

At home with your demons

By Ruth Ostrow

A PROMINENT business identity took me to lunch the other day and told me a remarkable story. He was celebrating because he'd just sold a home he owned and loved but couldn't live in. He and his wife bought the house a decade ago and promptly moved in. It was an extraordinary home at the time, built on prime real estate, surrounded by ocean.

But the minute they moved in they knew something was wrong. "We felt it in our bones," said a man who, together with his successful wife, were recently applauded in a national newspaper for their business acumen and influence.

"When we entered one particular room the hairs on our arms used to bristle. My wife was no longer sleeping well at nights. Bad things started happening in our marriage and everything that was good around us began to crumble."

Although he and his wife wanted to view the situation rationally, they both knew that it had something to do with the house. This was further confirmed when a rather bad accident happened in the creepy room downstairs.

Eventually they moved out and into a beautiful, sweet home and their lives returned to normal. But they continued having trouble with any tenants they put into the vacated house. There were countless accidents, dramas, unpaid rental situations.

"In desperation we rang a feng shui expert who said she'd never had such a difficult project, there was little she could do, and that we were wise to have moved out. So we rang a well-respected dowser who specialises in the Earth's energy fields. His prognosis was that the house was sitting on a large vortex of energy sucking down deep into the Earth.

"Of course we were very sceptical, but each time we or anyone else held the dowsing rod, it moved powerfully," he said. "The dowsing expert never explained the cause: whether it was natural energy emanating from the ground or whether intense things may have happened on that site."

He told them to place a copper sheet under the house, which was sitting on posts above the ground. "Within 24 hours the house felt better. I am a man of logic and science, not given over to superstition. But I can tell you that the next day the tenants cleaned the entire place for no apparent reason, they paid their rent, there was never another problem with that property again.

"You either believe things like that or you don't but to cut a long story short, we did and it was miraculous. Beyond belief," he said.

I listened with interest because of this man's credibility and because I do also believe that houses and homes can be filled with energy from past tenants and owners, or from what's emanating out of the land they are built on.

The great pyramids and Stonehenge were built on powerful energy meridians. The Chinese with their feng shui and the Indians with their ayurvedic philosophy, practise a form of architecture that accommodates energy flows.

I have noticed fluctuations in our happiness levels depending on the home we are living in. During our sojourn in one small apartment block we witnessed three sets of loving couples move into the flat above us in succession. Each time, within a few months, there would be fights, violent noises and then break-ups. We were also miserable in our apartment below.

Which reminded me of a letter I received last year from a European journalist, talking about the energy that some homes have:

"Dear Ruth, I have lived in uncountable places throughout my 60 years of life and I have come to the questionable belief that places, and in particular, houses, do absorb good or bad energy. I have been to many houses, occupied or empty, which have given me the creeps. If you investigate, you'll invariably find a disturbing history.

"To give you an example of good vibes: some 16 years ago we parked our VW van overnight on a dark road on the Sunshine Coast. Driving out the next morning we saw a property for sale. The house was dilapidated, there was rubbish everywhere, the colours were atrocious. We sat for half an hour under the huge trees in the mango orchard and then, because we had no doubts at all, signed a cash contract. After trying for many years to fall pregnant, at age 43 I fell pregnant almost immediately and our son was born.

"I found clues that [all previous owners] had been very happy there. Some years ago we had a huge bushfire. We were all ordered to evacuate. They had given up the house. But after the firewall had gone through, the only thing still standing was the house. Just that. No washing line, no chook pen, no shed, no papaw plantation. This house was the only thing not burned within an 800ha area.

"As an ex-journalist I don't believe I am writing this, but there is more to it than I can explain." My business friend and his dowser would surely agree.

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