

New Years Resolutions

Andrew Pace: Welcome to the Non Toxic Environments podcast. My name is Andrew Pace every week, my cohost Jay Watts and I will discuss healthier home improvement, ideas and options. Thank you for finding us and please enjoy the show.

Hello folks. Welcome back to Non Toxic Environments. It is 2021. Jay it is very good to hear from you. I hope you had a wonderful holiday season.

Jay Watts: Yes, we did. Andy, uh, time to kind of reflect, rest, gear up for the new year. And it's going to be an interesting new year. I think we will be able to reflect on what we think is coming ahead and I know you've got some points, so let's dive in.

Andy: Well, you know, I thought that it would be a good opportunity, you know, New Year's is always an opportunity for everybody to make their New Year's resolutions. I need to the gym. I need to lose weight. I should stop eating sweets. Maybe cut down on the coffee.

Jay: Yeah. Listen to the NTE podcasts more often.

Andy: Well, that's number one. That's number one. Not only listen to it, but spread it around to all your family and friends. There you go. But, I thought it'd be fun to do a New Year's resolutions as it relates to not only our show and what we want to provide and what we want to do but I think all of us as a community, I look at the number of listeners that we have all over the country, all over the world. I just got an email from one of our vendor partners for the

show. We are now ranked the 22nd highest "home and garden" related show in New Zealand of all time.

Jay: That's amazing.

Andy: Amazing. And tip of the cap too, to our Kiwi friends. Thank you so much. But my point is no matter where you are in the United States and Canada and Mexico, New Zealand, Germany, UK, Australia, you're part of our community. And I look at this as a large family, a growing family, a growing community. It really that leads me to my first New Year's resolution for Non Toxic Environments and this podcast is more interaction with our community members.

Jay: Yeah. We were just talking about that off mic a little while ago, the idea of incorporating, obviously the audio side of it, but the video side of it, which is really a messaging medium that people really respond to. And there's a lot of things we can do in that regard. We're in a visual business in a way, the kind of work that we're involved with, where you're remodeling and decorating and home building. So it's a visual message we can have. Certainly that's something that's going to be exciting for us to do, share with everybody.

Andy: Without a doubt. And I think that I want to take this even further and I'd like to have both audio and video connections with our community members all over the world that we can actually do live here on the show. I would love to, and I'll be honest, I have heard from some of our listeners in other countries via email and so forth, but I think it would be wonderful to actually have some folks contributing to the show from all over the world. I would love to know what does healthy building mean in New Zealand? What does healthy home concept mean in

the UK and how can we assist in making homes healthier in your location? What can we do? What can we talk about? How can we bring to light what's happening in your area?

Jay: I think this is such an exciting concept, and for us to be able to learn, too, because there's going to be things that will be shared with us that would be novel to us. And we'll both be kind of going, wow, we hadn't ever thought of it in that particular way. I'm so excited when I get into the different alternative building options that are available now. I'm constantly surprised, amazed, excited to hear what people are doing and how they're kind of taking the basic model and kind of turning it on its head a little bit. I think right off the top, I think of the tiny home revolution that's been going on, but just the use of materials and the novel use of materials and how people kind of work out outside the parameters a little bit of what's typical, and do some really beautiful and very affordable by the way, affordable things that of course meet our criteria. And the number one criteria as we've stressed is we want to build the healthiest environment you can for you yourself.

Andy: And folks, Jay isn't kidding when he says he gets excited about these new building technologies. And I know this because I'm always getting texts or emails from Jay just at any time of the day or night saying, this new material is so cool. Check this out.

Jay: I'm hopelessly attracted to it, it's exciting.

Andy: Oh, I love it. I don't know, my background commercial building before I got into this. And so to see some of the things that Jay comes up with for these new technologies, be able to do 3D printing of homes out of clay. It's just fantastic. And obviously some of this does not relate to what we do here on Non Toxic Environments, but the fact of the matter is Jay's

constantly looking at these things online and other resources, and it's really exciting to see what's out there and how this industry is going to improve dramatically over the next few years.

Jay: Yeah. And like you said, if we can tap into our friends around the world and they can share their input, and boy, this is going to open up a whole new avenue for us to be able to think about, talk about, reflect on and share.

