

Vehicle Restoring Diseases

I do not know if you have come across the restoring disease of 'Hoarding' yet, or the associated and more serious disease of 'Never Mind the Cost'. These diseases are quite wide spread, not talked about very much, and little understood.

Those with the 'Hoarding' disease tend to fall into two camps. Those who hoard and restore, and those hoard and talk about restoring. The 'Never Mind the Cost' disease strikes restorers mainly, but can spread quickly to restorers wives / partners. The latter group, being very astute, have already recognised the disease and taken action to cure it by forming **R**estorers **W**ives/**P**artners **A**nonymous (**RWPA**). They normally have their meetings at rallies where you will see them huddled in groups away from the cars and their husbands/partners talking about where the housekeeping money is going. At least that is what I think they are talking about.

Initial Symptoms

It seems that when you first get into restoring cars/bikes/trucks/stationary engines, your needs are simple. Something easy - a simple, relative inexpensive restoration. You manage to successfully complete the restoration and then proceed to showing off your handy work at Club Runs and Static Displays. However, all the time you have in the back of your mind, almost without realising it, this vision of a particular model or models. If you have some years on the clock it will probably be a pre WW2 Sports Tourer. If you are post WW2, then it will be a '50s or '60s Muscle Car or Sports Car. You read an article on restoring a particular model of interest and immediately scan all the photos into the computer, collect a few more from the internet, blow them all up to A4 and print them off on the colour printer. You hang all the pictures for better viewing and expect everyone in the household to share your enthusiasm.

Out of the blue, when you can least afford it, the dream model is offered by a friend of a friend – condition is not as good as you had hoped, but what the hell – price is good for this model, it is restorable and can be done over a few years to spread the costs. You now find it difficult to make progress on the 'Current Project' and it gets pushed to the back of the shed as the new project is started. This is the start of the 'Hoarding' disease and it requires considerable self-discipline to resist it. A reminder by the local RWPA member regarding the amount of money you have already put into the current project is often necessary to restore a sense of balance and to make sure you retrieve it from the back of the shed.

The effects of the disease

If you succumb to the onset of the disease and are lucky enough to have an auto accessories shop nearby, you immediately lay in a stock of parts ready to start, and wonder how such a little amount could cost so much. This is a sign that the associated '**N**ever **M**ind the **C**ost' disease has started as well. You always seem to end up talking to someone who convinces you to make it bigger/better/faster.

If you are fortunate enough to get to travel overseas, you will always find time to visit the local auto museum or spares reproduction shop if one is nearby. Try to leave a reasonable amount of time for these visits, or else you tend to panic and buy more than you need, thereby exacerbating the onset of 'Never Mind the Cost' disease. When you run out of cash and start using the Credit Card then the "Never Mind the Cost" disease has really taken hold. However remember that you may not pass that way again and some of those accessories will really be useful. You need a good memory to avoid duplication though, for you can arrive home and find you already have several of the same sort of thing that you bought last year and this can make you feel a little guilty. Keeping things in a cupboard in boxes is a good way to ease

this guilt because you don't see how many parts you have bought over the years until they start spilling out of the boxes. It also avoids the RWPA member seeing how much you bought as well. After a few years you will have cupboards and boxes stuffed full of manuals, engine parts and accessories, sufficient to start your own retail shop. The 'Hoarding' disease has by now really taken hold and you can start to feel despondent, particularly if you have not started to build your dream. It is funny how the enthusiasm for a dream decreases in direct proportion to the proximity to the available workspace. Possibly this is another symptom.

A possible cure.

You may feel by now that there is no cure for these diseases, however take heart. Many Clubs have become aware of the existence of them and are trying to effect cures. "Restorers Anonymous' groups are run every month where you can go and share experiences of the affliction. These are normally called Club Nights, where the hoard and never restore types are often prominent. However the best cure so far is the Club Swap Meets. This allows the afflicted restorers to seek cures by bringing all of those things they have hoarded over the years and selling them at bargain prices. You have to be careful though, for if one is not completely cured, you end up taking home more than you brought with you.

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