting sick, what is a safe home to you when it comes to your kids? Yeah, I mean it started baby steps.

Today we have Kelly Race! Alright! Today we have Kelly Grace, a licensed architect, redefining how buildings impact your health through non-toxic materials and high-performance design.

I just bought a new oven. I wanted to use the air fry option. i cannot use it without hooking the wi-fi. Well this is the dumbest thing. Is there some way to kind of protect it and block some of those things and put certain things that absorb that that emf from those devices?

I think you have to pick the only water test you to do on your house is to fill your bathtub and let it hold water for 24 hours. That's it. And what does that do?

You just make sure your bathtub doesn't leak. I keep joking about this, but I'm serious. The MAHA movement. Make American housing healthy again. There's several things.

Welcome to another episode of a Healthy Point of View podcast. I'm your host, Sam Tahata. And as usual, we're bringing experts from all over the world to talk about health, wellness, beauty, and mindset.

Today's guest, she comes all the way from Washington, DC. This is an interesting one. We're gonna be talking about how you live, where you lives, what your actual house or building is made out of.

I don't make sure where you're living is the healthiest environment. And I'm not just talking about the material. Yes, that's one thing, but we're talking everything else, the way things are laid out, air quality.

We're interviewing an architect that specializes in today's modern living.

Kelly Raceu2019s Background and Path to Architecture

How to live the Healthiest Way Possible. Today we have Kelly Race. All right. Welcome. Kelly Grace. Hi, thank you for having me. You know, I froze up a little bit because we were talking about the maiden name and stuff and how you kind of cut that off and made it a bit simple.

So, Kelly, it is a pleasure to have you on the podcast. Thank you. I've been waiting for this one. We've talking for months about this. And, you know I have a, little spot in my heart for architects because both my parents are architects, my mom and my father.

So I grew up watching them, I mean, from a young age where they had all the different markers and the pencils and all school way that architects would actually create the blueprints to all, the way from that point in time to them actually utilizing the computer and using AutoCAD.

And I remember me being a teen and them trying to teach me how to use it, try to get me into that architect world. Yeah. Which I have a lot of family members.

My uncle that brought us here to the United States, he also was an architect. And they all did a lot of commercial real estate. I mean, my father designed Miller Park.

He was one of the architects on Miller park stadium, the IMAX dome theater, a lotta different, I've been in big buildings, all kinds of stuff. I loved what he did.

Him as a business owner, my uncle as business owners, he would design a lot of the universities in Wisconsin. They would actually take me to different areas in the Wisconsin, like La Crosse, where Frank Lloyd Wright had a different designs that he had there.

One of his beautiful Greek church, the Orthodox Greek Church in Milwaukee, Wisconsin was there, that was Frank Lord Wright. So I got a little spot in my heart for architects, you know, I do appreciate what you guys do.

And that's really what motivated me to become a business owner is actually as a kid shadowing my dad and going on, some of his business meetings with him.

But before we get into everything you're doing as an architect, I want the listeners and viewers to really get to know who you are as a person and for us to go way back to your upbringing so people understand how you were raised and how the heck did you become this architect focused on health?

Yeah. Well, thank you. This is great. Yeah, I'm from Washington, not from, Washington DC. I live in Washington D. C., but I am from Wilmington, Delaware, so not that far.

And I grew up a pretty normal life, you know. My dad was a shoe salesman most of my life but then turned painter. And my mom was a paralegal at a law firm.

Went to a public school my whole life. And then when I went to college, I want to Catholic University in D. C., which is I was able to play field hockey there, which was great.

I played four years there. Became the captain of the team, have some of my best girlfriends around the And then just love the city, and I didn't want to leave.

But even more than that, one of my teachers at Catholic, his name is Travis Price, who I work for now. He was just the biggest mentor of mine. I mean, he had the coolest class.

It was an around the world architecture course. and we would spend the semester diving deep into the cultures of places around the world. So we'd do some in Italy, in Ireland, Machu Picchu.

We were in Ethiopia, we were Vancouver, it was all over. But the whole point of it, was to dive deep in the culture and to create a sculpture in a landscape, a piece of art that told their story.

He's deep the National Geographic and he's got a really, a cool group of friends that travel the world and get to see all these cultures that are really dying off.

And so I just fell in love with everything about storytelling and architecture. Because if you, I mean, you probably know this from your parents, try coming up with a building design when you have a blank piece of land.

It's not easy, you get out there. What are the driving factors and forces that are gonna make you create something unique and cool and sculptural and beautiful?

And so I drank the Kool-Aid, I was all in. And I did many abroad programs and courses with Travis and then after graduating, came back and was teaching the course with him at Catholic.

But I graduated with my master's in the 2008 recession, so architecture was not hiring. Travis was no hiring, I was hoping to work for him as soon as I got out.