Andy: So that brings me to the second resolution for this year. More education. And I know this is a broad subject. I mean, we try to educate on a weekly basis, but what I mean by more education is some of the technical aspects of how things work. Last year, if you listened to the 'best of' episode from just a couple of weeks ago, best of 2020, we did interview a number of people in the last year, but I believe that this year we want to get even more involved with educational events and educational opportunities, even beyond the show. I'm talking about doing a Facebook live events, YouTube live events, being able to interact again, this kind of brings in the last, point about more interaction, but interaction and education are really closely linked, but we really want to make sure that we are constantly moving the ball forward. We're not just rehashing old ideas and talking about the same thing over and over and over. This is about bringing to you new information on materials or methods that we believe will truly have a positive effect.

Jay: Yeah. It makes me think of the the fact that we all had to go virtual this last year. And certainly it was a huge impact on our education system. You know, there was no school. So everyone was doing their studies from their computer. So I think the positive thing for me there is everyone's kinda got their tech technology up and up and running. So for us to be able to

say, Hey, listen, we can do these kinds of things now because we know how to do it. You're more comfortable with it. And I think that opens up a whole new avenue of conversation,

Andy: Which is well, kind of a funny side note on that Jay. In years past, I have had to ask customers on the phone, is it okay if you have an email address, I'll email you a copy of this technical data sheet or your receipts? What have you. No, no, no I don't have email. I don't like the internet. Now, granted sometimes it's because of their sensitivities and they can't tolerate EMFs from the computer the smell of the plastics from a warm computer fan. I get that Believe me. But in the last few months, it is astonishing how people have really grabbed onto technology, as you say. I have consulting clients now that when I reach out where they make an appointment to me, the first one of the first things they ask is, will you just want to do a Zoom call? Well, this is not something I'm used to hearing from my clients. So I'm really excited about this and about what that means to the educational process of everyone.

All right. So number three, if we got more interaction, we got more education. One of the things that we're working on, and this has been a long time in coming, and I tease it now because I'm not exactly sure when it's going to be ready, we are working on a step by step guide on how to build a healthy home. I've been working on this for 27 years. Jay, you've been working on it about the same amount of time.

Jay: It's been in process for quite a while.

Andy: It's all in the head, some on paper, some in the computer, but this is the year that this gets, I don't want to say finished, but it will get started, a step-by-step guide on how to build a healthy home for you. Not for me, not for Jay, not for your neighbor, but how can we build a

healthy home for you that you can live in? That's the key. We know people in the industry who have authored books on the subject, I'll tell the story a little bit, Jay, and you'll know who I'm talking about. I don't want to mention him because I feel like I owe so much to him, but he authored several books on how to build a healthy home, because he built a home for his wife, and it was just a fantastic success. And he wanted to bring that information to the world. Here's how he did it. Unfortunately, in the eyes of someone who has severe chemical sensitivity, if something doesn't work, sometimes it needs to be somebody's fault. This happened to be his fault that it didn't work for them to the point where he is out of the business. He's a professional photographer now, he doesn't even want to be involved in this. He's a customer of ours still to this day and is very appreciative what we do, but he's afraid that even him coming on the show will conjure up some, some old feelings from people. He doesn't want to be a distraction because he's just a wealth of information.

Jay: Sometimes when you're a pioneer, there's a risk involved in. People misunderstanding or the information is, how do I think of it? It's like the information is so new that it's difficult to anticipate the ramifications of disseminating information, because there's too many permutations that can't possibly consider the early stages. They kind of come out later. The fact that you're bringing this up you know, kind of puts the pressure on our efforts to be sensitive. We say that word every day. We know the personal nature of these issues. I think as long as it's backdropped the proper way. We've done this throughout the podcast life, we're always telling people, this is what the messaging is about. You know, the foundation of this is about your personal health, your personal wellness. And with that caveat, I think we would give a little bit longer leash in terms of the things we can promote and talk about, but we always know where we're going to come back to home base. And everyone I think that listens to us will trust us in that regard.

Andy: Well, and I'll say this too Jay is what you're saying that makes tons of sense. Just to add onto this, what we try to do here is not tell you- here's how you do it, you gotta do it this way, or no way. We're giving people options. These are the options that we have found to work best over so many years with a tremendous amount of people. But that caveat of there are situations that are out of all of our control, right? We need to be ready for that. We need to be mindful of that. When taking advice from somebody or many people on what's the best way to do X, Y, Z, you have to look at all the factors and then decide what is best for your situation. Even this past week I was dealing with a client that I've worked with for several years and she has also hired other consultants over time and we kind of have this bad habit now any time we talk about a subject, she'll say, well, so-and-so said this, and so-and-so said that, what do you say? Well, that puts us all in a difficult situation. We all may have different ways to meet the proper end of the the solution. I'm not saying there's only one that's right and everybody's wrong. There are many ways to do a similar thing, but we have to look at all the information properly and decide what's best for us. And if it doesn't work, it's nobody's fault, we're all trying to help.

