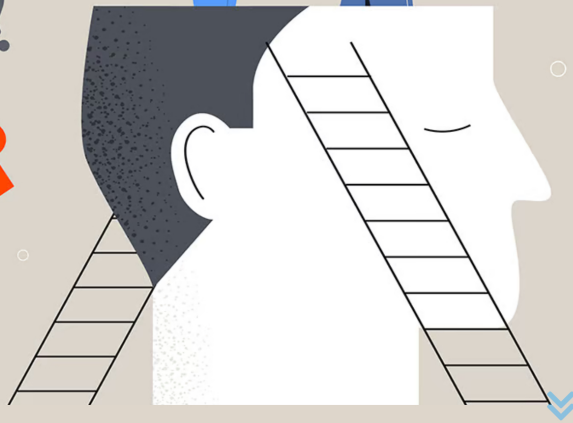




# Finding Clarity by Taming

## MIND CLUTTER

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## Features



### Cover Story: Finding Clarity by Taming Mind Clutter

Start the new year with a fresh mind to maximize productivity... decluttering your mind!  
By Shauna Parsons



### OSHA Recordkeeping and Reporting for Restoration Companies

Learn the importance of record keeping and reporting for companies to help avoid issues when having a potential OSHA inspection.  
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### Listening: 5 Steps for Smoother Interactions and Fewer Hiccups

Listening is key to any thriving relationship, Lisa shares with us just how important the skill of listening is within the business structure.  
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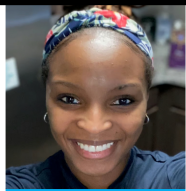
An eNewsletter delivering a blast of education to help enrich your restoration, remediation and cleaning business practices or be a stepping stone for those starting out needing more information.



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Myldred Ingram



# Editorial Comment

## A Path to Peace of Mind



In today's fast-paced world, it's easy to feel overwhelmed by the constant demands and expectations placed upon us. We often find ourselves saying "yes" to every request, fearing that saying "no" will lead to disappointment or conflict.

However, learning the art of saying no can be a powerful tool for reclaiming our time, energy, and ultimately, our peace of mind. Within this note we will explore the importance of setting boundaries, the benefits of saying no, and practical tips for gracefully declining requests.

To Start it is imperative understand the power of Boundaries. Setting boundaries is crucial for maintaining a healthy work-life balance and protecting our mental well-being. By clearly defining our limits, we can prevent burnout and ensure that our time and energy are allocated to the things that truly matter to us. Saying no is an essential aspect of establishing and enforcing these boundaries.

Second, is understanding the positive benefits of saying no. Saying no allows us to prioritize our own needs and goals. It empowers us to focus on what truly aligns with our values and passions. By declining requests that don't serve us, we create space for activities that bring us joy, fulfillment, and personal growth. Saying no also fosters authenticity and builds trust in our relationships, as it shows that we value our own time and respect the boundaries of others.

The following are strategies that can be used when needing or wanting to decline in any situation.

- **Be Honest and Direct:** When declining a request, it's important to be honest about your reasons for saying no. Express your gratitude for the opportunity and explain why the request doesn't align with your current priorities or capacity. Being direct and transparent can help avoid misunderstandings and build trust.
- **Offer Alternatives:** If you genuinely want to help but are unable to fulfill the request, consider suggesting alternative solutions or recommending someone who may be better suited for the task. This shows that you care and are willing to support in other ways, while still respecting your own boundaries.
- **Practice Self-Reflection:** Take the time to reflect on your own needs and priorities. By understanding what truly matters to you, you can make more informed decisions about where to invest your time and energy. This self-awareness will make it easier to confidently say no when necessary.
- **Practice Saying No:** Like any skill, saying no gracefully takes practice. Start by saying no to smaller requests and gradually work your way up to more significant commitments. Remember, saying no is not a selfish act, but a necessary step towards self-care and maintaining peace of mind.

Mastering the art of saying no is an invaluable skill that can bring us peace of mind, protect our well-being, and allow us to live a more fulfilling life. By setting boundaries, prioritizing our needs, and communicating honestly, we can confidently decline requests that don't align with our values and goals. Remember, saying no is not a rejection, but a conscious choice to invest in ourselves and create a life that brings us joy and contentment.

*Myldred Ingram*

Myldred Ingram  
R&R Editor-in-chief





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# Finding Clarity by Taming Mind Clutter

Shauna Parsons


We all have limited time to reach our goals, so the time we do have is far too precious to waste on noise. The buzzing that is all around us can steal our focus and take our attention away from what is really important. The noise of the day, the frenzy of calls and tasks, the fires to put out at work (and sometimes at home) can all serve as constant distractions for the mind.

Given the opportunity, the mind prefers to work on the many small tasks rather than the big thoughts. It's easier and more fun for our brain. But it's in the big thoughts that we find the big ideas for our big future.

In order to make way for the big thoughts, we must periodically clear our mind of the clutter and make time to be as mentally still as we can. The brain serves us all day and this is its recharge. It is in this stillness of the mind that the big thoughts have space to grow.

