

Episode 0015

Letting Go

Show Transcript



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Presented by Dr. Gala Gorman

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00:03

Dr. Gala Gorman: I will say that divine timing will take care of this. It might not feel like divine timing if we have not listened to the call of divine timing.

00:19

Announcer: You've tuned to Awareness Addicts with Dr. Gala Gorman. Here, you'll find Sage Advice for taking inspired action. Awareness is the key. With this key, it's easier to navigate in the human world with all of its detours. It requires that we get to know ourselves intimately. If you choose to join us, this just might make you an Awareness Addict ... alive, alert, awake and aware of life's possibilities.

00:48

Dr. Gala Gorman: This is Episode 15. In the last couple of episodes, we've focused on making changes. Just about anything that is currently part of our life experience is serving some purpose. So, when confronted with cutting the cord, resistance shows up in all sorts of ways. And, what about the changes that are forced on us ... like the death of a loved one, the loss of a job, or a relationship coming to an end. We need to have some tools handy so we can let go gracefully. I'm Dr. Gala Gorman and in this episode of Awareness Addicts we are going to add some tools to our Spiritual Tool Chest™.

01:27

It helps to know we're not alone. There's much we can learn from each other. There is no need to recreate the wheel if we don't have to. As Awareness Addicts we keep an open mind and trust that the information that we're looking for is seeking us. This article will provide some insight to help apply what we're learning in this episode.

I found this article on the website News-Medical.Net. It talks about how women experience higher stress levels from

major life events than men. I found this fascinating. The article says that the Physiological Society is using this particular study to raise awareness of the effect of stress on the body's functioning.

02:18

I talk a lot about how physically damaging stress is. It goes on to say, "During stress, the body prepares for action by releasing hormones into the blood stream, which affects the heart as well as digestive and immune systems. Frequent and prolonged stress can cause long-term physiological problems in the body. With women more likely to report feeling stressed than men, this could have a very real impact on their health."

In the actual quote from the article it says, "While many people are aware of the effect of stress on mental wellbeing, it is also important to consider the impact on the body's systems. Your brain, nervous and hormonal systems react to stress and it affects your heart, immune system and gastrointestinal system. When stress is prolonged, these effects on the whole body can result in illnesses such as ulcers or increased risk of heart attack."

03:23

I see this at work in my own relationship with my husband Charlie. I found this to be true. I experience this with other men in my life ... either work partners or personal partners. It just seems that men do a better job of compartmentalizing things. I'm not quite sure why this is the case. That's probably another episode topic for another day. But, I believe this compartmentalization allows them to say, "I'm dealing with this right now and I will deal with that later."

04:00

I know for myself, personally, that this is one of the things that causes me stress. I keep a lot of plates spinning in my head simultaneously because I've got my hands in so many different things. I think many woman have taken on the primary role of caretaking for their children or keeping the house ... and on top of that they're likely working a job

outside the house. And, where a man might say, “It’s my job. I leave that at work.” I know for myself, and a lot of women, that it doesn’t quite work that way. It is not as cut and dried to go from one role to another role. We wear all these hats simultaneously. It’s understandable that it begins to feel kind of heavy on your head.

It’s also important to know from this article ... the observation ... that when we’re under stress our bodies release hormones into our bloodstream to help us manage it.

05:10

Women have a more delicate hormone structure than men. When we are under stress and we get a flood of additional hormones. And, because our hormonal balance is already so delicate, I believe that this impacts us more than men when dealing with stress. They get the same flood of hormones but because their hormone balance is not quite as delicate or as complex, it doesn’t impact them to quite as much of a degree.

If you are listening to this whether you are a man or a woman ... if you’re a woman you’ve got men in your life and if you’re a man you’ve got women in your life ... regardless of what your sexual preference or orientation is, this is important information to have ... and to understand ... and to be respectful of ... and to know that we all deal with situations in our life differently. It helps to have empathy for ourselves and others.

06:15

Let’s take a moment to develop awareness. This is something you can practice anywhere ... anytime. Begin by noticing where your breath is landing in your body? Are you feeling your breath in your chest? Is it expanding your rib cage? Or, even your belly?

Just become aware of your breathing.

Now, we're going to breathe intentionally. We'll start by breathing deeply into our belly. Breathe deeply ... expanding your belly. Notice how it feels for your belly to expand. Then, pull your abdomen in so that all of the stale air gets pushed out on the exhale.

Let's do that again. Breathe in deeply ... all the way into your belly. Expand your belly. And again, breathe out and flatten your tummy. Squeeze all that air out.

Next, we'll move the breath up to our rib cage. Intentionally expand your ribcage with the breath. It may feel like your ribs are stretching out on both sides ... or you may feel it expanding your back. Just notice how that feels. You're stretching your lungs to the side and creating flexibility in your ribs. Take another breath into your ribcage.