And it actually worked out for the best. He couldn't hire me, but I've got a job on Capitol Hill as a kitchen and bath designer at a construction company.

But it was a small construction. So I, was wearing many hats. And I turned into a project manager, I'm running job sites, and I went fresh out of college.

But it was so good for the length of my career to have started in construction and really see boots on the ground, in the dirt, how things are made. Because most architects don't get that.

You know, you just go right to paper, right your computer, And you always get time in a field. So I would work at the construction company from six to three, and I forced my way in the door.

Travis is like, I'm coming. 330. I'll be there. And I work from 3 30 to 7 30 for free just to get my leg in. The door because I need to be in, the know I don't want to miss anything.

Also, to become an architect, you have to Get a certain amount of credits that you Have to clock in and be able to take your test, your exams to Become licensed.

So that was my way of like getting some hours in outside of work that I could start to work towards licensure. So, that's where it started and then I became, I worked for him in 2011 and I've been there since.

And I'm now the managing principal of the firm. And we do really cool stuff, modern architecture all over the world. Mostly homes though is our bread and butter residential.

And now I've got three beautiful babies, seven, five and two, and maybe have more. But that's where my health journey in homes really ratcheted up. So I've been down the health trail for a while.

I have been gluten free for probably 15 years and very healthy in my food choices and having been a college athlete. You know, I had a lot of steps already like checking the Health Boxes.

But it wasn't until having kids where you really start to like do a deeper dive. My son And my daughter both had some health issues. We lived on a boat in Washington when they were born and it was awesome.

And we looked right at the Washington Monument, beautiful real estate. It was just, it, was lovely. But that boat I came to find out was full of mold.

Oh, wow. And that is really where everything turned for like, how do I fix my kids? How do help my kid? And it just like every onion, it starts to unravel and you go down these trails, these rabbit holes.

Mold, Safe Homes, and Indoor Air Quality

And, that's what's really just opened up this whole world of healthy architecture. Well, what a story. You know, and right now it's like the perfect timing because people are so aware of, you know when it comes to health and wellness, people have been very proactive about that.

Now, have you seen a lot of architects that are actually taking this route into building healthy living? So, you know, there's a a checklist, I call them checklist architects.

There's lot a big commercial companies that do big, commercial buildings where they are like required to do checklists of like different You could call them healthy, they're more environmental.

Where are you getting your materials from? Get them within a 500-mile radius of your home. Are there VOCs in that carpet? They're kind of edging into it a little bit, but it's barely scratching the surface.

And they are not required. So some people are doing it. But as far as homes, I'm finding out that we're one of the few. Wow. kind of thankfully in a way, but also like, come on guys, get with the times.

There's a long way to go in the international building code. I was just with them this morning and that's my big

cheerleading effort right now is changing code because code, we sign off as architects to protect the health, safety, and public of the people, the welfare of people.

Make sure your building doesn't fall down, make sure you're healthy and you've got clear passageways and all these things, taps into health in the way that I'm talking about.

I mean, not at all, you know, so the code needs to catch up. And I think it's going to take people like me and other cheerleaders that are rallying to really push them.

That's gonna take some doing. Absolutely. Are you seeing that people, because you're talking building a lot of these healthy homes, are you seen people that already have homes are renovating the homes as well, too, where it started from scratch?

Totally. Yeah. I mean, there's a big, what I would consider an epidemic in America right now where the majority of American homes are built with wood.

And you go to Europe and it's lot of concrete. It's lots of masonry and steel. But America, we love wood and mold loves wood, and there was this stat that I heard that 70% of homes have mold in some capacity, which is wild.

And then when you think about 90% people spend their time in their homes, especially with the pandemic, more people were staying indoors. But I think it's actually still true.

You spent a lot of time either in your house or in office. So you're in your car, and then you may be in the sun for a little bit, the outside, then your back in a building.

So where you spend your time is getting, it's really important. Especially if our buildings are full of mold, I mean, a lot of it is invisible too. People don't see the black on the ceiling, or they might notice their caulk joint in their shower, they're like, oh I don' really think.

you know, that's probably fine, I'll just bleach it. And I think a lot of health issues that people have, they don't realize are actually mold. There's like a slew of things that can be attributed from mold, biotoxins.

We find patients all the time with mold toxicity. And that's not an overnight fix. Number one, you gotta get rid of the mold, if not you're gonna continue to get the exposure, right?

And then number two, detoxifying the body, the lungs and everything else, it's a process. So taking that proactive approach is definitely important. Now, to go back to one of the things that you mentioned about when you guys were living on the boathouse, right?

And the kids were getting sick. So how did that redefine how you look at having a safe home, what is a Safe Home to you when it comes to your kids? Yeah, I mean, it started baby steps, right?

You know, when you have kids, you start with like everything that gets, that's on their bodies. So obviously their clothes and their lotions, their diapers, they're ointments.