When we are able to find and maintain a level of stillness, we can become almost superhuman with surprising clarity, capabilities, and contentment. But even once realized, stillness doesn't stick around without work. Although our mind enjoys stillness, impulses are its enemy. Given the opportunity, the mind will jump on whatever distraction comes its way.

Mind clutter doesn't just block the big, visionary ideas. It gets in the way of everyday decisions that we make. Every leader has stories to tell about times when they made a decision that they shouldn't have. I know I have a few. It's usually because I felt overwhelmed or under pressure, with a mind that was tired from the clutter of it all.




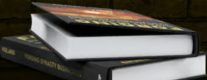
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The time to make a quick judgement is not when stress is clouding our view. With clarity of thought being blurred by the stress of the immediate issue, we can make the wrong decision. Everything changed for me when I learned to take the time to calm myself and consider my options.

When I find stress, anger, or frustration taking over, I take deep breaths, a short walk, run an errand with the music cranked up—whatever I need to do to center myself. Afterward, I find I can see things more clearly and make better decisions. What's funny is that sometimes, just by taking that time to step away, I find the need for a decision has gone away. Either it was a situation that I realized could fix itself or someone else had already handled it.

Here are some additional ways that I have found to curb the mental clutter.

### Carve out time for your mind to be quiet

This doesn't mean you need to just sit in a corner. Instead, it can be an active time for your body but quiet time for your mind.

Although quiet time for me is key to my productivity and focus, a few years ago, I wouldn't have said this. I was working all the time but not being as effective as I should have been. I mustered the courage and went to a meditation class. It ended up being awesome! I left there feeling empowered yet relaxed and knew this new tool was going to be a game changer for me.

Since then, I always add some form of meditation into my schedule. What this looks like are quiet activities such as a walk alone, a massage, exercise, or a hike to a beautiful view. All of these are meant to give my mind a rest so it can recharge and serve me better.

### Limit the inputs

Be aware of the source of your noise and work to limit it. For some the noise is social media, TV, or the barrage of other info being projected toward us at all times. For others it's coworkers who rely on our help too much. For parents it is the array of responsibilities and activities that go along with having kids.

There is a line between what actually needs our attention and what is just taking it. We need to be at our kid's soccer game, but we don't need to run the concession stand. We need to be available to help coworkers with things that fall under our expertise, but we don't need to solve all their problems.

All these things are not just taking our time, but they are fogging up our brain. Instead of using our mind to work through the things on our priority list, it's thinking about the things on other people's lists. Our mind thinks it's fun to be in the middle of everything, so unless we control the inputs, it will keep having a grand ol' time wallowing in the clutter.



### Stop overthinking

Overthinking is the art of creating problems that were never even there. We make things harder by overthinking. It causes slowdowns in productivity, shakes our confidence, and often just makes things worse. Many times we already hold solutions to the problems that we are overthinking. All we need to do is slow down. As the fog of the mind clutter clears, often the answer appears.

Over thinkers must find ways to halt the overthinking train when it starts. Some tactics that have worked for others include walking away from the issue and resetting, isolating the issue using visual methods such as diagramming on a whiteboard or writing in a journal, and using the classic "count to ten" method. It's important to put a plan in place for when we overthink, so we will know how to work it. Perhaps, over time, we will be able to replace our plan entirely with a clearer mind.

### Learn more

Once we limit our inputs, then we need to replace the noise with something useful for our mind to chew on. But we need to be careful not to replace noise with different noise. Instead, we should find constructive input that feeds our mind in a useful way. Listening to an audiobook or podcast is a great way to impart useful info as long as we're not using it to drown out the quiet time. Even with good inputs, our mind will need the quiet time to process and recharge.

I block off time on my calendar for learning. This is when I read, take an online class, or do research. My learning time is a fixed part of my schedule that I won't change for many things. I find that it gives my brain not just the intellectual fuel to serve me later but the quiet time of no distractions, just a gentle flow of good input.



### Find a mentor

We all have someone we aspire to be like. I don't mean someone who has the job or business that we want, although we should have that person too. I mean the person who appears to be calm in the face of chaos, seems to always be present, and looks like they have it all under control. With a mentor, not only will we learn a lot, but we will have an accountability partner for when things go off the rails.

To get the most out of a mentorship, I suggest spending some time together. Although quick calls are good once the relationship is established, you will get more out of it if you actually spend some time with them. Invite them on a fishing trip or to a baseball game. Find a way to carve out time where you can talk but not be rushed.

I used to golf, not because I like to golf, but because it was a great way to spend time with a man who intrigued me with his refined, gentlemanly exterior and incredibly kind heart. He was retired after spending his career in a high-pressure profession. He always seemed so relaxed and in control, even when his golf game wasn't great that day, so spending time chatting with him and getting a glimpse at the world through his eyes was enlightening and gave me a level of calmness to live up to.

In the face of constant distractions and increasing demands on our time, the power to simplify and focus our mind lies within us. Each of the strategies listed above offers a path toward mental clarity and heightened productivity. I invite you to embark on this journey of transformation. Choose one method from the list, integrate it into your daily routine, and observe the difference it makes. You may be surprised to find how even a single, subtle shift can open doors to profound changes, not just within yourself but also in your relationships and interactions with others.



