

# BIOPHILIC DESIGN THE ARCHITECTURE OF LIFE

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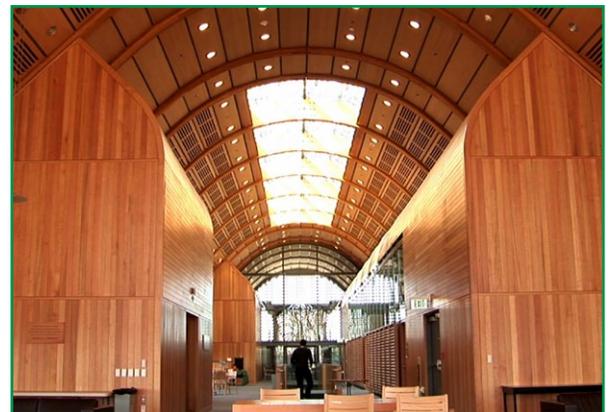
## Bullfrog Community Screening & Discussion Guide

**Roll out the red carpet!** Use your film screening of BIOPHILIC DESIGN as a tool to build community and spark discussion about the concept of “biophilic design”, architecture, and how the buildings where we live, work and play affect our emotional well-being. This guide offers some background information plus helpful tips & discussion questions for an informative, and rewarding screening. **Good Luck!**

For additional resources, visit [biophilicdesign.bullfrogcommunities.com/biod\\_resources](http://biophilicdesign.bullfrogcommunities.com/biod_resources)

## About **BIOPHILIC DESIGN**

**BIOPHILIC DESIGN** is an innovative way of designing the places where we live, work, and learn, a design revolution that connects buildings to the natural world, buildings where people feel and perform better. Come on a journey from our evolutionary past and the origins of architecture to the world’s most celebrated buildings in a search for the architecture of life. Together, we will encounter buildings that connect people and nature--hospitals where patients heal faster, schools where children’s test scores are higher, offices where workers are more productive, and communities where people know more of their neighbors and families thrive.



## About the Directors



Dr. Stephen R. Kellert is the Tweedy Ordway Professor Emeritus of Social Ecology and Senior Research Scholar at the Yale University School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. His work focuses on understanding the connection between nature and humanity with a particular interest in environmental conservation and sustainable design. Bill Finnegan’s work has been featured in the series Natural Heroes, and at the International Wildlife Film Fest and Environmental Film Festival in the Nation’s Capital. Bill teaches video production at Champlain College and is a 2010 TogetherGreen Fellow and member of Filmmakers for Conservation.