You, know I was super conscientious of that from the get, we were bringing in formula from Europe. You know, we were being very conscious about all of the things we put on their bodies from a clothing perspective, and then you take that to the next step of bedding.

What's their bed content? Is it an organic mattress? is it made of wool? or is a piece of polyester foam that the majority of beds are today? You cut your bed open, this thing explodes, Wham, these VOCs are knocking you out and you spend 30% of your life on that thing.

Right. In bed. So it's those babies stepping into all of the things that they're on. And once you get past the bed and the food and all that, then you start to look into indoor air quality and do I need an air filter here?

Do I a filtration system? I mean, in the boat, there's not much we could have done other than rip out everything. But Yeah, there's lots of little ad hoc things you can do to an existing house which I can touch on but right now my big goal is not necessarily always designing new but really making the building from scratch but also renovating it in a way that we can actually make a real lasting impact.

Absolutely, I don't love having air filter machines in every room. Yeah, you know, it's just it seems ad hoc, right? Can the building do it and not have all these systems all around us?

Yeah I'm sure we'll get into this later, too But there's a whole layer of EMFs and other things when you're in your bedroom that I'll go So now You're talking about air quality, right?

So the severity of indoor air, like, you know, release this building where the podcast studio's at. So, I wanna have good air qualities, so I have the air filter there, but in all reality, for my home, not want that in every single room.

I would want it to be, So what are some of the things that we're talkin' about when it comes to air-quality with the expertise that you have? I mean, a lot of, so HVAC, heating, ventilating, air conditioning is your ductwork equipment, right, that heats and cools your home.

So many times is it full of mold and people don't realize. People don' realize that they have to get their duct work cleaned on an annual basis. Dust collects in ductwork.

It's sucking it in, right? And when dust is collecting in your duct work, which sometimes, most duct is made of galvanized metal, you wouldn't think dust could stick to it.

But when the duct works starts to condensate at all and it gets a little water or a just oils from the home, there's things that get sucked through your system where then dust will collect.

Mold loves organic materials. And mold loves dust. So you think about deep into your duct work, you begin to have mold growth that you'll never see. And even some of the cleaning companies are not that great.

So like you really have to do your due diligence, get a camera, put it in there. I don't know if you've heard the story about Jordan Peterson lately. He went completely under from SIRS, which is a mold, a very, very severe mold illness.

Michaela Peterson who I love both of them I follow them deeply and she has been sick for years like since she was young debilitatingly sick and I think for eight years she Was on the lion diet.

She only ate meat and it helped her mold symptoms But it wasn't until just recently that she found out she had sirs also because there's actually a genome that it's I guess HLA is the I'm not a doctor here, so I wanna spitball this a little bit, but we all have the HLA gene, I think there's 25% of people in the world that are very susceptible to mold illness.

So 25%, it's not small number. One in four, two billion, that's a lot of the people. I start with duck work. Getting a good set of lungs, it the lungs for your house.

And so most duct work is just recirculating your air in your house. But there are systems now, thankfully, it's called an ERV system. You can actually add to your existing system, and you're now drawing outside air.

And like, duh, why wouldn't we want outside fresh air coming in through our system? Or just re-circulate in the old stuff? It seems so natural to think like it means like opening a window.

Some of the biggest problems today, I think, are a lot of energy influencers in the building world are pushing for airtight homes. What does that mean?

Airtight really means, it means what it sounds like. No air to escape through your walls. So imagine back in the day,

you put up what used to be like little wood sheathing boards, insulation maybe, maybe a vapor barrier, probably not, and then gypsum board.

Your home was very leaky forever. That's always how it's been. And that's how what actually kept the home safe. Wood can get wet, but it has to dry. If it dries, no problem, not mold.

It's just staying wet and moist and damp. That's the problem. So you need to design the building to to try. But when you make a home airtight in like a retrofit or renovation and it hasn't been designed that way from the get, you have to be super careful because no matter now, whatever you bring into your house, your breathing, Your house is no longer leaking out that air.

You know Chinese polyester couch or whatever it is. It's off-gassing for a long time, right? You're you know, just the fast fashion of clothes is kind of the same in architecture and then building products fast cheap couches cheap furniture cheap fabrics They are usually not made of natural materials and they will off gas for a long time.

So I'm saying all this because the lungs of your home are even more important, right? Your HVAC, you really want to upgrade to that ERV, add it on and get the outdoor air circulating through your house.

Because I do think airtight design is where we are going in the future. You know, we only breathe through our mouth. We don't breathe our skin. It's the same philosophy in a house.

So let me ask you this. Obviously, I'm in Florida. There's not that many wood frame construction homes here. Yeah, it's a lot of concrete homes, especially because of the hurricanes and everything else.

Um, that system that you're talking about, you know, first thing that comes to my head, it's like fresh air in the middle of summer coming into your home.