**Shauna Parsons** is a business development advisor for Violand Management Associates (VMA), a highly respected consulting company in the restoration and cleaning industries. As the former owner of a concrete and foundation repair business, Parsons has a deep understanding of business operations and uses her knowledge to help businesses run more effectively and grow, while building the company's culture. To reach her, visit [Violand.com](http://Violand.com) or call (800) 360-3513.



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# OSHA Recordkeeping and Reporting for Restoration Companies



By Barry Rice

Throughout my travels it has been common for me to find a Restoration Company not posting an OSHA 300 Log. In the big picture of safety, this certainly is not a huge issue – posting a 300 Log does not make you safer! However, I believe this topic falls into the category of “Cracking the Door Open”.

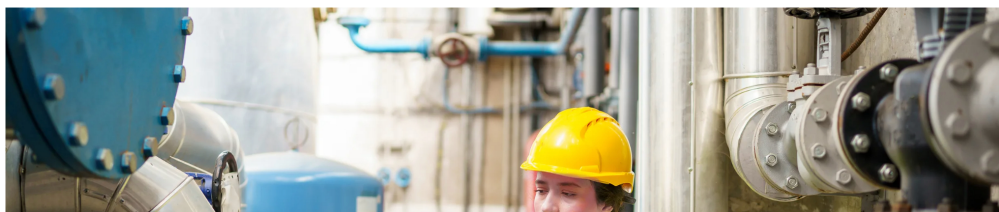
Let me explain. Envision a Restoration Company that somehow ends up with an OSHA Inspection in their office or warehouse. The inspector begins looking deeper and further for infractions and notices there isn't a 300 Log posted. I consider this a door cracked open that leads to further questions and investigation into how injuries are managed, recorded, etc.

In this article I'm going to give you an overview of the OSHA's recordkeeping and reporting requirements and how you can keep that door from being cracked open.

## What is Recordkeeping and Reporting?

This is quite simple:

- Recordkeeping is maintaining an OSHA 300 log that documents details of employee injuries and illnesses.
- Reporting is informing OSHA of specific types of injuries within certain timeframes.







### What OSHA Expects

OSHA Part 1904 lays out the requirements for recordkeeping and reporting. (1) Some Restoration Companies will meet the requirements and others won't. There are two exemptions that sort this out. The first exemption is for companies with ten or fewer employees; they will not need to maintain an OSHA 300 Log. See the following section on exemptions for more details.

The second exemption is for companies working in a low-hazard industry. To understand the industry hazard level, the company will need to determine its SIC or NAICS Code. I have always used the NAICS Code, so I'm going to cover that. Please see the next section for details.

If your company does not meet either of these two exemptions, OSHA expects you to maintain and post a 300 Log.

### NAICS Codes and the Restoration Industry

The acronym NAICS stands for North American Industry Classification System. The system has 6-digit numerical codes for different types of businesses (e.g. roofing, auto dealers and bakeries). A company picks their NAICS Code; nobody assigns it to you.

Restoration Businesses do not have their own NAICS Code. Instead, we must fit ourselves into a relatively similar industry. The most commonly used code I have seen is 236220. This code is for "Commercial and Institutional Building Construction" and further expands into "Addition, alteration and renovation, commercial and institutional building".

(2) I give you this information only as a reference; your interpretation may differ and I encourage you to research if other codes make more sense for your company.

You can get help determining your Code through the NAICS website and their NAICS Lookup Help page. (3)

### OSHA 300 Log

The 300 Log is a three-part form that can be a handwritten hard copy, a fillable PDF form, or an Excel spreadsheet. The three parts are as follows:

Form 300: this part identifies the employee, describes the injury/illness case, and classifies it.

Form 300A: this is the part that summarizes your cases over the course of the year and is posted the following February 1<sup>st</sup> through May 1<sup>st</sup>. It contains your company information, NAICS Code, number of employees, total employee work hours, and the signature of a company executive.

Form 301: this part contains the incident report for each reported case. It contains details about the employee, the treating physician, and what specifically happened.

Please see the Resources Section to get downloadable 300 Logs and instructions.

### Recordable Injuries

It is important to understand that only "recordable" injuries and illnesses are entered into the 300 Log. Here are some examples of recordable injuries (4):

- Stitches
- Broken bones
- Passing out
- Doctor-prescribed medication
- Doctor ordered days away from work
- Doctor ordered restricted/limited work duty

### Here are some examples of non-recordable injuries (5):

- Minor injuries treated with First Aid (e.g. abrasions, scratches)
- Butterfly bandage, Band-Aids, or Steri-Strips applied to a cut
- Taking nonprescription medication
- Tetanus shots

- Hot or cold therapy
- Drilling a fingernail or toenail to relieve pressure
- Splinter removal
- Removal of foreign bodies from the eye with only irrigation or cotton swab

#### Notes:

- See the Resources Section to help determine what is recordable.
- States that have their own OSHA Program generally have a specific 300 Log (e.g. Michigan and California). Check with your State to see if you need to use their form.

