

West Coast Green Early Adopter's Workshop Interview Questions

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What inspired or caused you to get involved in green building & how many years ago was that?

I have been an environmentalist since I was a kid & started designing houses right out of High School. The houses became larger and larger through the years and my work felt really disconnected from my values. I came across a book on Straw Bale homes in 1994 and that was my "aha" moment - it was that I realized I could shift my focus to environmentally sensitive homes. I then set an intention to do nothing but green homes within 5 years, and accomplished that in 7.

2 or 3 examples of what do you do to keep you on your edge?

I go to conferences and network with others on similar paths to see what they are up to. I also find inspiration in challenges from leaders who pose a possibility of really stretching the limits – such as Architecture 2030, the Living Building Challenge, and Al Gore's 2018 Challenge.

What are the next steps for you to get to the next level?

Currently working on a project that will incorporate the Living Building Challenge; Teaming with others on a book on how to incorporate green building practices in the field; Seeking inspiration from nature & keeping an open mind for signs.

What feelings come up for you when you think of these steps?

Energy & excitement & hopefulness for direction.

What are a couple of success stories of bringing along your network to their next level?

Working with several building department heads to permit straw bale construction for the first time in their jurisdiction, Sharing stories of success on my unconventional projects and debunking myths that can't it be done; Speaking out at Guild events; Exposing builders to a multitude of green building steps that they've now incorporating into their regular job practices.

If you were to describe your network as a metaphor that comes to mind...what would it be...

Roots & branches of a tree – some with their feet planted deeply in the ground, some visionaries and dreamers up in the air, all contributing an important aspect to the whole.

Next steps in working with your network in helping & inspiring them to the next level

I am in a transition point in my life and so am not really clear on that right now.

Resources you'd suggest

Northwest EcoBuilding Guild www.ecobuilding.org; Environmental Building News www.buidlinggreen.com; Development Center for Appropriate Technology www.dcat.net; The Last Straw Journal www.laststraw.org; The Living Building Challenge; www.GreenBuilder.com;

Anything else you'd like to tell me that I haven't asked

It is really important for everyone in the green building movement to make use of their best talents to pass the information on – writing or speaking or drawing or teaching or organizing – and do it now. We need to transfer information to the public & professionals in the fastest means possible to turn the tide of climate change.

Interested in interviewing others?