



News Category Menu

[Psychology / Psychiatry](#)
[Categories A-B](#) >

[Categories C-D](#) >

[Categories E-G](#) >

[Categories H-L](#) >

[Categories M-O](#) >

[Categories P-R](#) >

[Categories S-Z](#) >

[View full category list](#)

Your News

[Popular News By Year](#) >

[Personalize Your Homepage](#)
[Weekly Newsletters](#)
[Daily News Alerts](#)
[Follow Us On Twitter](#)

Featured Information Hubs

[Hemophilia](#)
[Pneumococcal Disease](#)
[Other Information Hubs](#) >

[All 'What Is...' Articles](#)

Conditions Information

[IBM Health Device Event](#)

Other Navigation Links

[About Us](#)
[News Licensing](#)
[Free Website Feeds](#)
[Free Tools & Content](#)
[Tell a Friend](#)
[Accessibility](#)
[Help / FAQ](#)
[Article Submission](#)
[Links](#)
[Contact Us](#)

Clinical Trials

Medical News Today



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In Vulnerable People, OCD Can Be Triggered By Collectibles

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Article Date: 16 Mar 2011 - 3:00 PDT

29

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[opinions](#)
[Like](#) 3

Although collecting articles with moderation has good psychological effects on collectors, this habit can become a psychological disorder.

The massive marketing campaigns launched by publishing houses at the start of the academic year can cause people bound to suffer **obsessive-compulsive disorder** to develop this pathology before. The fact is that collecting articles without control is a symptom of this serious psychological disorder - one of which most known variants is Diogenes syndrome - and of shopping **addiction**. These are two mental disorders affecting approximately 12% of the population.

Porcelain dolls, precious stones, world thimbles, watches, fans, dinosaurs, language courses, and tanks and ships in parts are some of the articles that often crowd our stands. In principle, and "as long as this hobby is performed under control" collecting items is good from the psychological point of view, as it helps in developing positive skills and attitudes as perseverance, order, patience or memory - among other.

However, professor Francisca López Torrecillas at the Department of Personality, Psychological Assessment and Treatment of the University of Granada, and an expert on addictions, warns that in the recent years, "a very significant increase has been observed of cases where uncontrolled collecting has caused obsessive-compulsive disorder and shopping addiction".

Perfectionism and Meticulousness

The researcher points out that certain attitudes as the need of control, perfectionism, meticulousness and extreme order "are very frequent traits in people who likes collecting articles. However, they are also closely related to the psychological disorders mentioned above".

López Torrecillas states that collecting can become an obsession, and so, a disorder "in individuals specially vulnerable", i.e. individuals with low self-esteem, poor social skills and difficulty in facing problems". When people have this feeling of personal inefficiency, "compulsive collecting helps them in feeling better".

The University of Granada professor affirms that "the excessive pressure and aggressive marketing that many publishing houses employ in certain months through the media may cause individuals bound to suffer this disorder to develop it".

Nonetheless, López Torrecillas states that, as it occurs with other things in life "controlled collecting has numerous benefits from the psychological point of view", and she warns that "further study is needed in this field of research".

Source:

Francisca Lopez Torrecillas
University of Granada

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