It seems like it is going to get very hot and humid inside of my house. So it has a humidifier. You have to do a whole new humidifiers with it and it actually humidifies it right when it comes in.

but you'll find this really interesting. Florida is full of mold. Oh yeah, 100%. It's so wild. I was just here recently. Um, I'm staying at the Palm right down the road, right?

I wasn't in the gym at The Palm and I look up, and there's black mold all over the ceiling of the palm. And that's just one example. It is a very high-end hotel and y'all aren't even taking care of this, But even though you have a concrete home, you more than likely have what's called furring strips on it, and then your chipboard.

So you've got wood, it's just maybe in a smaller quantity, but it still holding a lot of stuff up.

HVAC, Ventilation, and Building Science

And Florida is extremely humid. Very humid, yeah. That's actually, Michaela was living, when she got sick, she was in Miami. Okay. Her duck work, which happens all over Florida, people run their duckwork in their unconditioned attic.

So, duct work is pushing freezing cold air, because you want to be cold in Miami, you wanna be cool in your house, cooler, cause it's hot as heck outside, and what's happening is those condensate lines are running through your hot attic and it just, it getting so wet.

And so that's the mold. That makes sense, yeah. So you really wanna keep your ductwork inside and if it is in you're unconditioned attic, then you'll wanna condition it and insulate it.

Yeah, absolutely. So do you feel like right now we're still engineering homes that are harming people? Absolutely. I was just at the International Build Show today in Orlando, and I'm around thousands of builders, many of which are starting to follow me and joining the conversation, which is awesome because that's where it really starts.

But so many Believe that mold is not a problem because these guys they build homes and they're sitting out in the rain for a long time because they are waiting on windows waiting packages and our building lumber is getting super moldy before they even close it up.

But one of the biggest things I'm railing at is you know we don't have in America an inspection system in place right now we're building inspectors test the moisture content of these materials before they allow you to cover them up.

There's no like, yep, go ahead, you can move forward with this, which I don't love paperwork and checks and balances that much either, but there are things that we need to do to protect these houses.

I think the building industry has a long way to go, building science is really ratcheting up big time right now and that's gonna I think roll right into healthy homes.

Now when we talk about building healthy and building those healthy structures. What is that practice looks like? I know you mentioned like certain code has to change, right?

But code is one piece of the puzzle. What are some of other pieces of puzzle? Because I feel like it's a collective effort of code as a change. There might have to be a few state statutes that affect that.

You know, other things that Maybe when they're getting certain inspections, you know, through the code enforcement, all those people have to get trained.

What are some of the other pieces to the puzzle for this to actually happen? Yeah. I mean, legislation is probably a big thing. A lot of states adopt, let's just talk homes for now, the International Residential Code.

and then a lot of states have their own like addendums that they will either add on to and make it more strict or actually take away from because some of the codes are getting really crazy with energy efficiency, which is Driving up a lots of costs and construction and so I am So I have to change.

I mean, I think it really starts with the code and the building inspectors and to do a better job. I mean, right now, the only water test you have to on your house is to fill your bathtub and let it hold water for 24 hours.

That's it. And what does that do? You just make sure your bath tub doesn't leak. It's like, that's the thing. There's no like let's hose down the windows and make they don't leave.

So they have a long way to go. I would love for, I keep joking about this, but I'm serious, the ma-ha movement. I want like a ma ha ha movement, make American housing healthy again.

You know, it starts with a conversation, But there's so many people like you and others that are really taking their health head on. And I think when people, you've already checked the box of food, working out, all of the things you can do, then the home's the big one.

That's a very important environment. I mean, if you're getting exposed to all kinds of toxic stuff, it's like you put in all this extra work, eating the right foods, the antioxidants, taking all of your different supplements, for what?

For what, exactly. Yes, you are going to enhance the detox pathways, but if don't have to go so hard because you aren't getting it exposed, then maybe that changes what's needed.

Now, one of the things, Kelly, that you were talking about earlier, which we're going to get into it now, is EMF exposure, right? And there's a few different exposures within the home that people have to take in consideration.

EMS is one, RRF, you got 5G now, right? People with pets, they leave their pets home all day while we're here at the office. Then you got this 5g Wi-Fi internet just blasting your pet animals.

And then people wonder, well, my dog ended up getting cancer at only five years old. So I wanna talk about some

of the steps you guys are taking in designing these homes to try to protect the people within those homes from a lot of these different exposures.

There's there's several things from an EMF standpoint. It's tricky and it's very nuanced right we especially in the health world of I'll dive deeper into that in a second, but the.

I think. Tackle the bedroom first, right? If that's where we sleep and spend, you know, 30% of our time in that bedroom, make sure that is your sanctuary.

Make sure is that your place of actual rest and reprieve. So what I'm doing now is I am installing kill switches in the bedrooms so that it knocks out all the power in bedroom.