#### Exemptions

Let me repeat how a company can be exempted from maintaining a 300 Log. Your company has to meet one of these criteria to be exempt (6):

You have 10 or less employees at all times throughout the previous year. The key qualifier is "...at all times..." That means if you had 11 employees for three months and then dropped back to 10 employees, you are not exempt.

Your NAICS Code is considered a low-hazard industry. See the Fact Sheet in (6) of the References Section to verify this.

Warning: I have not seen an NAICS Code in the exemption list that would fit the Restoration Industry. As previously mentioned, we are lumped in with the Construction Industry and therefore considered a high-risk industry.

#### Maintaining and Posting a Log

Finally, we arrive at companies who qualify for maintaining a 300 Log. Maintaining is simply recording information when you have a recordable injury. Be sure to complete pages 1 and 3 of the 300 Log collection.

Posting involves completing all the information on the 300A form. On the left side of the form, you total everything recorded on the 300 Form (first page) onto the 300A (second page). On the right side of the form, you will need complete your company information, the average number of employees throughout the previous year, and the total labor hours worked by those employees. Finally, a company executive will need to sign and date the form.

At this point, you are ready to post. Every year, 300A Logs are to be posted on February 1 and remain posted until April 30. On May 1, you can remove the posting. Be sure to post in a common area where employees can see it, like a break room or common hallway.

#### Electronic Submission of Records

Some employers will be required to take the additional step of electronically submitting their 300 Log to OSHA. Here is OSHA's list of exemptions for electronic reporting; if you meet any of these criteria then you don't have to report (7):

- The establishment's peak employment during the previous calendar year was **19 or fewer**, regardless of the establishment's industry.
- The establishment's industry is on [Appendix A to Subpart B](#) of OSHA's recordkeeping regulation, regardless of the size of the establishment.
- The establishment had a peak employment between 20 and 249 employees during the previous calendar year AND the establishment's industry is *NOT* on [Appendix A to Subpart E](#) of OSHA's recordkeeping regulation.

For the sake of keeping this article relatively short, please refer to (7) in the references section for further details.

#### OSHA Severe Injury Reporting

This [reporting requirement](#) is completely separate from the OSHA 300 Log!

OSHA expects any employer to report the following injuries (8):



- All employers are required to notify OSHA when an employee is killed on the job or suffers a work-related hospitalization, amputation, or loss of an eye.
- A fatality must be reported within 8 hours.
- An in-patient hospitalization, amputation, or eye loss must be reported within 24 hours.

Please refer to (8) in the references section for details.

When I started writing this article, I thought it would be simple and straight-forward. Then I got into the details and realized how complicated it can be! Further, I have barely scratched the surface on other details. Please reach out to a Safety Professional, an OSHA Office, or attend a workshop in your State to verify you understand what's expected of you and get all your questions answered.

I stand by my statement that if your company is inspected by OSHA, this is a topic that can crack open the door to many other questions and potential violations. I strongly recommend Restoration Companies evaluate if they qualify for maintaining an OSHA 300 log and understand when you should report serious injuries.

## Resources

OSHA 300 Logs:

- Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Injury & Illness Recordkeeping Forms – 300, 300A, 301. <https://www.osha.gov/recordkeeping/forms>

Determining a Recordable Injury:

- Occupational Safety and Health Administration, OSHA Forms for Recording Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses, Page 2, An Overview: Recording Work-related Injuries and Illnesses. <https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/OSHA-RK-Forms-Package.pdf>
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Recording and Reporting Occupational Injuries and Illnesses, 1904.7. <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1904/1904.7>

Occupational Safety and Health Administration, OSHA Injury and Illness Recordkeeping and Reporting Requirements. <https://www.osha.gov/recordkeeping>

OSHA National New Release, Department of Labor announces rule expanding submission requirements for injury, illness data provided by employers in high-hazard industries, July 17, 2023.

<https://www.osha.gov/news/newsreleases/national/07172023>

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3. North American Industry Classification System, NAICS Lookup Help. <https://www.naics.com/naics-identification-help/>
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**Barry Rice** is a Certified Safety Professional (CSP) with over 20 years of experience. He is the Environmental, Health, and Safety (EHS) Director for Signal Restoration Service's family of companies that includes Signal, PuroClean, and others. Mr. Rice has supported EHS efforts in various industries, including environmental restoration, heavy industrial manufacturing, mechanical field service, automotive and aircraft manufacturing support, residential and commercial construction, and disaster restoration. If you have questions or would like to speak to Barry, he can be reached at 248-878-5662 or [barrynrice@gmail.com](mailto:barrynrice@gmail.com).





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# Listening: 5 Steps for Smoother Interactions and Fewer Hiccups



Photo credit: Getty Images

By Lisa Lavender

In our fast-paced industry, the importance of good communication skills cannot be overstated. Taking a moment to reflect on our day-to-day experiences, we recognize how often our challenges and triumphs are intertwined with the quality of our communication.