Now, let's go back to how you were probably breathing when we started this practice. Breathe into your upper chest. You can feel your breastbone raise and lower with the breath. Notice how it feels to take a shallow breath now that we have expanded the breath into our belly and rib cage.

We have sent a clear message to our brain and nervous system that we can take control. Let's use this feeling of empowerment to practice Aware Appreciation.

What is ONE BIG THING that you appreciate right now? And, keep this in mind as you notice more things to appreciate as you move through your day.

08:33

Are you thinking about making a change in your life? Or, maybe a change was thrust on you ... without asking your permission. This episode is for anyone that is dealing with change in their life. In other words, it's for everyone! Whether the change you're dealing with is proactive or reactive, you are going to deal with many of the same issues.

When confronted with change, resistance shows up in all sorts of ways. We need to have some tools handy so we can let go gracefully.

09:04

When life presents us with an opportunity to let go, what does it look like when we are in resistance to that? Let's just explore a few examples that most people can relate to that are begging for us to let go of gracefully.

Let's start with a parent that has a college bound teenager. It is understandable. We hear about the "empty nester syndrome." The parent has become so accustomed to having their life revolve around their kids and what's good for their family. As it relates to having young people in the household, when they're confronted with going back to focusing on their own lives they don't know what that's going to look like. And, that's going to require some changes.

10:06

The way we resist this is rather than embracing it and saying, "Let me go back and dust off some old dreams." Or, "What have I been saying I didn't have time for that now I'm going to have some time freed up." When we're in resistance to something like this it looks like, "I'm going to just sit on the sofa and watch television and be depressed, sad, and lonely." You can see how we've got a choice there that we can make. We can either say, "I'm going to really use this time constructively." Or, "I'm going to resist."

Maybe you're in a job that you hate. You're always complaining about it and you talk regularly about how you need a new or better job ... how you really want to make a change. Now, you are confronted with a layoff or being fired. Or, maybe it hasn't come to that point yet but you're sitting back waiting for somebody else to take matters out of your hands so that you don't have to be the one to make a decision.

11:25 Here's another example, maybe you're in an abusive relationship and you are holding on to a promise you may have made early on in the relationship when everything was rosy. Or, if you are married you're holding on to the vows "for better or worse" and you've got yourself convinced that you need to stay in this abusive relationship to keep a commitment that you've made.

Commitments should definitely not be taken lightly but if you are in an abusive situation ... you are number one. You need to do whatever it is that you need to do for yourself to take care of yourself. Then work on the relationship and issues that are going to need to be addressed once you've stabilized your own situation and have extracted yourself from a situation that's causing ongoing abuse.

12:26 These are just several situations that we readily experience in our lives. Being in relationships that we know are not healthy for us. Engaging in work we don't enjoy just for the paycheck. Or, having a change happen, for example, an offspring making a transition in their lives. In that particular situation, we knew that was coming ... that it was going to happen at some point. But rather than preparing enough in advance, it has blindsided us ... and snuck up on us.

13:05 What is it going to take for us to release, in this situation, gracefully? We can start by identifying what isn't working in our lives. It can be helpful to sit down and take a few moments. Practice the Aware Appreciation Exercise and Breathing Exercise. Notice where you are seeing resistance come up. Maybe you are finding it challenging to find something to appreciate. This can shine a bit of a spotlight on places where you are in resistance to making a change that you need to make.

I'll share this example. A person that I know, Mary Jane, she and her partner lived in a very small home. She was into high fashion ... always looked fantastic and well-put together. I asked her at one point how in the world she

managed such an incredible wardrobe when she lived in a home ... I knew what kind of home she lived in with really small closets and not much storage. She said that every year she would go through her closets ... all of her clothes, everything she has ... and if she hadn't worn it in the last year she would give it away.

14:40

I have tried to exercise this several times in my life and I have not been able to be that relentless with letting go of things. I still convince myself that I'm going to need it or want it at some point. But, this is a great practice to really challenge ourselves. What do we really need to let go of? What are we constantly complaining about or allowing to be a source of ongoing frustration and irritation in our lives?

15:18

I will say that divine timing will take care of this. It may not feel like divine timing if we have not listened to the call of divine timing that's probably been knocking on our door. If we are hearing the call of divine timing, and we're still digging in our heels and resisting, then typically what's going to happen is the universe is going to take over and make it happen. This often feels very unpleasant and is a bumpy ride. It's definitely in our best interests to not resist to the point that we get what I like to call "whacked in the knees" and forced to deal with it.