So no outlets work. You can't charge your phone. I mean, I guess you could bring your iPhone in hypothetically, but I would urge you to leave it out of there.

That's one big thing that if you can just really make your bedroom really dead at night so that you soundly sleep, have absolutely no lights. The lights from the outside black it out even just a pin light of like you know a router in your bedroom has an effect on your circadian biology so I think it's being super conscious of that safe like that clean space.

So that's one for bedrooms and then it. Lighting, I think, is probably one of the biggest drivers of health today that people aren't realizing. We're inundated with LED lights now, which has a very strong blue spectrum.

There's no ultraviolet light in an LED bulb. So that's the red spectrum, that the spectrum of sun and fire. And so if we're constantly with our phones and with office lights and our house lights with the car lights, streetlights, everything is going LED because it's energy efficient, right?

But it is wreaking havoc on our bodies. I've been following a lot of circadian biologists now and I'm so aligned with The idea that you get out first thing in the morning and you gets sun.

But even more critically to in end of the day you you taper down your light with the sun so I turn off almost all the lights at night and I'll have maybe.

Handles or like all the bulbs in my house are incandescent I took all of the LEDs out and I went with very and it's it so much more romantic and warm and It's way more pleasurable than the bright blue or any that blue spectrum So I think that's an easy thing that doesn't cost a lot to just turn off the lights and prep your body for bed early on.

And that kind of like the basic of the way the earth works, like, the world works. Like, let's go back to the we were created as a species a bit and don't keep adding things.

EMFs, Smart Homes, and Bedroom Design

Interesting enough, but some of the things you're talking about with these lights, you see a lot of modern homes that are being developed with the concept of furniture and whatnot.

And you walk into one of these homes, specifically at night, and it's almost like you are walking into a lab, a laboratory. The bright white lights are just straight up that blue color, overwhelming.

But if you go like back in the day where you have more like traditional homes, you got that very warm feel, cozy. And it's funny you said the candles because I feel like we go way back, didn't use candles, right?

Yeah, make sure their beeswax are non-toxic. We don't want to do the wax, the toxic. No fragrances, please. But that's another trick with architecture.

I almost loathe recess lights today. It's a big developer thing, big box builder. They just feel like everybody needs

these recess cans all over the house.

when's the worst thing to look at a light bulb. It's not good for eyes and it's just not pleasurable. So I like to put wall sconces and bathe the light upward, never seeing a bulb, I use a lot of natural wood in the house too.

I'm big into biophilic design, which is like natural materials. Our bodies really resonate with that and the earth and I think it actually has an effect on our nervous system.

but I think it's also so beautiful when you uplight a wood ceiling, you just have this beautiful orange glow and it feels really nice when just you relax.

So lighting has a lot to do with healthy architecture. What about when you guys are deciding these homes, like, I'm thinking about like a stove, right?

Are you for having a gas stove or should it be a, you know, electric stove? Is there a difference? There is. And, gas has gotten a bad rap with the fumes that come off of the gas.

I think it's one of those things you pick your battles with the gas versus electric. Now this is kind of a bigger problem today though is that I was just at the Wolf showroom.

Wolf is a very high-end oven cooktop company. They got rid of the electric cook top and now they're just doing induction cooktops. and gas. I know you've heard of induction.

It's the one that we have to have a magnetic pan. And so it stays cool. But when you put the pan on, it completes the circuit and heats your pan I see it all over social media.

Before I went down this deeper trail, I was like, oh, this is beautiful. You can have it in a countertop without even seeing a burner. Like they have invisible ones.

and I thought this was the coolest thing. Um, love doing kitchen designs. So I, thought for sure I'm going to do one of these. then you start to peel that onion and you read the fine print and it says in there the safety distance is 11.4 inches away from the burner.

who's cooking their food 12 inches away touching the burner? I don't know about you, I always use the front right burner. I mean, and I've never used the other three.

And when you have a spoon in the pan, you are now connecting the circuit. So there's just these deeper things that sound cool. This is where the whole smart home world blows my mind.

Can we please go back to dumb home because you can't buy an appliance today without Wi-Fi. I just bought a new oven, I wanted to use the air fry option.

I cannot use it without hooking it to wifi. Well this is the dumbest thing. But they think people want this. And I beg to differ. We've got so much instant gratification on our phone.

You don't need to think, you just do the thing, it's like we're becoming these robots. and having our homes do all these things, I think, does a disservice to our brain.

I'm like, you need to remember to do some things. So let me ask you this. The smart homes, it's the craziest thing right now. Everybody has an Echo device.

They're controlling all of your lights here. You got the Ring cameras all over the place. It's all through Wi-Fi. Everything is on an iPad and on your phone and connected to your home.

What are we doing at that point? Is there some way to kind of protect it and block some of those things and put

certain things that absorb that EMF from those devices, or is it like we're just removing it?

