

HELP! I MAY BE A HOARDER

It has been said that one man's trash might be another man's treasure. I remember years ago when there was a junk yard or dump in every town.

It was a favorite place to go look for something if you needed it or just go snoop around to see who got rid of what. Many times we would take things to get rid of to the dump and come home with more than we took.

If, for instance, someone collected jars or bottles, the dump was the place to go to maybe find that unique piece for your collection. There were usually all kinds of soda bottles, mason jars, beer bottles and half empty perfume bottles to be acquired at the town dump.

A lot of people love going to flea markets and garage sales to find something for their collections that they just can't live without. You may call them collectors or they may even be a type of hoarder.

Is there a difference between hoarding and collecting? They say that every culture and everyone collects something, but when does collecting turn into an obsession and when does an obsession turn into hoarding?

My son used to and now my little grandsons collect and play with Matchbox cars. They have cases full of the little cars. However, if one is missing they know. Some of the older cars my son had may be collectors items by now.

Someone I know has bunches and stacks of old air craft magazines. They date as far back as the 1960's. They are all arranged in order by date. Even though the collection has not been added to or moved for 20 years, he would know if one were missing or out of place. Now I

wonder if this type of behavior is collecting or hoarding? My first thought is, “who would want these old magazines?” But like we said, “One man’s trash is another one’s treasure.”

Do you remember when the Beanie Babies were a popular item and people collected them? I had friends who would get up at the crack of dawn and wait for hours to buy the latest Beanie Baby on the market. They simply had to have one of each kind or the world would come to an end.

I don't know if they still make Beanie Babies or if anyone still collects them, but those collectors had fun with the thrill of just finding and getting a new one.

I would call myself a type of a hoarder. I buy lots of different kinds of makeup. If I get home and don't like it, I still keep it. My bathroom cupboards are full of old makeup I can't part with. I am not collecting makeup, I just can't stand to get rid of it.

I also probably have over 75 pairs of shoes and I don't even collect shoes. A lot of them hurt my feet, some are worn out and some are just plain ugly. But, I just can't bring myself to throw any of them away.

I have the same problem trying to get rid of old clothes. I keep thinking maybe I will lose 20 pounds and get back into some of those tight fitting jeans or perhaps my bell bottoms will come back in style. I just can't part with them.

While we know that people are collectors of all kinds of various items, I was surprised at some of the strange collections that people have. Some people collect navel lint, dryer lint, napkins, air sickness bags (barf bags), handcuffs, sugar packets, toothpaste, burnt items, and nail clippings just to name a few.

But, who are we to judge and make the decision if someone is a collector or a hoarder?

You never know if or when something you have or collect may be worth something to someone else. Personally, I don't think I would collect navel fuzz or nail clippings, but I say to those who do, "Happy collecting."

Do you collect anything? Have you ever been to a junk yard? Do you believe that people can be collectors and hoarders as well?

Let me know and I'll give you a Penny for Your Thoughts.