16:05

How do we let go gracefully? What does this look like? Here's my ideas that you might apply to help you move through some sort of transition that you are needing to go through. One is to create a little ceremony. Create a goodbye party. We see this happen a lot when people are leaving one job and going to another job. Or, if your teenager is going off to college, throw a "congratulations on your new endeavor" party. Make a ceremony out of it. If this is not something you want to celebrate with other people, write a letter to yourself. And, when you feel like that letter has pretty much completed itself and you've said everything you need to say, burn the letter in a ceremony and let it go. Put it to rest.

17:06

It's also good to start to think about how you're going to replace whatever it is that you are letting go of in your life because any habit that you have is bringing you some relief ... regardless of what it is. That is a deep concept ... you might challenge me on it. But, I can show you how any habit or situation, even if it is unpleasant, is bringing you some relief.

One of the ways that we can embrace letting go and transitioning is to find a way to bring similar relief in healthier ways. If we just got rid of something, the universe is going to create a vacuum and that vacuum is going to suck in the new. We can just allow it to happen that way but, if you want to feel a little more proactive and you like living your life by design, I suggest that you begin to identify how you are going to replace the relief that this old habit or experience was creating.

18:20

Lastly, we can just take the approach that, "I'm just going to deal with it." Life happens. I'm feeling sad or depressed and I'm sure this too shall pass. Again, that is an approach that you can take and there is some value in what I refer to as wallowing. We just want to keep wallowing to as short of a period as humanly possible so that we can get on with living a full and fulfilling life. Shining that spotlight of awareness on the situation is what's going to help us do that and really embrace this letting go process.

19:03

What's your takeaway for today? One little "aha" and your time will be well spent.

Even wanted change is stressful. Most of us lead busy and full lives. Change requires that we add activities and decisions to an already full plate. No wonder we resist! It's inevitable though. So, we need to develop the resiliency to deal with whatever life puts on our path. That's why it's so important to put together your Spiritual Tool Chest™ in

advance. When you feel overwhelmed or frustrated, you will know what to do. You can use a tool you've had success with in the past and trust that it will provide the same support for the current dilemma. I have a resource for you that will make building your Spiritual Tool Chest™ easy. To get your copy, just visit AwarenessAddicts.com/Episodes and click on the link for this episode - number 15.

19:59

Question: I have a habit of making enemies out of people in my mind. I make up stories of what they are thinking about me ... especially when I put myself out there publicly. Even though I doubt the stories are true, that doesn't stop them from causing stress. How can I let go of this habit?

20:21

Dr. Gala Gorman: First, thanks for submitting your question. You've become aware of a habit that is not serving you. Good job! That's a great first step. Since you are questioning the validity of the stories you're making up in your mind, I imagine that you have some experience that has proven this to be the case. So, when you become aware that you've started creating a story like this, ask yourself, "Is it true?" Just posing a question to our own mind can interrupt the process. Your mind may argue its case but now you've created some mental separation. Rather than trying to push it back, embrace it. Tell that part of your mind that you appreciate how it's trying to protect you, but you're going to wait to see if there's any real evidence that there is eminent danger. This typically has a soothing effect that will ease the stress. Something else to consider ... your "habit" may have its

roots in attachment issues. A psychotherapist that specializes in attachment disorder can help you address it at its core. And, the work we do at Awareness Addicts will make formal therapy much more effective.

21:35

Announcer: Are you ready to create an attitude adjustment? Practicing Aware Appreciation will make a positive difference. You can access the Aware Appreciation Worksheet by visiting AwarenessAddicts.com/AA. In just a few minutes a day, you'll stop negativity in its tracks ... and gain some insight and awareness in the process.

Your feedback makes a difference. What part of this episode helped you the most? Join the Awareness Addicts Facebook group and share your thoughts. Make sure you leave a review wherever you've accessed the show. And, if you know others who could use some divine inspiration, share with them! Remember, all the links and resources are available at AwarenessAddicts.com/Episodes. Don't waste another moment feeling confused and stuck. As an Awareness Addict, you're alive, alert, awake and aware of life's possibilities.

22:29

Dr. Gala Gorman: What happens when we know we need to let go of something ... you name it ... and we resist? We may be able to get away with it for a while but eventually the consequences will mount. You may have seen examples where people have taken this to the extreme. They've become what is referred to as a "hoarder." Hoarding is a real

disorder but it doesn't have to be taken to the extreme of a diagnosable mental condition to cause you stress or harm. Don't think it could happen to you? Consider this ... hoarding shows up in life in ways that you may not initially recognize. Don't get blindsided. In the next episode, we'll explore hoarding and why it makes developing awareness much more challenging. You don't want to miss it.

23:13

Announcer: This was Awareness Addicts with Dr. Gala Gorman. For more information and to find any resources mentioned in this episode, visit AwarenessAddicts.com/Episodes. Thank you for tuning in.

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