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The Biophilic Design & Nervous System Reset Guide

What Is Biophilic Design?

Biophilic design is the practice of intentionally connecting your home or workspace to nature through light, indoor plants, natural materials, air, nature views, and sensory experiences to support your body, mind, and nervous system. Research suggests that nature-connected environments can reduce stress, improve mood, and support recovery from illness or burnout.

In my story, this looked like transforming a “heavy,” toxic-feeling condo into a Northwoods cabin that acts as a nature therapy reset and a partner in healing.

[Read the full article Here.](#)

[Listen to the podcast episode here.](#)

The Three Core Principles: Light, Order, Life

Drawing from my experience, this guide centers on three beginner principles:

Light – letting God’s light and natural light in

Order – creating peaceful, low-clutter spaces

Life – bringing nature indoors in meaningful, functional ways

Principle 1: Light – Let Nature and Peace In

I noticed that dark paint, heavy curtains, and closed-off rooms made my nervous system feel stuck in “go mode,” while brighter, sun-filled rooms helped me feel energized and hopeful.

Simple ways to start

Open curtains fully every morning to maximize daylight and outdoor views.

Use lighter, low-VOC paint colors in bedrooms and living spaces to bounce light and reduce toxic-load. Add mirrors opposite windows to reflect natural light into darker corners.

Sunlight exposure helps regulate your circadian rhythm, supports better sleep, and is linked with improved mood and serotonin production, which can calm the nervous system.

I also integrated **photobiomodulation (PBM)**—red and near-infrared light therapy, to support healing, reduce inflammation, and modulate pain, using a [light therapy patch for under \\$100/month](#), as part of my daily routine.

Explore my **photobiomodulation** story and “aging in reverse” photos here: [Timeless Vitality: Light Therapy & Before/After](#).

Clinical research shows PBM can influence cellular energy (ATP), inflammation, and tissue repair in conditions ranging from musculoskeletal pain to wound healing.

Key takeaway – Light

Let as much natural light as possible into your home each day and consider targeted light therapies, like photobiomodulation, as part of a faith-aligned, whole-person wellness plan.

Principle 2: Order – Declutter for Stress Relief

My home shifted from a “neatly cluttered” luxury space that felt heavy, toxic, and chaotic to a simplified cabin where everything had a place and evenings ended with a “ready for guests” reset.

Chronic visual clutter is associated with higher perceived stress and can be linked to elevated cortisol, increased cognitive load, and reduced sense of control. Creating order lowers that background noise so your nervous system can rest.

Simple ways to start

Choose one room or surface (a countertop, nightstand, or entry table) and clear everything that doesn't serve a clear purpose, bring joy, or contribute to peace.

Give each item a dedicated "home," and put things back at the end of the day. You'll love how easy is it to start your day with this five-minute nightly reset.

Let go of excess decor furniture that exists only to hold more stuff.

I turned decluttering into a spiritual practice: asking, "Does this item serve a real purpose or help create peace?" and released anything that didn't.

Key takeaway – Order

Order is not about perfectionism; it's about intentionally reducing visual and mental noise so your home becomes a sanctuary of peace instead of a mirror of inner chaos.

Principle 3: Life – Bring Nature Indoors

I moved from chemically "off-gassing" finishes and sterile materials to natural wood, wildcrafted decor, and indoor plants that felt alive and meaningful.

Biophilic design emphasizes environmental features like indoor plants, natural materials, natural colors, and views of nature, all of which can lower stress and support well-being.

Studies suggest that indoor plants and views of nature can help reduce stress and may even improve air quality in certain conditions.

What I implemented

Natural wood walls, floors, and furniture wherever possible.

Creative plant displays using fallen branches and air plants as sculptural elements.

Foraged wildflowers in vases and jars as seasonal, low-cost decor.

Shark HEPA air purifiers in major rooms to improve indoor air quality.

Essential oils with antimicrobial properties in diffusers to clean and freshen the air, which I discuss in detail here:

[Antimicrobial Essential Oils Article](#)

There is emerging evidence that some essential oils have antimicrobial activity, though they should be used with caution and proper dilution.

Key takeaway – Life

You don't need a greenhouse to bring life indoors, start with one plant, one foraged branch, or one vase of flowers and build a consistent, low-maintenance connection to nature throughout your home.

Practical Beginner Steps You Can Take This Week

Here's a simple starting plan:

1. **Open your curtains fully** every morning and clear anything blocking windows.
2. **Choose one small surface** (counter, nightstand, shelf) and clear it completely each night for a week.
3. **Add one living element** to your home: a low-maintenance plant, a vase of wildflowers, or a branch display.
4. **Audit one product category** (cleaners, laundry, or personal care) and swap one high-toxicity product for a cleaner alternative.
5. **Create one mini “refuge” zone**, a chair by a window with a soft blanket, a Bible, and maybe a plant or candle.

“Small steps truly do lead to big changes.”

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