

# Episode 0016

## Hoarding

Show Transcript



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Presented by Dr. Gala Gorman

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00:04

Dr. Gala Gorman: We might call this laziness or procrastination but it can just be a lack of vision.

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 16. In this episode, we are becoming aware of how we resist letting go of what no longer serves us. Hoarding is an extreme example, but it doesn't have to escalate to the point of becoming a diagnosable mental condition to cause you stress or harm. Don't think this applies to you? Consider this ... hoarding shows up in life in ways that you may not initially recognize. I'm Dr. Gala Gorman and in this episode of Awareness Addicts, we are going to make sure that you aren't blindsided by passive hoarding. Let's get started!

01:19

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

If you think that hoarding is not something that has to be dealt with on a regular basis, think again. This article from ABC7 in New York talks about the fact that the New York firefighters have been trained to battle not only dangerous

fires, but hoarding conditions as well. This radio call is quoted in the article. It says, “One six with a command, command come in, chief we have a medium clutter condition,” a firefighter said over the radio.

02:16

“A medium clutter condition is one of three levels a firefighter may encounter at a scene. In each case, the struggle is to get through piles and piles of debris.” We know that hoarding is a mental health condition and somebody doesn’t just change from being a hoarder one day to throwing everything out the next without a whole lot of help. If you know somebody who’s hoarding, it is really important to address it because as you can see here, this can turn into a really dangerous condition.

But, what I want us to become aware of is that this person didn’t become a hoarder by going out one day or over the course of a week and gather up all these things and say, “I just really want to feel like there is not a single space to move.” They brought these things in one by one. And little by little, they didn’t clear the clutter and they kept accumulating things.

03:28

As we go through this episode today, I want you to really think of spirit or source as the fire department. The fire department sometimes has to go to extremes to save us from ourselves, including causing damage to something that they might consider less valuable than human lives. Sometimes, the universe rips things away from us that we’re clinging to that are no longer serving us to help us clear that clutter out of our lives.

This is just a good observation and something to keep in mind as we work through this episode and find our resistance points.

04:13

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.

06:30

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. Taken to the extreme, this demonstrates itself as hoarding. You probably don't have a diagnosable mental case of hoarding but it can still be causing you stress or harm. Let's look for ways that hoarding shows up in our lives that we may not initially recognize. It makes developing awareness much more challenging.

07:01

As I've mentioned previously, hoarding is a real disorder. You may have seen programs on TV where they highlighted somebody who was a hoarder. If you haven't been exposed to that, it's quite shocking to see how things have piled up.

The way we tend to hoard though is behind closed doors or drawer fronts. One of the great examples that I can use here is my husband's father. Over the years, he collected stuff. After he passed away, I believe they found five different ladders. He may have had 20 different screwdrivers of the same size. Even more disturbing ... the attic was full of empty boxes. Everything they had purchased over the years ... the box that it came in had been stashed up in the attic, just in case it might be returned at some point.

08:15

One of the really disturbing finds was old toilet seats that they had replaced. He had saved the old toilet seats in the attic. I guess just in case he might need it at some point. We might be chuckling at this, but we all do this. We all have those drawers and closets that we have stuffed things in so that it is out of sight, out of mind and we don't have to deal with it right now.

There are legitimate reasons for let's call it "constructive hoarding." For example, we live near the beach. Rarely is it going to get cold enough here where I need sweaters or ski gear on a regular basis. But, I have ski gear and sweaters and I'm not going to get rid of all my ski gear and every

single sweater because on occasion I may want to go skiing in snow country. Or, I may travel to somewhere where it's cold and may need some cold weather clothing.

09:26

In that case, even though I may not use that regularly ... I may not even use it once a year ... but I know that there may come a time where I'm going to need it. The important thing for me is to apply a filter. I shouldn't be keeping enough snow gear or sweaters that somebody who lived in Alaska year-round would have in their wardrobe or in their closet. I need a few sweaters that would be appropriate for a week or 10-day trip to somewhere cold.

What tends to happen the way this stuff accumulates is we are not applying the filter. We're not saying, "Okay, there is some constructive hoarding that makes sense. But, how am I going to sort this out and make sure that I'm not keeping stuff that I really don't need?"

