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We have been on this journey this season, and

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we're talking about wellness design, not as a style, but as a philosophy. And it's so meaningful because if you want to achieve true wellness, you know, you can drink the green drinks and exercise and and that's all great. And believe me, I am all for that. But our environments play such an important role and well-being.

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These are the places we live and work in every single day. Our homes, our businesses. And they do impact overall how we feel emotionally, physically, even spiritually.

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And so this season has been focused on this philosophy of wellness design. And it's really been an incredible journey. And we're going to continue on that journey. You know, just to recap a little bit.

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We were talking in the last couple episodes and listeners, if you haven't heard, I encourage you to go back. We're talking about the resonant framework, which is how we go through design to achieve well-being. It's so important. Resonant framework. It's a diamond shape, if you can imagine. Last couple episodes, we talked about the top of the diamond, which is identity, and that's about discovering who you are and how we design space around the who.

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Last episode we talked about behaviors and rituals, and that's how we that really brings the function to this space. And

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this episode we're going to talk about connection, the relational aspect of the resonant framework. So this is the third dimension and so important because human connection is a core need for everyone. Right. And how we connect in these spaces is so important, whether it's connection with ourselves or connection with others.

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And it's not just about connection, though, it's about meaningful connection. And that's how well-being is achieved in these spaces

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when we're speaking about the relational aspect. So when you really think about it, Valerie, what we do for a living is we design connection. I love it, I love it. That must be why we have so much fun that what we do.

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Right. I think there's such, a great, accomplishment in the way that you can use design and the power of design and the power of architecture, and details and artistry to kind of bring all that together. And it really is almost like that soft blanket that wraps around you. You don't even really realize that some of these things have been planted and positioned in such a way that allows you to really foster connections in that sort of way.

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But this is what we do. This is what we do every day. Whether it's a, another beauty type of space or even for the home, the same principles that we're talking about here still apply. And, you know, it's really them through the power of design that we can can, you know, catapult these concepts and these ideas and really make it, a space that really emotionally connects with you and allows you to kind of get to that deeper level.

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100% listeners, this is so important. If you're missing

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connection, think about your space. What are you missing? What's what's not happening, whether it's your place of business. And as you mentioned,

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we design medical, esthetic wellness spaces, we design beauty spaces, we design homes and wellness spaces. And it's all about connection with people. And I love this idea of lingering.

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Right. We you know, we talk about this a lot with our clients. Is this idea of people wanting to linger in these businesses, right? They want their clients to feel warm and welcomed and to want to linger and that's sort of the magic behind connection, because if you can create a space that forces somebody to linger. Even if that's if you are being reflective and you're having one on one time with yourself and in a place that you want to be reflective or your meditating or you're just, you know, thinking and how that space helps you to linger and stay, I think those are the spaces that really start to

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foster connection.

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And we're going to be talking about the details and how we can help create that connection in these spaces that we're we're designing and building in, that we live in. I love it. Let's do it.

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Valerie, isn't it true that connection isn't just emotional or reflective but architectural? 100%, 100%? I think, you know, that's just like what we were starting to touch on here is that through design, through these details, you're really able to open up a whole different level of design and connection to a space. You know, a great example I feel like, would be, you know, take a room that has a fireplace or a room that doesn't have, you know, this is like an architectural feature.

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It's usually a focal point in a room. And

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The way that the fireplace is able to really draw people in, to encourage them to stay, to encourage that type of connection. It's like it's magnetic.

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If you, you know, I'm a big proponent of fireplace. I know you are too. And there's just about any connection to fire and to emotion and, you know, are behaviors that really bring, you know, I think that architectural lesson quality is so important.

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I agree, we're both huge fireplace lovers, and I will even go as far as to say that I would love a fireplace in almost every room. Hear me out on this is, you know, when I'm remodeling my home and I've gone through phases of remodels when I remodeled my family. Great room, open floor plan concept. I position this fireplace in a corner.

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Not as sort of like, you know, traditionally centered on, you know, a seating area, but in a corner so that no matter where you're at in this huge, great room, you can see the fire. So important. But I would go as far as to say, because, you know, my next step in my, renovation project is my, my primary bathroom and my walk in closet.