# ready to watch!

## Here are some ideas and best practices to help make your community screening of BIOPHILIC DESIGN a success!

- 1. Publicize Your Event!** This is the most important step. Not only can you tell the world about your screening, but you can also let the Bullfrog Community team know about your plans so we can help you publicize your event. Visit [biophilicdesign.bullfrogcommunities.com/biod\\_screenings](https://biophilicdesign.bullfrogcommunities.com/biod_screenings) to register your screening of BIOPHILIC DESIGN.
- 2. Visualize Your Goal!** What do you hope to achieve with your screening of BIOPHILIC DESIGN? Your goal could be to generate a lively post-film discussion with your audience about bringing nature into your built environment. Perhaps you want a chance to discuss with others your ideas for greening your community. Or, you can simply provide an opportunity for families to watch and learn together.
- 3. Where To Host?** Consider which locations in your area would be ideal for accommodating a community film screening of the size you anticipate: churches, town halls, private homes and even high schools have been venues for many successful community screenings.
- 4. Find A Partner!** Give some thought to who is already working on revitalizing your community. Can they help sponsor the event? Spread the word? Speak on a panel discussion after the screening? Some potential partners include: your local American Institute of Architects (AIA) chapter, architectural and design firms, construction companies building green buildings, universities, high schools, faith-based organizations and institutions, museums, parks, nature centers, environmental groups and other organizations concerned about the health of your community.
- 5. Invite A Guest Speaker!** Guest speakers and panels are a great way to encourage discussion and debate after a community screening. When people are thinking about the issues they will stay engaged long after the screening has passed. Contact local architects, urban/city/or town planners, city government agencies, teachers, museum directors, park directors, and professors who have expertise or insight into the issues raised by the film, and invite them to attend and participate in a discussion or Q&A session.
- 6. Engage Your Audience!** Included in this handout is a section called Ready to Act! which is meant to be a hand-out at your screening. It will help your audience know what they can do to educate themselves about key issues brought up in the film.
- 7. Spread The Word!** Think about the best methods available to you for publicizing the film screening to people in your community. Sending emails, creating event notifications on Facebook or Meetup, using Twitter, and placing screening announcements in local newspapers and newsletters is a good start. Use the BIOPHILIC DESIGN screening poster and press photos at [biophilicdesign.bullfrogcommunities.com/biod\\_resources](https://biophilicdesign.bullfrogcommunities.com/biod_resources) to help publicize your event around town.
- 8. Tell Us How It Went!** Visit [biophilicdesign.bullfrogcommunities.com/biod\\_discussion](https://biophilicdesign.bullfrogcommunities.com/biod_discussion) to tell us about your event. Where it was held? Who attended? What went well, and what was challenging? Your feedback will help others in organizing their own successful events and will energize the Bullfrog Environment community as a whole.

# ready to talk!

**Your audience will be excited to discuss the issues raised by BIOPHILIC DESIGN. Here are some questions that will get people talking.**

- 1.** Can you see any predominantly natural areas such as mountains, a wooded area, a creek, or a river from where you live? From where you work? What is your favorite place to enjoy nature? Why?
- 2.** How often do you go out into a natural environment? How about your children? What do you feel is the actual daily minimum level of contact with the natural world needed to live a healthy life?
- 3.** At the Cook + Fox office in New York the building's rooftop garden is described as a new ecosystem where "life follows life." Where else can we contribute to the creation of new ecosystems? Note: examples could be man-made ponds, man-made wetlands, creating compost, mulching, gardens, crop fields, protecting and building sand dunes along the ocean, etc.
- 4.** Do the smaller landscape features, such as street trees and green rooftops, in your community contribute to your closeness with nature? Is access to a large forest more effective than a neighborhood full of these smaller green features?
- 5.** What are some differences between 'green building' and 'biophilic design'? Name examples of built environments that are green, but not biophilic.
- 6.** What are some of the ways the interior of buildings may be inspired by nature? How about the exteriors of buildings? What if the shapes and forms are not literally from the natural world?
- 7.** How do you think a biophilic designed school, coupled with outdoor play and environmental education, impacts a child's personal and social skills (i.e. self-esteem, cooperation and teamwork)? How does it affect their learning?
- 8.** The filmmaker says that a biophilic environment at work has measurable benefits in people's productivity. Are there examples of built environments in your workplace that use biophilic design? Can you think of ways to bring nature into your workplace?
- 9.** Consider the issue of well-being. To what degree do you think that emotional problems that many people today suffer from, like depression and anxiety, might be due to a lack of contact with nature?
- 10.** The film suggests that a biophilic environment within a psychiatric hospital reduces the patients' stress level, and then tends to reduce the rate of hostility and aggression. What other places could a biophilic environment be helpful in reducing stress and aggression?
- 11.** Would you be willing to pay (a very small amount) for more biophilic environments to be easily available to all people in your community? Should biophilia be a central concept in how we design and arrange our modern lives? Why or why not?
- 12.** Is biophilia still applicable in our changing society as we modernize? What could happen to people, to society, if we distance ourselves from nature?