10:27

Over the years, I have moved way more times than I could count ... probably even on my fingers and toes. That moving has created the opportunity on numerous occasions to put things into storage. Boy, it's tough! Once it gets into storage, it's hard to motivate myself to go back and clean my storage out and get rid of it ... or, move it into some place where it actually will be put into constructive use. The garage (or an off-site storage unit, if you don't have a garage or if you've filled your garage to brimming over) is a great first place to start to observe how much stuff or junk you really are hoarding that may not be constructive.

11:21

It is so challenging, once it's there, to generate enough energy to go through it so it can be released. We might call this laziness or procrastination, but it can just be a lack of vision. "What am I going to do with it?" For example, we know a lot of what we have to go through needs to end up in the garbage, or going to a thrift store ... or something like that. Making a plan for where you are going to put things to

“stage” them on their way out can help us get over our procrastination.

12:08

I know some people will say, “I’m just waiting for a fire to burn the place down and then I don’t have to deal with it.” I encourage you to be careful what you ask for because this can show up in a lot of different ways. It’s definitely not the most graceful or elegant way of dealing with the mess that we’ve created. We want to be proactive in sifting through our clutter and decongesting ... doing what I call “divine decongestion.” Keep only what we really treasure and let go of what no longer serves us.

In order to heal this affliction, we want to really look for the ways that it is creating stress and causing us grief. It can even show up as health issues. Congestion can manifest itself in so many ways in our lives. In Chinese philosophy, Feng Shui applies not only to our space but our body as well. So, if the energy is not flowing in our space because we’ve got a lot of clutter, then that is spilling over into our physical presence.

13:31

It can also help us to ... once we’ve looked at this and said, “I’ve got to deal with this” ... come up with a big WHY. Why is it important to deal with it now? Let’s demonstrate that we have trust ... that we have everything that we need. That is really what this decongestion process requires. When we hold onto things, it is like we are saying that we don’t trust that we are going to have what we need when we need it.

14:02

Letting things go is an exercise in abundance mentality and trusting in the divine flow. Practically speaking, this decongestion process, the process of decluttering, is usually a messy job. Wherever we’ve stashed it, it’s probably collected dust and it is going to be messy and feel less organized before it feels more organized. If you’ve got somebody ... even if you have a housekeeper, hire your housekeeper to stay on a few extra hours and help you sift through it, bag it up, and move through the process more

quickly. If you can make it as painless as humanly possible, you have less resistance to the process.

15:01

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

We all have that drawer or closet (most likely both) that has become a Pandora's Box of stagnant energy. Out of sight, out of mind, right? Not really. It is taking up mind share and creating congestion. If you'd like to add some space in your life for new experiences, nothing works like clearing out our old unused "stuff" to get the energy flowing. Make a list of several places that need to be cleared out and organized. Then, just get started. Even if you don't have time to finish it in one session, you'll make some progress. It never seems to be as bad or take as long as you think. And, you will feel so light when it's finished. Don't take my word for it though. You've got to experience this one for yourself. Let me know how it goes!

16:00

Question:

I live with my family and have been working nonstop to save for my future. They are always asking for money and I don't feel like I can say, "No." I know they need money because they have not been able to find work. I am thankful that I have a job but how can I honestly say I'm grateful for being broke ... when I am working so much?

16:25

Dr. Gala Gorman: First, thanks for submitting your question. Expressing gratitude for something we're not grateful for is counter-productive. I don't advise it. Rather, I urge you to practice Aware Appreciation. We can always find something to appreciate. You can get your copy of the Quick Start Guide at [AwarenessAddicts.com/AA](http://AwarenessAddicts.com/AA).



You have another issue that must be addressed for you to live a satisfying life. Giving your family money is enabling them and is most likely due to a condition known as codependence. Without arresting this condition and setting personal boundaries that you can hold, any progress you make will be quickly diverted. You must learn to say “No.” Once you begin to heal your codependence, you will be able to deny their requests in a loving and caring way ... and allow them to react with anger while still holding your boundary. In the long run, your rescuing them financially is not helping them. They need to create their own resources and sources of abundance.

17:31

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](http://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](http://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.

18:30

Dr. Gala Gorman: Do you find yourself complaining regularly about some condition in your life? This may require a bit of internal investigation ... also known as applied awareness. When we are repeatedly dealing with a situation that causes us to

express dissatisfaction, there is something at work in our subconscious. We are committed to something that we are not consciously aware of. Why would we commit ourselves to something that doesn't make us happy? In the next episode, we'll unravel this mystery and learn how to shift what has caught our attention. You don't want to miss it.

19:10

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](http://AwarenessAddicts.com/Episodes). Thank you for tuning in.

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