I mean, I think you have to pick your battles. It's it's so much of EMF is distance, right? Distancing yourself from the beast. I push for people to have an automatic shut off on their Wi-Fi at night.

Just like you're killing your bedroom, kill the whole Wi Fi to the house. And maybe when you go to work, Kill it if you are worried about your dog, if your not needing it during the day at home.

But what if you have your security cameras and stuff on the Wi-Fi? You should probably hardwire those, I would assume? Absolutely. Hardwire everything.

That's the ethernet, hard wire it. If you can get away with no Wi Fi in the house, do it, that's a big piece of it I think. And that helps, it's little easier in new homes, right?

you've got the walls open, like in run hardwired internet. The big concern with EMFs, we've now gone to a Romex cable for our power, which is like the rubber bendy electrical wires that you see that are usually yellow or red, snaking through the house.

What we push for is MC metal cable, what you've seen in commercial buildings, it's a conduit and it doesn't allow the EMS to go flying out of it. So there are ways when you're starting new to mitigate that a bit more.

But distance is your key. I would hardwire everything and then just really question all the things you're bringing in. You know, I don't love the new idea of these wearable technologies.

And this isn't having to do with architecture, but it's a bit, you're constantly having a pulse on you. And I've heard it really lowers magnesium. It's supposed to rest in reprieve at night.

People are putting these things all over their body to see how they slept. Can we just turn the lights out on the electricity and not get so hung up on?

I can see maybe every now and then. Yeah, listen, I think you and I talked about that briefly. And I'll do a digital detox off of the wearables just to kind of let my body relax a bit.

Because I wear the aura ring. I got my aura on right now, actually. So I wanna talk about lighting. We talked briefly about the lighting inside of your house, but I want to talk natural lighting, because specifically here in Florida, natural light is not too of a common thing because the homes, they try to protect them because of the hurricane and stuff.

But now with the Hurricane Windows and the impact windows, when you guys are designing these homes on the scale, how important is natural lightning? 10 out of 10, 100%. Are you putting sky lamps and all that?

Not always, not always. But big, big windows. I mean, there's nothing better than seeing a wall of glass floor to ceiling where you begin to bring the outside in.

If I can make you feel like your living room is out in the forest, it depends on where are, right, what I'm looking at. You can double the space psychologically by having the glass go to the floor.

But also, you don't have to have a light bulb on all day. You just naturally lit up. I mean, maybe you need task lighting if you're like deep in the house and you'd need to like go to a closet.

There's times for it, but I push for natural light as much as possible. We're deep into… what's called passive solar design. So like when we have a house, we are very much paying attention to where is the sun coming in, the solar angle.

How can I heat the house in the winter and cool the House in summer based on the angle of our roof and how we

let sun through our overhangs? Can we shade the houses and have the glass?

We want to have our cake and eat it too, right? You want think through, can you put fins on the outside of the glass to deflect the light? But I think it's one of highest health ROIs is big windows.

What do you feel is people that are ignoring a lot of things that we're talking about with lighting, specifically like the blue light spectrum, what are some of dangers that people have to worry about?

Yeah, I don't know if you caught the the Huberman podcast recently. He had Gary Jeffries is his name, Dr. Gary. he's from Scotland. I think he is an electrical engineer and he basically equated today's LEDs to asbestos back in the day.

Like that was his equivalent to how bad it is for us as a human species. And I was like, rewind rewind. Finally, people are starting, if he's on Huberman, the conversation is deepening.

People are gonna start to hear it, because I've been preaching it for a while, but it's so great when you see it getting talked about in a bigger way.

And it is just critical. The lighting is everything in the house, and the energy movement is pushing LEDs because they don't take as much power. But it's like, how about we just don't do as many lights?

You don' need to have 500 recess cans on your ceiling. Let's just be smart about how we place these lights, and with big windows, you don''t need as much.

And then I'm trying to get people to dark at night, so I''m still not getting too many. So I think it''s really understanding that it' not there. But I there are engineers that are getting there that I that LEDs will have a UV spectrum in the near future.

Maybe ask me in a while what I think about that.

Lighting, Natural Light, and Biophilic Design

So with Holmes, besides the things that we've been talking about, we all heard of Feng Shui, right? Of how things are set up and the sharp corners and where it should be rounded and what the entrance should versus the exit.

How deep do you get into stuff like that? So I was on a podcast recently with a feng shui woman, and we went deeper into it. I don't know as much about fang shuai, but I'm anxious to learn more.

There actually are good practices behind it, I think it's also just good architecture kind of recognizes a lot of that in a way. But I am big into, you know, Let's see how I put this.

I mean the way you orient the house, the the you like make your habits in your house. There's a lot of that that it kind of just cross pollinates with good design.

And it's cool because every project I do you take on newly. So that's definitely the next layer I could see adding in, you know, getting deeper in Feng Shui.

But yeah, I don't have much to say about it. Let's say someone is just listening to the podcast, and I'm ready. I am ready to just make this change in my house.