Jay: Right. You know, the analogy it's coming to mind is the idea that it's a five-star restaurant. We're going to have a really good menu here, and you'll be able to look at the menu options and decide based upon your knowledge and what you need to be able to make a menu selection off the menu that works for you. You're getting me excited again. You're going to start getting a whole wrath of late night phone calls. I wake up in the middle of the night and I'll be going, Oh my God, we've got to do this. We got to do that. Do you ever have that happen where you think something you're kind of in the half sleep state, but you forget to write it

down? And then the next morning you wake up and you can't remember exactly what it was, but it was a genius idea.

Andy: That's funny because my wife and I were just having a conversation about this a few days ago. In the middle of the night started going through all this information about how she's going to deal with a certain situation she had at the office and she said it was brilliant. It was fantastic. For three hours she was up thinking about this, that, and the other. She had all the verbiage in her head and she eventually falls back to sleep, wakes up about two hours later. Couldn't remember a word.

Jay: Get a little nightstand recorder if anything.

Andy: I've gotten to the habit of when this happens, I do physically get up and grab something to either write on or type on and I start typing notes. The downside to that is when I reread those notes, when I'm fully awake, I sometimes I can't understand them, but sometimes they are absolute gems.

Jay: There you go. Those are the ones I want you to save. So let's move on.

Andy: All right. So we've got more interaction, more education talking about our step-by-step guide on how to build a healthy home. This is more for this New Years's resolution is for Jay and myself, as well as everybody- more planning, more time to plan. This is something that I wish for all of us. It's a timely topic right now because of what we had last year in 2020, what we're still doing in 2021 with the COVID pandemic manufacturers of materials, can't get raw materials to make finished product as fast, freight companies can't deliver materials as fast

enough, installation companies and contractors are swamped with business, and they can't get to your project as quick as they want to. So we all need to do better planning and plan into your project time to allow things to happen. I had a client just yesterday call up and say, I need tons of material to work on this project. Can you get it here by Monday or Tuesday? This is 20 minutes before our shipping was closed for the day. They're typically a four day ship time away. And if you've known you're going to need this material for months, but you've waited until literally the very last minute to get it... Luckily we had the ability to somewhat fulfill the order that he needed, but there's still going to be some time to get the balance of the products, because we're all dealing with this pandemic economy where product is not readily available. So more planning.

Jay: That's a challenge always for the reasons you've alluded to. I think people kind of wait depending on why the decisions they are having to make. I noticed here last year, I didn't see a lot of slowdown. It seemed like the contractors were hot and heavy and busy all over, all around our area here. That's one of the challenges in our industry, right? We've got these different balls we have to keep in the air. Contracting is one of those tough ones because good contractors are busy and they have to coordinate their time and trying to fit your project into the whole schedule of projects they may have. That can be a difficult thing. So you're right on Andy with this ideal of let's get ahead of the game, do a little bit better on the planning stages in the front end, including disruption. I think the word that kind of came to me as I was thinking about this was the disruption that we've experienced in our day-to-day lives and the things we talk about specifically here, and I think going forward, we need to be prepared for more disruption, and we can make that a positive thing. It doesn't have to be a negative thing. How do we use that messaging that comes through saying we can expect that there may be some hiccups along the way, and let's figure that into the planning. Let's give ourselves the hiccup factor. Then that way

we reduce the stress. I think it was part of the whole idea of trying to keep the stress levels down. It's been stressful enough and we can work on that by better planning, I think.

Andy: I love it. I mean, that's really it. I understand that means that we're going to have to make decisions a little bit sooner than we're used to. I think we've all sort of got lulled into this sense of we can wait until the very last minute and then we'll make a decision and then we expect material or something to happen immediately. We need to be willing to buy product maybe a couple of weeks before he actually needed it.

