

Principles for the Designed by L.I.F.E.™ Process



Stay with the Process!

The Designed by L.I.F.E.™ Process (the Process) acknowledges that each client has their own unique tastes in shapes, patterns, textures, and colors. As my client, you may need several “trips around the mountain” to surface and sort out what matters to you and to see a design emerge that responds to whatever you discover. The key principle here is simple:

Stay with the Process!

Ideas are Placeholders.

Ideas are simply Placeholders in the design Process—neither good nor bad, simply ways to explore concepts. We look at ways to change your home and dig in until we learn something. We can then keep, modify, or move on to the next iteration, as we . . .

Stay with the Process—and learn what matters most to you!

Reactions are Information.

Initially, concepts respond to your *expressed* wish list. However, to create spaces that “feel right,” we must also surface *what drove you* to make your wish list. This happens as you react to ideas. Whatever is driving the wish list now guides our solutions, as we . . .

Stay with the Process—and address what matters!

The Three “Uns”: Unfamiliar and Unexpected Ideas usually cause Uncertainty.

We get accustomed to seeing spaces arranged in certain ways. For that reason, changing what is familiar can make us hesitate. 3D models enable us to better visualize how changes will affect us and turn hesitation into “Wow!” As we sort out the visual and functional aspects of the changes and refine them, anticipation builds! The three verbs that characterize this process are: Transform ~ Satisfy ~ Inspire.

□ □ □

The Decisions Triangle: Quality, Concept, Cost—choose any two.

The aspect you choose first will drive the other two. Choosing your second aspect will narrow, in turn, your options for the third. Let’s consider each of these.

With respect to Quality: Prioritize quality for the things you touch—and hear.

Beyond the appearance and durability that denote quality, consider how we interact with our home: through door locksets, light switches, faucets, cabinet pulls, and appliance handles—the things we touch. We connect through the tactile pleasures of surfaces as we run our hands across them. There are sounds that connote quality, too. The solid sound of a door shutting, the click of the latch engaging the jamb, a fan quietly extracting odors—all these deliver “quality” messages—and we like how this feels.

With respect to Concept: Design drives costs; your choices drive design.

If we discover that the initial Concept is becoming too costly, we learn from that, revise, and take another run at it. Rest assured, as a designer I never run out of ideas! That said, it can be challenging to revise a too-costly concept, because you must reconcile and adapt what matters most to you, changing your choices, lowering the Cost to an amount you can justify.

With respect to Cost: Priorities drive costs, more than the designer or contractor.

If a certain Concept truly matters to you—implemented at a certain level of Quality, the Cost aspect tends to be whatever it will be. (Note: Though it is tempting to save money by buying goods online, if you remove the profit that tradespeople add to cover their acquisition costs, you can expect to pay more for labor.) Adjusting the Concept and upgrading Quality during construction will typically lead to budget overruns. Employing 3D digital models greatly reduces in-process changes. Whatever you decide, we need to dial in a budget that you can justify.