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And our primary bedroom. And I will have a fireplace in my primary bathroom. And I know you thought I was going to say bedroom, but that two, I was going to say bedroom, 100% bathroom, I say check. I love that, right? Right. You know, imagine like a cold, rainy day and you're getting ready for an event and you've got a fireplace happening in there.

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And, you know, just talk about even personal connection, right? To feel good, to feel warm, to even create an experience around getting ready. Right. So what what a testament to yourself to sort of honor who you are when you're getting ready. Instead of stressing, you're connecting. You're connecting to the moment. You're connecting to yourself and maybe your partner, you know, in sort of this whole ritual of getting ready.

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So, yes. Fireplace. The other one is fireplace in the kitchen. Right. I love that, too. Yeah. I can't get to that fireplace. We were designing that one home project where we're looking at this idea of having a fireplace in the kitchen would be amazing. Can we convince them? I don't I think they're they're always open to our ideas.

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I want to give them the. Wow. Yeah, absolutely. I just think that's such a it's it's such a integral and central part. And just like the kitchen is, which, you know, I'm sure we'll we'll get into more detail, in another episode about, some of our home living spaces. But, you know, the kitchen is such that integral part of kind of bringing and fosters connection, just just like a fireplace and architectural details.

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Okay. So we've determined that design creates connection. And we talked about the fireplace because where we're going with that is that design is in the details. We've always said this is one of our mottos. Design is in the details. These details matter. That was just one detail. Yeah. Right. So if you want to do and create connection one detail can make all the difference.

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What are some other details? I think I love layering, you know, different lighting levels, different types of lighting. Anything that's really going to just make a space feel warmer and more inviting in that way. So you could put, beautiful, table lamp or a

pendant or a chandelier or even just some indirect lighting, which really, you know, can elevate the space, and change different light levels depending on kind of what types of conversation you're having.

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And exactly if you want to create intimacy, the lower the light level, right? Yeah. I, I'm all about that layering, lighting, you know, dimming the lights that really starts to create intimacy, not even just for your partner, but even a get together with, with friends and family. Right. You know, if it's not about if you're entertaining and you're watching a football game or something like that, you know, that's a little different.

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But if you're wanting to create true intimacy, I think you've got to lower the lighting in these, you know, these layered aspects of lighting I think are absolutely crucial. And that's something that we do in our designs every day. And of course warm lighting. Right. It has to be warm lighting listeners 4500 Kelvin temperature does not belong in a home.

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There I said it absolutely okay. Okay I'll always slip that one in warm lighting 3500 Kelvin temperature. Any who even warmer. But okay, so we talked about the lighting. You know, we're talking about design, creating connection, even, the the layouts of the spaces. Right. And if you're, talking about a family room and you're sort of missing connection in the house, you know, is everybody facing the TV instead of facing each other?

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You know, I think these are, you know, it's how the space is laid out that can help create connection with others. Don't you agree? Oh, yeah, I we have to, you know, first and foremost, if we don't have a way to have, eye contact with each other, how are you? Like, how does that even how do you have a conversation?

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Like exact eye contact? Is everything. I, I love what you're saying about, you know, if everybody's just facing a TV screen, of course, that's not going to foster the same type of connection. But if you change your your layout so that you know you are facing each other or turn towards you, turn toward each other, you know that that really will start to create a different ambiance, you know, like, oh, hey, there you are.

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You doing. No I love that. Yeah. The layout plays a big role as does materials and finishes. So you know again you know textures layers of textures area rugs. You know an area rug will anchor a grouping. So if you want to feel connected to others and you have a seating grouping we do this all the time.

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Right. We're in the middle of designing of space, and we're looking at this from the 3D realm, which we do all the time, and we look at a seating grouping. It's like, oh, what's missing? Oh yeah, the area rug, you know, like the area rug is just such an anchor. And and I think it speaks to, connection.

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It really does, isn't it? It's like an anchor. An anchor, or you can sort of better, you know, the, the area rug itself just it gives that that grounding effect that we're talking about the anchoring. And no matter how big of a space, it still helps make it feel like if everything belongs together, you know, that's that's right.

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It belonging. Right. That's you just set it right there. Belongs together. Right. And that's and that's people, right? You know, when you think about meaningful connection, you really have to think, you know, what is meaningful connection? Meaningful connection is where you're getting to the heart of of life, right? You know, even vulnerability to the point of vulnerability.