What's the number one thing that you would say for someone to make that adjustment in their house? I mean, air, light, and water. That's the three. If you can tackle and have the best water quality coming in, filtered water, if you do reverse osmosis, that's probably one of the ways to go.

You do have to remineralize it because it does strip your water fully. But it goes even deeper. Some people are

putting in There's a system where you can almost, it structures your water in a way that imitates the water coming down a stream.

Imagine your was running over rocks and it actually has an energy to it that we're supposed to have drank it in that way. And so there's ways that you filter your Effect of like a stream, so I think that's very cool And then adding an ERV to your HVAC getting your each back cleaned yearly really scrub get in there and find out I mean if there's a sticker in your h vac mold could cling to it, So it's really tackling your air Air when I say air And then, yeah, light.

Yeah, which we went on the light side. So, you know, when I'm thinking about like a new construction home, and, with our Liquivita locations, like we put a Liquavita location at Hippocrates Health Institute.

and Brian Clement was very adamant about this, and all of the material from the laminated floors that you're using, it has to be all eco-friendly, non-toxic, et cetera.

So are you finding that a lot of this material, like the different tiles and laminate floors, at one point there was that Chinese drywall situation where everyone was getting sick, have you noticed that these materials are toxic?

I mean pretty much anything with the word laminate in it is a compressed full of glue and different usually off-gassing high levels of formaldehyde. Where do people go to find like the good quality healthy material?

Is there like a website for that? Well, I mean I push for natural materials, so of the earth. So if we can use real wood floors, real stone slate, not just slate but real, you can porcelain too, tiles.

I just really push back from things that are made of a lot of glue and things are plastic. A laminate is usually plastic and I think your body actually pushes against that.

You don't realize how much you have a visceral effect to things of nature right so i always just you know i push towards the natural materials and right now i'm with a group i am actually the founding member um uh there's several of us but brian johnson who's a builder in arizona he created a company or like a a Group called the healthy building alliance and he's collecting, all of us collecting.

The healthy architects, the healthy builders, healthy materials suppliers. He's creating a place where you can go, and what you just asked for, how do I go and find these people?

Let me find that architect in Miami, let me that find architect DC. So I think that's in the works, where we have a big launch of that next week, which is exciting.

Yeah, I thinks the conversation is happening. So you know, obviously right now there's a big movement, the MAHA movement which you're very supportive of it.

So I wanna hear kinda your thoughts of everything that's happening, what you've been seeing when it comes to the Make America Healthy Again movement. Yeah, and like finally, right?

I'm so happy that there is change happening. And that is actually what really kind of was igniting some sparks for me because the whole food die piece was so wild, it's been, It's been generally recognized as safe, right, gross.

For 20, 30 years, these dyes, and obviously having kids, I mean I pulled way back with, didn't let them have any of that from the get. They've never had food dye or gluten or a lot of stuff.

So having kid helped that conversation, but seeing now at the forefront that these chemicals are now coming out is so awesome. And I just want the same for construction.

I want same thing for building materials. I'm hoping, you know, it's the same kind of copy paste, let's just move along and they just approve these materials so willy nilly.

They're not, they're barely checked off on for your house, so I hope that the conversation can get deeper and that we can really start to recognize these toxic materials.

It would be great. I think we could get there for sure. Yeah. Um, It's a topic that I found very interesting and I am more than sure a lot of other people in your hometown DC will find very interesting as well.

Kelly, you know, we're talking about these healthy homes. And part of the healthy home, one thing that we are seeing now, people that are very into the health of wellness, the biohacking, is that people are not just creating the healthier homes, but they're creating these wellness homes with the vitamin rain shower, a hyperbaric chamber, full fitness center, cold plunge, infrared sauna.

So are you guys developing some of these homes as well, too? Yeah, I push it with every client. I think it's the best thing because if you could have it at home, why not?

I mean, i will give up a bedroom for these people. What space is going to get rid of for you to have this? If it is at your fingertips, you'll use it so much more.

Healthy Materials, MAHA, and Wellness Homes

And I, think which starts even before we get to the layering of the health, like the equipment and all the things we can bring in, just designing the building to make it easy for the client to experience the free stuff, getting outside in nature, having your coffee or doing your morning yoga or your meditation outside.

It's all site dependent, but can I design your house in a way Or you can do all that and enjoy that, whether it's a courtyard in the middle of your house, like a little balcony or deck off of you bedroom to get that East morning light as soon as you get up.

Can we make these little moments happen very easily? I think it is step number one. That's just good architecture. But then layer that into having a sauna, having red light therapy, and doing grounding floors right now, which is really cool.

I'm actually working to get them inside the sauna. One of my biggest dreams right, now I am working on is this non-tox wellness box. And it's a grounded floor.