While salespeople are typically trained in the art of listening for relationship building and sales success, it's crucial to extend this focus to all members of our organizations. Even in the age of digital workflows, verbal communication remains a cornerstone of our internal and external relationships. However, when it goes wrong, the consequences can be significant.

### What's at Stake?

- **Customer Service:** Frustration and mistakes can arise when customers provide instructions, answers, or expectations that are ignored, missed, or forgotten.
- **Internal Relationships:** In leadership roles, failing to listen to our teams can damage relationships, erode company culture, and disengage the team.
- **Execution of Projects and Services:** Miscommunication leads to inefficiencies and hiccups in operations that can affect timelines, cause duplication of effort and degrade service deployment.

### What can we do to improve listening, reduce the hiccups, and have better outcomes?

- Provide clearly defined and concise information and instructions to guide your teams effectively.
- Treat the skill of listening as a requirement for various positions within the organization. Include the attribute in your employee evaluations and give honest feedback.
- Make it a part of Employee Training. Using the techniques below, practice and develop the team's listening skills and gain confidence when dealing with a wide variety of scenarios. This is an effective training principle of: Learn > Do > Collect Feedback > Repeat.
  - **Write it Down:** Emphasize the importance of writing down important details during discussions, meetings, and when given instructions. Encourage the use of notepads or digital equivalents. This would sound like, "Let me review what needs to be done on the job ... grab a notepad."
  - **Read Back:** Establish the practice of repeating instructions or key information back to the speaker to ensure clarity. This simple step can prevent misunderstandings and errors. Sounds like, "Great! Thank you, Joe. Could you please read back the plan so we can make sure we are on the same page and none of the details get missed."
  - **Accountability:** When encountering situations where instructions are **not** followed, inquire whether the information was documented and if the team member read it back. This applies to both internal and customer communications.

- **Lead by Example:** Incorporate these techniques yourself and demonstrate active listening in your day-to-day interactions and coach team members to do the same. This will reinforce these important behaviors and impart them into your culture.

**Finally, I offer some simple steps to help us, and our teams listen better:**

1. **Choose to Listen:** Recognize the objective of each communication and deliberately focus on the interaction. Examples of objectives in our operations may be:
  - a. A customer's instructions, expectations, and questions that need follow-up.
  - b. A supervisor reviewing a protocol or scope of work.
  - c. A direct report communicating a difficult situation, goals for the day/week, or ideas to help the company.
2. **Maintain Eye Contact:** This helps the listener focus and the speaker feel engaged and respected in the communication.
3. **Body Language:** Pay attention and listen to signals in body language.
4. **Minimize Distractions:** no multi-tasking, put down your phone, turn and face the speaker.
5. **Write It Down:** Actively engage with information by taking notes during customer interactions, team discussions, and meetings.
6. **Clarify:** If anything is unclear, ask simple and clear follow-up questions at the appropriate time in the conversation.
7. **Read Back and Confirm:** Repeat key information to the speaker to ensure accuracy and alignment. This not only helps us capture everything as a listener, it contributes to a positive relationship with the other member(s) of the interaction.

We can enhance our listening skills, strengthen team communication, improve customer service and ultimately contribute to the success of our organizations by developing the skill of listening. It is not just for the sales team. May better listening bring you and your teams much *Restoring Success*.



**Lisa Lavender** holds a BS in accounting from Penn State and is an IICRC Master Fire, Water and Textile Restorer. As chief operating officer and co-owner of both Restoration Technical Institute and Berks · Fire · Water Restorations, Inc., Lavender has over 20 years of experience in the restoration and reconstruction industry, and has been involved in the training other restoration professionals since 2012. In 2018, has expanded her passion for serving other restorers by partnering and becoming VP of operations design for iRestore software. In addition to contributing to the running of the operations of her organizations, she authors a monthly column for R&R, Restoring Success, writes, instructs and develops courses and materials in the pursuit of her passion to give knowledge, passion, and inspiration to others for success in the industry. You can reach her at [lisa@RTILearning.com](mailto:lisa@RTILearning.com).