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But along those lines, you have to feel safe, right? So safety is what people open up and are most vulnerable, which creates the greatest, most meaningful connections when they feel safe. And so that's part of our our job is creating these feelings or elements of safety around, in environments to create those connections. I love that.

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Valerie, I have a question for you. That I it's a trick question. Now, where in your home do you feel the most connection with others? And then second question with yourself. So 1st May be easier to answer than the other, right? That's tough. I would say probably my, my living room is probably where I would gravitate towards having like really good conversations, meaningful conversations with others.

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I have my fireplace in there. I have, really comfortable seating, and it always just feels very safe and cozy and warm and inviting.

So it's like one of my favorite places to go. Like, I have friends over or family over and they always say, oh, your your sofa is so comfortable. I love it. And and so I don't know, it just it's, it's that sort of, it just everybody feels good in it.

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That helps. I feel like and I think personally for my own self-reflection, oddly enough, I, I feel like I gravitate towards, like, the dining room, you know, versus, or in my house, I have kind of like a front end kind of, I call it my nook. It's a little area, surrounded by natural light and with windows.

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And so it's always very light filled. And that is, that makes me happy. That's a comfortable, happy place. I love that I think this is good for our listeners to to think about here, because I'm with you, for personal reflection and even, like, planning and that sort of thing when I want to be my by myself. You know, I think about vacations and for some reason, when I'm on vacation, I do my best planning, even for business.

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You know, I come back so refreshed. But one thing I do on those vacations is I by myself. I sit in a lounge chair in the sun, but shaded always in the sun, but shaded. It's the warmth that surrounds me that helps me to relax. And when I do that, I can start planning and, you know, thinking of creating a creative ideas for the business and all sorts of ideas and so I was thinking about that the other day in my home, like how, how do when do I feel the most comfortable to be by myself, where I feel like I'm doing my best work?

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And maybe it's not the type of work you do at a computer. It's the planning and thinking and reflecting sort of work. Right? And that's in a comfortable lounge chair, just like the vacations. I was thinking about this and surrounded by the natural light, because I'm trying to, I think, replicate that feeling or idea. And so listeners, this is something I encourage you to do is to really think about you know, if you want to be your best self in your home, do you have a place that you most closely resonate with that helps you to plan, to think, to reflect?

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You know, for me, it's outside, you know, if I had a choice and it's, you know, 82 degrees, I'm outside on the patio in a lounge chair, doing exactly what I would do on a vacation, when I can, it doesn't happen often, but boy, it is. That's my me time. Yeah, I love that. And, you know, I think that's also a really good point.

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You know, those moments that we have where, you know, we're on vacation, where you're you are can be truly relaxed, right? Because that's the whole point of your break into going on vacation is to kind of regroup your, you know, reset. And so I think there are moments like if you are somewhere and you're having those same thoughts, you it's like, wow, this is like the best.

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I feel so comfortable. I feel so relaxed. How how do you replicate that at your home? And I think that's such a good insight and a way to think about it. And it's very natural. Oh, here's a good one. Is the dining room. You know, when I think about connection and I do work at my dining, I have an open plan.

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So I go I work at my island, my dining table. You know, I'm sort of all over the place, but the dining room table for an intimate dinner, whether it's one on one or with guests or family, that, to me is where connection really happens over good food, cozy environment, candles, you know, just the the right background music.

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Fireplace, of course, in the corner you can see it from all angles and right there you've created this place for connection. Right. And so that's something that, you know, again, listeners, to be thinking about where in your home can you really create these connections with others, and how can you accomplish that even in a dining room, for example, you know, not everybody sits at a formal dining room every day.

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You know, maybe it's just on a special occasion. Sometimes it's a Sunday family meal that we said at the dining room table, and it's probably meaningful for a lot of people, but maybe we don't do it enough. A and B if you don't, what is it that you can create in terms of rituals and design to create that level of comfort and that level of intimacy?

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And I love that. And I'm going to I want to challenge our listeners, you know, if any of you have those dining room spaces, because I think that's such a great example. You have a dining room space and you walk by it every day and nobody uses that. Please, please, please do something change that is that is somewhere where everybody wants to be, where everybody wants to come together.