Jay: Yeah. Well, we've been so long in the home improvement, retail environment that it's just becoming embedded into everyone's thinking, you know, I'll just drive down to the local Home Depot, Lowe's you name it. And I'll pick up the stuff the day I need it. And in our particular area of expertise and where we're at, we're not the necessarily mainstream product offerings and that changes the dynamic tremendously. I'm seeing all this information in the book you're going to write Andy about this. It could be kind of in the introduction.

Andy: Exactly. Well, honestly about doing a podcast is that it's literally a living, breathing book. Yeah. Everything we talk about is a chapter and it's just wonderful. It's just a new way to do it.

Jay: Yeah, exactly. I think of it that way. That's great.

Andy: So we've got everything figured out here. The last thing I want to talk about for the New Year's resolution is really directed squarely at me and a little bit of Jay

Jay: What'd you do now? I gotta be thinking about myself here.

Andy: It wasn't the first one I wrote down, but I can't really think of the way to say it. I'm going to read it the way I wrote it. Less scare, more happy. A lot of the presentations that you and I have done together over the years, one of the things I say to people is, listen, I am not here to scare you. I know some of these topics are scary and they can be overwhelming, but I'm really here for the education and to provide assistance and how you can achieve what you want to achieve here. Probably mean less scary, more happy. What I think that means to me, Jay, that we're going to do topics beyond just the scary, toxic-laden material topics, but we're going to get into some happier topics this year.

Jay: Yeah, I think that's great. The word that came to my mind when you were saying that is refining our listening skills, being able to listen at a deeper level. I think that's a good wisdom for anybody, especially now listening to one another, paying attention to our intuition. We know this because of everything that has happened. Healthy building is really, really important more than ever now. And the fact that we've had to stay in our homes more, it just points out that our sanctuaries have to be as safe as they can be. That's been our message all along. And I think the happy story versus the other story is a good way to kind of spin it. We need to do that.

Andy: Well and as you say it's not just healthy building, but it's healthy living. We're all living inside our homes more than we used to. We are inside the built environment. We may spend a few hours every day outside of it. As you had mentioned this morning, you took a sunrise walk this morning. I mean, that's wonderful for the psyche, for the soul. So I think we're going to talk about happier things as well, because you know, let's face it folks, we all want to be happy and healthy. Listening to me ramble on about the toxicity of building materials every episode is not necessarily the best message. I know it's necessary, and there's always a happy ending,

which is here's how you take care of it. But I want to hear more about that. I want to hear success stories. This goes back to more interaction with our listeners, with our community. I want to hear from our clients and customers and friends we've worked with over the years and hear the success that they achieved by using healthier materials and living in a healthier home.

Jay: We know there's so many stories. I mean, that's one of the reasons we come to work every day, right Andy? We hear these stories. To be able to share them on a broader level is really great. I'm hoping all our friends down in New Zealand, if you need Andy and I to come down there and do some live work, I think we've mentioned that before. Wouldn't that be kind of exciting actually to be able to travel? And see what people are doing and get into their place and say, Hey, let's talk about this. That'd be exciting.

Andy: Well, that was the topic of another show that I was going to do years ago, going around the world and talking to green building experts in their areas and talk about what does it mean in their country? What does it mean in their community? And I still think that it's a brilliant idea.

Jay: Well, I think because of what you mentioned earlier about the technology and what we can do with that, I think that's going to be something we're going to see that we're going to be able to connect in that way. We may not be able to go there personally, but we can certainly get as close as we possibly can. Virtually.

Andy it's been a great morning talking to you. I guess the time to do your normal sign-off. I know we've got some mail bag that we're going to jump into next week. I've got some good ones. So we'll do that but let's say welcome to 2021 everyone.

Andy: Welcome to 2021 Jay. As always it's a pleasure talking with you. I'm really excited about this year, this new season, season four Non Toxic Environments. Four years, wow, we have plenty of stuff to talk about this year, and we're really looking forward to hearing from you. So please reach out to us. Andy@degreeofgreen.com is my email address. You can go to degreeofgreen.com, leave us a SpeakPipe message. Leave us a rating and review on Apple iTunes if you're using that method, otherwise just let your family and friends and associates know that the show exists and the more people listening, the more we can get this information out there to all. And as I said earlier, please tell us your story. If you want to be interviewed, you want to have a conversation here on the show, live with Jay and I, please reach out. We'd love to hear from you on how living in a healthy home has made your life more complete.

Jay: I'm excited about hearing those stories, believe me.

Andy: With that folks, we will talk to you again next week. Jay thank you very much. We'll talk to you in a week.