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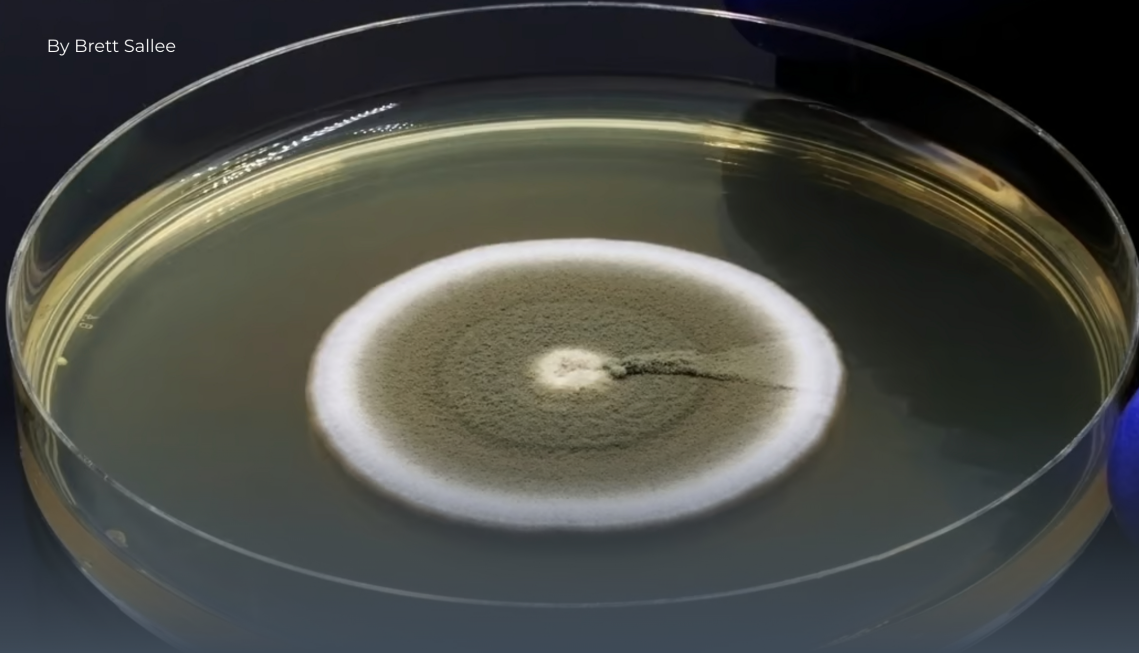
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# MYCOTOXINS: The Menace behind the Mask

By Brett Sallee



In the mold remediation industry, the primary focus in regard to potentially harmful health effects, has historically been centered around mold colonies and the spores they release into the building environment, and that may well be a valid concern.

Let us assume we have an environment that has visible mold growth (black or otherwise). Perhaps joined with some type of air quality testing that indicates an elevated level of mold spores. Now, let us further suppose under those conditions that we also have building occupants that are experiencing negative health effects, perhaps severely so. Imagine this happening repeatedly throughout the years, to more and more people. It would be understandable to conclude that the mold (cause) is the menace creating the health problem (effect).

Now to be sure, mold itself can have deleterious effects on someone's health. At a minimum, mold can trigger an allergic reaction in individuals. As with other allergens, that may be more or less severe depending on the person and the exposure level.

However, with the advent of new technologies and the research they have allowed, the true menace is unmasked.



## Mycotoxins!

Mycotoxins are chemical poisons produced by certain mold species under certain conditions. There are several key reasons that make the discovery and removal of these poisons so difficult. For starters, investigative tools able to identify airborne mycotoxins recently been available to our industry. In the past testing for mycotoxins was typically limited to the individuals themselves or surface areas in the environment.



The problem with the former is that even if a person did test positive for mycotoxins in their system, it would be unknown as to where that mycotoxin exposure had occurred. Was it an environmental issue, from a dietary source or possibly something entirely different?

With the latter, the testing of surfaces does not necessarily indicate what may be in the air inhaled and since most people are not going around licking the furniture, that information may be a false flag.

Now, however, we do have the ability to test the air for the presence of mycotoxins and identify the type and concentration of those





toxins. This has been a huge step forward in helping affected people know for sure if their home is contaminated, and more importantly, whether the remediation efforts to cleanse the home of these toxins have been effective. This new ability to empirically determine the presence (or post-remediation absence) of mycotoxins has greatly enhanced our efforts to solve another huge challenge.

### Removing Mycotoxins from the Building Environment

Recent research and case studies have shown that when performing traditional mold remediation or removal, even if structural elements of the contaminated building itself are mitigated, any mycotoxins present are left behind after the removal process. Mycotoxins show up in homes that have had mold and mold removal done years prior and yet the toxins remain.

Mycotoxins are not a living thing, such as mold spores. They are essentially hitchhikers, which can attach themselves to mold spores dispersed into the environment. When the mold spore removal happens during remediation, the mycotoxins detach.

They are immitigable unlike a living mold spore, and due to their sub-micron size, they are irremovable with conventional filtration.

Therefore, an entirely new way to approach the removal of mycotoxins developed in order to address these challenges. Protocols and products have developed which allow us to introduce a new "vehicle" for mycotoxin adherence. Then this "vehicle", with the mycotoxins still attached is systematically detached from the environment.

With post-remediation testing in place, we do not have to wonder *if* we have successfully removed them...we can prove it!

In a time when more and more individuals are finding it difficult, if not impossible in a home or office that has compromised air quality, we can be thankful that new research and technology has made these protocols and products available to our industry, aiding in effectively addressing the needs of our customers.

**Bret Sallee** has over 30 years' experience in the Mold/Fire/Water restoration and construction industries. He holds certifications in mold remediation and inspection. He currently serves as the National Trainer and Sales Representative for Goldmorr USA. Bret was as an Advisory Member to the Consensus Board for IICRC's S530 Standard for Environmental Assessment for Suspected Mold Contaminated Structures in 2021.



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HAPPY NEW YEAR

# Progression in the New Year

By Myldred Ingram

As the calendar turns to a new year, it presents an opportunity for reflection, goal-setting, and personal growth. The concept of progression encapsulates the essence of this transformative period, as individuals strive to move forward, evolve, and achieve new heights.

