

Building Your Creative Self

Heidi Houdek explains how interior design helped her find creative freedom.

BY GEORGIA VALLES

Heidi Houdek rediscovered her “creative self” five years into her sobriety journey. She unexpectedly found that creative freedom in interior design. Two and a half years following her sobriety journey, she started designing spaces in her own home. After channeling that newfound creativity, she realized it was not something most people can do. It wasn't until her son (then 14 years old) told her to make a career out of her new passion did Houdek make the decision to quit her corporate job and start her own interior design firm in Austin: Modern Hippie Design Studio.

“I decided to hire a photographer and to build a website,” Houdek expresses. “The jobs and award nominations started to come in fairly quickly. Before I knew it, I was running a full-time business.”

It hasn't always been an easy road for Houdek. She struggled with imposter syndrome in the beginning, feeling guilty and unworthy for the good things happening to her. “Over time, I was able to find my voice,” she says, “to trust that I am a smart, capable woman who absolutely deserves everything that I have been able to build.”

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Since Houdek found her voice as a “smart, capable woman” in design, her work has been featured in publications like *Austin Home* and *Texas Living*, each showcasing her interior design work. Modern Hippie Design Studio has also won many awards for its builds. (Houdek is hoping for a nomination for Austin Home’s Best Interior Designers of 2023 list.) In 2022, they won *Austin Home*’s Best Interior Designers award.

The team of three interior designers consists of women who share the same passion and creative energy as Houdek. Each designer brings part of their own style into their work. “I am super proud of the work environment that we have created within the company,” Houdek says. “We have found that we can be just as successful by tapping into our strengths as women, and we can absolutely run a business with a feminine energy.”

The relationship Modern Hippie Design Studios has with its clients is what makes it a multi-award-winning company. “I think our biggest change has been that we are fairly picky with the clients we choose to take on,” Houdek expresses. “We do our best work when there is good energy between us and the clients we are working with.” That good energy comes through as Houdek speaks about her excitement on a new build they have been a part of from the ground up (which will be ready by next year).



Photos courtesy of Modern Hippie Design Studio.

“Our primary goal is to create a space that fully reflects the personality of the client,” she says. “We strongly believe that everyone has a unique style, and we want to help our clients create an environment that embraces who they are.”

Along with her strongly positive energy that reflects onto the company, Houdek also has a great influence on the company’s design style, which is based on her personal aesthetic. The company name reflects the natural materials and earthy colors she uses in spaces to make a calming energy, including in her own home. Her more recent project was for a single woman.

“That project was my favorite to work on because of the mutual trust shared between my team and our client,” she explains. “She gave us the freedom to get pretty creative with our designs.”

Houdek continues to make Modern Hippie Design Studio a place for free creativity and passion. “When a client trusts me with their home, it is not something I take lightly,” she insists. “I pour my whole heart into every project I work on.” This kind of trust from her clients fuels the passion Houdek and her designers have for their work.

“Design is a visual representation of who you are emotionally and of your life experiences,” she explains.

“Coming home should make you feel comforted and at ease.” ●