# ready to act!

handout

## Share this handout with your BIOPHILIC DESIGN screening audience!

**1. Bring biophilic design into your home.** Integrate natural elements into the building process, including construction materials, ventilation methods, lighting techniques, and more. Ideas are:

- \*Fill spaces with daylight and present more views of the outside world by installing skylights and floor-to-ceiling windows.
- \*Build indoor gardens, fountains, and outdoor garden ponds
- \*Use rough lines instead of perfectly straight lines— the natural world is not perfectly straight
- \*Choose organic shapes over geometric shapes
- \*Choose colors found in nature, such as earth tones or shades of blue to mimic sky and water.
- \*Add variety to your designs—nature hardly ever perfectly ‘matches’

**2. Beautify and green up your school.** You can work with parents, students, teachers, principals, school board members and local community groups to get your school board to pass a framework resolution promoting green spaces in schools. The Green Schools Initiative is a great resource to start: <http://www.green-schools.net/>

**3. Write letters and telephone your city officials.** Encourage your local Department of Parks & Recreation and environmental planners to bring green spaces into your community such as street trees, rooftop gardens, community gardens and living walls. Inspire your community to transform the asphalt playground into a green space or a garden for better learning, playing and connecting.

**4. Start a community garden.** Families can grow vegetables and fruits in empty lots (with permission), in their backyards, in window boxes, or pots. Donate your surplus produce to local food banks.

**5. Join (or create it yourself!) a community revitalization group.** For example, Bronx Green-Up works closely with the NYC Compost Project in the Bronx to provide outreach and education to their local community gardeners, schools, residents, organizations, and businesses. [http://www.nybg.org/green\\_up/](http://www.nybg.org/green_up/)

**6. Make use of local spaces of nature with your children.** There could be nature centers, environmental centers, playgrounds, gardens, national parks, nature preserves, hiking trails and campgrounds in your community. In urban areas, you will find rivers, creeks, parkland, community gardens, ovals, patches of bush, bike paths, swimming pools, and so forth.

**7. Protect the natural spaces you already have.** Work with churches and synagogues, community councils, universities and colleges, and other local groups to protect these zones by designating them as parks or conservation areas. Perhaps you already have a local environmental conservation organization? If not, a good place to start is the International Union for Conservation of Nature <http://www.iucn.org/>

**8. Read up on biophilia and biophilic design.** We recommend:

- *Biophilia*, by Edward O. Wilson (1984)
- *The Biophilia Hypothesis*, by Stephen Kellert and Edward Wilson (1995)
- *Children and Nature: Psychological, Sociocultural, and Evolutionary Investigations*, Edited by Peter Kahn, Jr. and Stephen Kellert (2002)
- *Building for Life*, by Stephen Kellert (2005)
- *Biophilic Design*, (yes, there’s a book, too!) by Stephen Kellert, 2008

**9. Road Trip!** Experience the beautiful spaces showcased in Biophilic Design in person. The public places located within the US are:

- Aldo Leopold Foundation in Baraboo, Wisconsin <http://www.aldoleopold.org/>
- California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco, California <http://www.calacademy.org/>
- Fallingwater in Mill Run, Pennsylvania <http://www.fallingwater.org/>
- IslandWood in Bainbridge Island, Washington <http://islandwood.org/>
- Shangri La Botanical Gardens & Nature Center in Orange, Texas <http://www.shangrilagardens.org/>

Additional Locations:

- Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center at the University of Texas at Austin <http://www.wildflower.org/>
- National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, DC <http://nmai.si.edu/home/>

**10. Spread the word!** People are increasingly curious about living healthily and sustainably—for themselves, their children and the earth. Tell them about incorporating nature into their living spaces. Take it a step further and organize interesting and educational evenings such as film screenings, walks and workshops, or discussion groups.

**11. Arrange screenings** of this film with other groups in your community. We've made it easy at [www.biophilicdesign.bullfrogcommunities.com](http://www.biophilicdesign.bullfrogcommunities.com)

**12. Join the Bullfrog Environment Community** at [www.bullfrogcommunities.com/bc\\_environment](http://www.bullfrogcommunities.com/bc_environment) and show other environmental films to expand understanding on caring for the earth and our relationship with it.