The following is a high-level overview of the significance of progression in the New Year and how it can pave the way for a fulfilling and successful journey.

- 1. Setting Meaningful Goals:** Progression begins with setting meaningful goals that align with our aspirations and values. Whether it's personal, professional, or health-related, these goals provide a sense of direction and purpose. By focusing on specific, measurable, attainable and relevant goals that we can create a roadmap for success to and track our progress along the way.
- 2. Embracing a Growth Mindset:** To truly embrace progression, it is essential to adopt a growth mindset. This mindset allows us to view challenges as opportunities for learning and development. Instead of fearing failure, we see it as a stepping stone towards improvement. By cultivating resilience, adaptability, and a willingness to learn, we can overcome obstacles and continuously evolve.
- 3. Taking Incremental Steps:** Growth is not about making giant leaps overnight; it is about taking consistent, incremental steps towards our goals. Breaking down our objectives into manageable tasks helps us maintain focus, build momentum, and celebrate small victories along the way. Each step forward, no matter how small, brings us closer to our desired outcome. Remember life is a marathon not a quick race.
- 4. Embracing Change:** Truly moving forward often involves embracing change and stepping out of our comfort zones. It requires us to let go of old habits, beliefs, and routines that no longer serve us. By embracing change and being open to new experiences, we create opportunities for personal growth, expand our horizons, and discover hidden potential within ourselves.
- 5. Seeking Support and Accountability:** The journey to greatness can be very challenging, and seeking support from others can make all the difference. Surrounding ourselves with like-minded individuals, mentors, or coaches who inspire and motivate us can provide invaluable guidance and encouragement. Additionally, establishing accountability systems, such as sharing our goals with trusted friends or tracking our progress publicly, can help us stay on track and maintain momentum.
- 6. Celebrating Milestones:** Amidst the pursuit of progression, it is crucial to celebrate milestones and acknowledge our achievements along the way. Recognizing our progress not only boosts our confidence but also fuels our motivation to keep going. By taking the time to reflect on how far we have come, we gain a renewed sense of purpose and determination to continue pushing forward.

Each New Year is an opportunity for personal growth, self-discovery, and transformation. By setting meaningful goals, embracing a growth mindset, taking incremental steps, embracing change, seeking support, and celebrating milestones, we can embark on a fulfilling journey towards success. As we embrace progression, let us remember that the path may not always be smooth, but it is the willingness to adapt, learn, and persevere that will ultimately lead us to new heights in the year ahead. Wishing you a happy, progressive and prosperous New Year.

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## Innovative ideas to transform the Restoration Industry

# Ask? The EXPERT

In this episode of Ask Annissa! She talks ways to improve the industry with technician Israel Ward.

As we all know, the restoration industry plays a crucial role in repairing and rebuilding communities affected by natural disasters, accidents, and other unforeseen events. As technology advances and customer expectations evolve, it is essential for the industry to continuously improve its practices and embrace innovative strategies.

In the video accompanying this article, Annissa covers several key areas where the restoration industry can enhance its operations, including leveraging advanced technologies, adopting sustainable practices, prioritizing customer experience, and fostering collaboration within the industry.

The following are just some of the ways to ensure industry improvement and growth.

- 1. Embracing Advanced Technologies:** The restoration industry can greatly benefit from embracing cutting-edge technologies. Artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning algorithms can be utilized to streamline the assessment and estimation process, enabling faster response times and more accurate cost projections. Drones equipped with high-resolution cameras can be employed to conduct aerial inspections, providing a comprehensive view of the damage. Additionally, 3D printing technology can be leveraged to quickly produce replacement parts and materials, reducing downtime and costs.
- 2. Adopting Sustainable Practices:** In recent years, there has been a growing emphasis on sustainability across various industries. The restoration industry can contribute to this movement by adopting eco-friendly practices. This includes using environmentally friendly cleaning agents, implementing energy-efficient equipment, and promoting recycling and waste reduction. By incorporating sustainable practices, restoration companies can not only reduce their environmental impact but also attract environmentally conscious customers.
- 3. Prioritizing Customer Experience:** Customer satisfaction should be at the forefront of every restoration company's strategy. By providing exceptional customer service, companies can build trust, loyalty, and positive word-of-mouth referrals. This can be achieved by implementing user-friendly online platforms for easy communication and updates, offering transparent pricing and detailed progress reports, and ensuring prompt and efficient response times. Additionally, personalized post-restoration follow-ups can help gauge customer satisfaction and identify areas for improvement.
- 4. Fostering Collaboration within the Industry:** The restoration industry can benefit greatly from fostering collaboration and knowledge-sharing among its stakeholders. This can be achieved through industry conferences, forums, and workshops where professionals can exchange ideas, discuss best practices, and learn from each other's experiences. Collaboration can also extend to partnerships with other related industries, such as insurance providers, construction companies, and technology firms, to create a more holistic approach to restoration.