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And it's not just wasted, wasted opportunity for connection. I love it. That is an opportunity for connection. And if you're lacking connection in your life, because remember, connection is a core human need and leads to well-being. That's what we're talking about here. We're talking about wellness design, not as a style, but as a philosophy. And in order to have well-being in your environment, you need to create these connections.

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If you're missing those connections, it's doing exactly what Valerie was talking about, really looking at these spaces that are underutilized. And maybe it's just, you know, another challenge is even that small detail that you can do or that small investment that you can make to create, cozier seating grouping or invest in a new chair for self-reflection. There's so many things that I think we can do, even that are, you know, value conscious.

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And just by turning or changing a grouping that could make all the difference in the world. Agreed. Take that.

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Valerie. I'm going to talk about design

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like a

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therapist. Okay. Right.

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If design has the power to change lives, isn't design intelligent? Right? Absolutely. I think that's something we could really think about as we're thinking about our spaces and thinking about design as intelligence, and that our spaces are intelligent.

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You know, think about even this emotional connection to a space. Have you ever walked into, like, an older home? And it feels happy, right? There's and I think spaces are so intelligent. They're that they're able to hold memories and reflect those memories. When you walk into a space. You love that, right? Yeah. Quick inside story here. This.

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You just made me think of this. I remember, when I was looking for my now house that I have, we went through, I don't know, it was a ton. Probably like 30 or 40 houses. Our poor realtor was probably like, get these people out of my hair. I remember when you were looking and, you know, I didn't even think we were being out picking, you know, some things just didn't work out.

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It fell through. But I remember the first time that I stepped into this house and, I just had an overwhelming sense of, like, happiness. Peace of, like, I think this is it. This is the one. And, you know, I'm still I'm just in love with with our house. And I think part of it is what you're saying.

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It's that character. It's the intelligence. It's the history. That goes along with it that resonates with me, you know, not only that, but all the natural lighting and it just it worked. I wonder if there is happy emotions built into the home, you know, lasting emotions. That also goes to show that you can create those memories and that intelligence into this space.

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Right? So if you're building a space around happiness and happy memories and joyful moments, you know, as the years go on, this space reflects that. And that's the real depth that design has. And we know it's true, because as you're experiencing, you walk into a space and you have a feeling sometimes it's a dark feeling, right? And you're like, get me out of here.

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And you know, and and it's like, yeah, that those are the spaces you don't want to be in. And don't kid yourself. Other people pick up on those dark feelings if they're walking into your house and they're sort of feeling this darkness or this, you know, vibe, if you will, it's the space it radiates that in, and it has everything to do with how this space is laid out.

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The character of what is in space, in the space. You know, how personal it is. And so I think this is something that is really important for us to be thinking about, you know, when we're looking for a new home or we're designing a space, I think we need to be thinking about these good bones, I think is a good way to do it.

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The same thing. You know, when I found my home to, I thought, now

this place has good bones. I'm.

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you know, I think this goes along the lines of this idea of that a space has an emotional tone to it. That's so there's positive emotions and there's negative emotions.

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we want to be focused on those positive emotions for really accomplishing well-being. Absolutely.

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Yeah. So speaking of emotional tone, Michelle, I think there's kind of it I almost want to call it a little bit of an epidemic. I feel like, in this in homes. Right. And that feeling of like emptiness. And I think we really have an opportunity with design. It can be a solution to those that feeling that, just tone of a space.

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Yeah. It's isolation. Yeah. You know, there's, you know, we have clients who we've worked with, the design of their home, and they have these huge homes. Right. And and there's so much separation happening in the house. And even though they're home, you know, there is an epidemic of loneliness and isolation happening. And so I think that's I think part of the trend that was happening is sort of this intimacy trend where, you know, people were staying home but still losing the connection.

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And so design can solve that problem. And I think it's so important to be thinking about what are the missing connections in your home that will sort of help to fix isolation, you know? And that's the dining room, the living room. There's ways to solve that by creating environments that just draw the participants of the home into these spaces to really create those meaningful connections.

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And that's what we're talking about here, Valerie. We're talking about connection. We're talking about the human need for connection, but not just any connection. We're talking about meaningful connection. And we accomplish that through design. Design has the power to create connection, and it's part of the resident framework. Listeners continue on this journey with us. There's a lot to unpack.

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We're going to be continuing on this journey. Next week, we're going to be talking about the how how we bring it all together. And there's a lot of fun to be had there. So don't this sets.