

Going with the flow

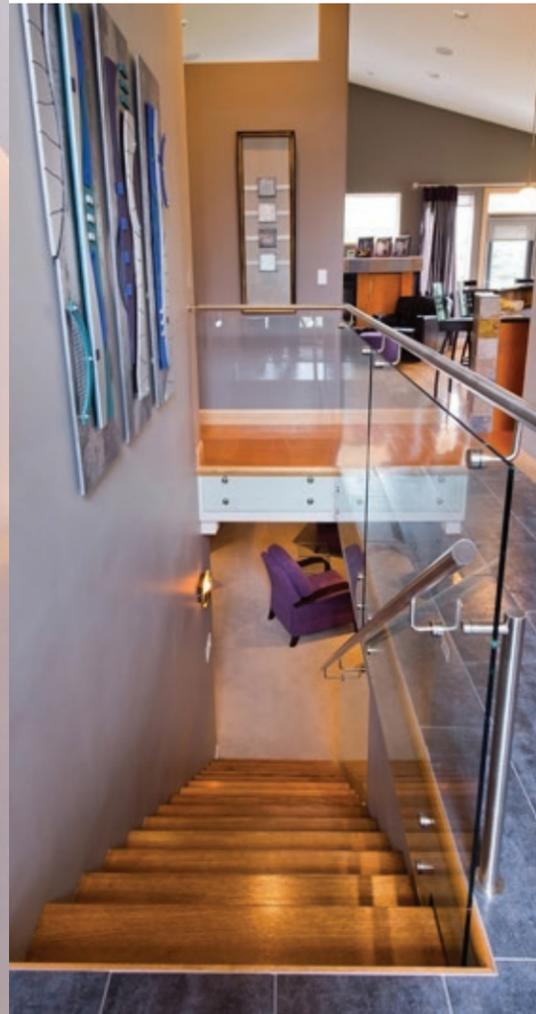
by LYNN FENWICK B.I.D.

WHEN SHARON FIRST PHONED OUR OFFICE for a design consultation, she was looking for some design advice on a bungalow she had recently purchased. She really wanted to live in the area where the house was located and the house had a good basic shape to it. The previous home owner had done some renovations but the home was somewhat dated, closed in, and wasn't exactly what Sharon was looking for.

We asked Sharon what she envisioned for her home. Sharon has three active older children and the home had to function for their lifestyle, as well as her need for a

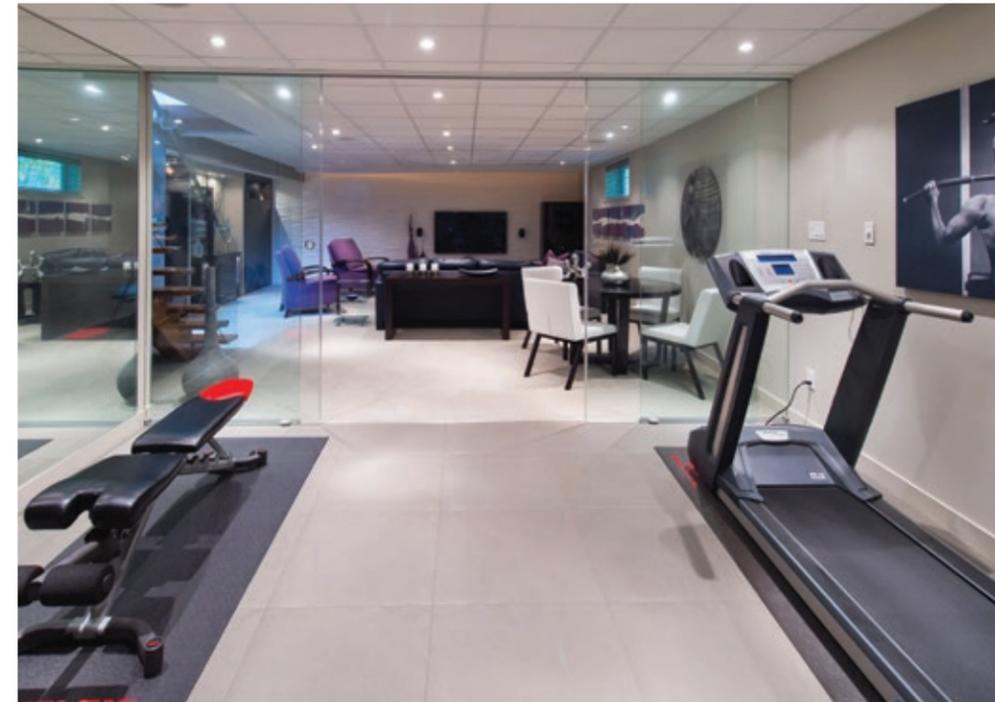


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space to entertain her friends and family. She wanted the house to feel more open and flow from the main floor to the lower level to allow the areas to be fully utilized. The lower level was unfinished and this was her main focus for the renovations. She wanted a separate area for her children to relax and entertain, but she just couldn't see how to make the space feel like a part of the rest of the house.

Sharon's wish list included a gym that would be large enough where she wouldn't feel restricted. Walls on all sides would be an issue! She also wanted to be able to watch TV from the gym. This meant the gym would have to be exposed to the entertainment area - which meant the gym would have to look neat and tidy at all times. A place for everything and everything in its place! She also



SHE WANTED A SEPARATE AREA FOR HER CHILDREN TO RELAX AND ENTERTAIN...

wanted two large bedrooms and a 'wow' bathroom downstairs.

On the first consultation at the home, it was very evident that the flow of the house was inhibited by the location of the stairs. When you entered the foyer, you immediately faced a wall that hid the stairs to the lower level. Traffic flow was directed around the stairwell wall to the downstairs where you were confronted by another wall at the bottom. The location of the stairs split the lower level into two areas that hindered integration with the main floor.

Our first order of design business was to correct the issue of the traffic flow. We posed the question... "What if we flip the direction of the stairs?" Reversing the stairs would open up the foyer, provide a full view of the lower level as you entered the

front door, and create a feature wall that wasn't three feet away from the stair landing. Sharon went with our recommendation and has no regrets.

Removing the visual obstacles and revising the traffic flow by reorienting the stairs, has created a lower level that suits her family's lifestyle and added 1,000 square feet of usable space. In addition, the house now has the look and feel of a newly built home in a neighborhood she loves. Sometimes it is worthwhile to go with the flow!



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