Improving the restoration industry requires a proactive approach that embraces innovation, sustainability, customer-centricity, and collaboration. By leveraging advanced technologies, adopting sustainable practices, prioritizing customer experience, and fostering collaboration within the industry, restoration companies can not

only enhance their operations but also make a positive impact on the communities they serve. With a commitment to continuous improvement, the restoration industry can revolutionize its practices and ensure a more efficient and effective response to future restoration needs.

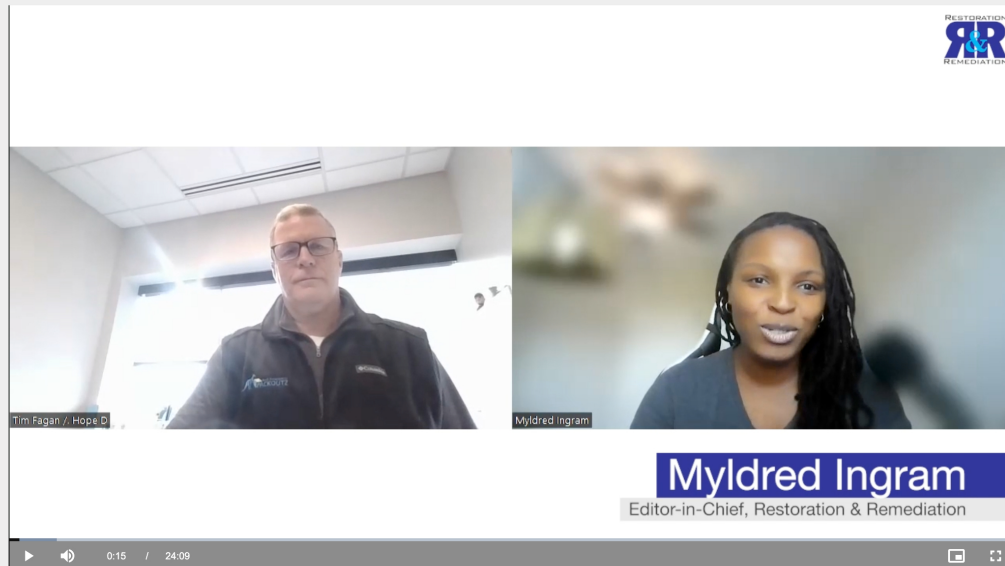


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## Ask the Expert: Education and Contents Restoration



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When disaster strikes, whether it be a fire, flood, or other catastrophic event, the damage to our homes and belongings can be devastating. Among the many challenges faced during the aftermath is the restoration of our cherished possessions. Contents restoration, a specialized field that combines artistry and technical expertise, plays a crucial role in salvaging and restoring items that hold sentimental, historical, or monetary value.

In this interview, we will touch on the fascinating world of contents restoration, its techniques, and the professionals who bring our treasured belongings back to life.

### The Importance of Contents Restoration

Contents restoration is not just about salvaging material possessions; it is about preserving memories, heritage, and the emotional connection we have with our belongings. Whether it's a family heirloom, a valuable artwork, or a collection of photographs, the restoration process aims to bring back the original beauty and functionality of these items, allowing us to hold onto our past and pass it on to future generations.

### Techniques and Processes

Contents restoration involves a wide range of techniques and processes, depending on the nature of the items and the extent of the damage. From cleaning and deodorizing to repairing and refinishing, restoration professionals employ a combination of traditional craftsmanship and cutting-edge technology to breathe new life into damaged belongings.

### Challenges and Innovations

Contents restoration is not without its challenges. Each restoration project presents unique obstacles, requiring creativity and problem-solving skills. Whether it's dealing with smoke damage, water stains, or structural issues, restoration professionals continuously push the boundaries of innovation to overcome these hurdles.

### The Role of Contents Restoration Professionals

Contents restoration is a highly specialized field that requires a diverse skill set. From art conservationists to electronics experts, restoration professionals possess a deep understanding of materials, techniques, and the history of various objects.

Contents restoration is not just a technical process; it is an art form that restores not only physical objects but also our sense of identity and connection to the past. Through the dedication and expertise of restoration professionals, damaged belongings are given a second chance, allowing us to hold onto our memories and preserve our history. In a world where disasters can strike at any moment, the field of contents restoration provides hope and reassurance that even in the face of destruction, our most cherished possessions can be restored to their former glory.







The #1 directory of professional restorers and remediators, insurance claim professionals, property managers and distributors. Our resources included suppliers, associations, and products such as chemicals for disinfectants, carpet cleaning and spot removal as well as water extraction equipment and smoke damage repair products. The Restoration & Remediation directory is designed to provide you with sources for these important products & resources. Below is a sampling of some of the companies featured in this year's directory. We invite you to reference the supplier logos below and click on them to learn more about each company's offerings.



Plus, be sure to visit (and bookmark!) our easy-to-use [online directory](#) here.



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**RESTORATION & REMEDIATION** (ISSN: Digital 2329-0226) is published 12 times annually, monthly, by BNP Media II, L.L.C., 550 Merrill St., Suite 200, Birmingham, MI 48009-1443. Telephone: (248) 362-3700, Fax: (248) 362-0317.

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