Inside with a sauna, but the sauna has a son of curtain instead of a wall So you can be doing your sauna and you get a really hot one if you close the curtain and be in the Sauna but it's big enough where you could stretch and like move around in this thing cuz My mama three don't have time like I need to do this quickly and do that quickly so I can I get all these things done very quickly in red light at the same time and ground at The same and I I think Wellness is so awesome to be at home and why not?

Yeah, absolutely. So yeah, I'm all for pushing that. Yeah. It's one of my favorite things. Some people see it and they're like, oh, that's definitely an overkill, having all of this equipment and stuff.

I like it. You know? Yeah love it Awesome. Awesome So Kelly, what I want you to do now is take a moment and think about, are you going to answer this question?

And this is going come from the heart, you know, and I, Basically, tell the world what you want them to hear about what the problem is, what do you do, and how that's the solution.

A question from the heart. I think about this. Well, we'll start off with the problems. Tell the word what's a true problem. Yeah, I mean the true problem is what I mentioned before, this epidemic I think of homes being moldy is a big piece of it.

And just understanding that we have a long way to go to have to have the legislation to get to where I'm trying to it to be, which is, you know, more checks and balances on bringing in materials that are healthy into our houses, like

stop allowing us to bring these toxic materials into the house.

So from the heart, from base, I want people to just have peace and joy in their life, right? And I think to to that, to you need to in an environment that promotes that and makes it easy.

I'm raising the flag because it's a big problem in our homes and I know it kind of a silent killer. I don't think people realize what's happening behind their walls.

And a lot of times until, I want to say until it is too late, but I think there needs to be an awareness about it. But I just want people to live more minimally.

That's what I love about living on a boat. just less stuff, more spending time on you and your family and the things that you can do outside of having all this stuff and these things.

So if we can kind of peel away and go back to some of the basics. That's what I want. And I wants your home to promote that. I wanted you to feel so good at home and have shoes that fit, right?

Make shoes a fit for you. That should be your safe place, the safe haven where it takes care of you mentally, physically, everything, emotionally, et cetera.

So we're going to have a little fun here really quick. I'm all about fun. I have the Diary of a CEO conversation cards here. Welcome. One of my favorite podcasts.

So you'll open that up and dig in there and grab two random cards. All right. You go ahead and read that out loud. We'll read the first one outloud and then answer it.

What would you do if you absolutely weren't afraid? Oh, what would do you if absolutely you weren' afraid. What are you afraid of? Well, yeah. Oh well.

So, forever, before kids, my husband and I always rode our motorcycle. And I won't do it anymore because I'm afraid that I could, you know, go and not be around for my kids.

So I wasn't afraid. I would ride a motorcycle everywhere. Yes, yeah. And my kid's would be with me. We'd all be on bikes. What was the most valuable lesson you've learned in the last year and why?

I think I think it's really about slowing down and, you know, everything is so nuanced today. And I don't want to get ahead of myself. I'm still a constant.

We're always going to be learning, right? Every day is a new thing to add into my backpack of learning things that I want bring to the next project. For me, it is really just, I dunno, slowing answering this right wasn't viable.

You know, slowing down and hearing everybody's opinion before formulating too much of my own, I think there's just so much, there is so fast information, it's easy to get caught up in, oh I saw this post, this must be right.

And I really think we need to absorb it all in but then filter out and figure out what's the real business again. Yeah, I don't want to get too ahead of my skis here with all the fast digital world is coming in fast.

Yeah. Awesome. So Kelly, as we start to wrap up here, if there's someone listening to the podcast and resonates with today's message, what's that one thing you can leave them off with?

Um, I would just urge you to take a look at your house. Be very observant of the space you live in and see how you can take baby steps to getting it to a more healthier place.

It does take maybe steps with the house, I mean, unless you're building new, you are starting out and shipping away one little thing. So figure out where you could have an impact and take action.

That's how we feel good in life. We take little actions and that That gives us juice to do more. Action. That's the action. And if people want to find you, where can they find?

So I work at Travis Price Architects in Washington, D. C., so TravisPriceArch is our Instagram, and then at NontalksArctect is my new page where I'm cheerleading until the end of time to promote healthy architecture.

Amazing. Kelly, listen, I appreciate what you're doing. It's making a difference in the world, And this is a very informative podcast.

Closing Advice and Final Takeaways

Thank you for coming. Yeah, thank you so much. Absolutely. And thank for having me. I was so glad I could get here safely. You did, you did it. Yeah, thanks.

Guys, it's all about how we live. A healthy, very safe home, building, these are the things that are changing the trajectory of our house. This is the future.

So if you're going to be making any kind of remodeling to your home or you going start building a new home. Are you gonna start a business and do a build out?

These are some of the steps you need to start taking. Listen, make sure you share this podcast with friends and family because we could change everyone's health with this type of information.

Make sure like, comment, subscribe, and we'll see you for the next one. All right.