

Topic Objectives



- Provide a general overview of hoarding
- Identify the different types of hoarders
- Discuss assessment options for hoarding
- Discuss treatment options and resources that are available to assist with hoarding

Getting Started

- General Information of Interest
- Clinical Impressions
- No Self Diagnosing
- Limit Diagnosing of Others
- Self Assessment and Reflections
- Getting Help

Whose Hoarding?



Whose Hoarding?



What is Hoarding?

- A. Persistent difficulty discarding or parting with possessions, regardless of their actual value
- B. Difficulty is due to a perceived need to save the items and distress associated with discarding them

Steketee & Frost, 2007, Frost et al, 2009, Koran et al, 2006

What is Hoarding?

- C. Results in accumulation of possessions that congest and clutter living areas and substantially compromises their intended use.
- D. Clinically significant distress/impairment in social, occupational or other important area of functioning (including maintaining a safe environment for self/others)

Different types of hoarding?



Different types of hoarding?



What is OCD?

- **Obsessions**
 - persistent unwanted thoughts, images, or impulses
 - Intrusive, uncontrollable/excessive
 - provoke anxiety
- **Compulsions**
 - repetitive behaviors or mental acts
 - performed in response to an obsession, or in ritualistic fashion
 - intended to reduce discomfort or prevent feared event
- **Severity: symptoms must cause**
marked distress
occupy \geq 1 hour/day
OR
significantly interfere with functioning

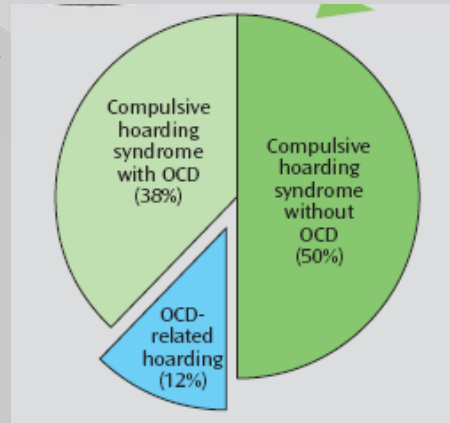
Is Hoarding OCD?

Hoarding 'Obsessions'

- Intense preoccupation with belongings

However:

- Not intrusive
- Not resisted or unwanted
- Not distressing



Hoarding 'Compulsions'

- Acquisition/sorting /protection of possessions

However:

- Collecting of things is generally enjoyable
- Not ritualistic
- Not distressing

Rachman, Elliott, Shafran & Radomsky, BRAT, 2009
Pertusa et al, AJP, 2008

Manifestations of Hoarding

1. Compulsive Acquiring

2. Saving

3. Disorganization



Steketee & Frost, 2007, Frost et al, 2009, Koran et al, 2006

Manifestation #1

Compulsive Acquiring

- ◎ **Compulsive buying**
 - > Retail/discount
 - > Ebay, web shopping
 - > Home shopping network

- ◎ **Compulsive acquiring of free things**
 - > Advertising flyers/handouts
 - > Give-away's
 - > Trash picking, dumpster diving

Steketee & Frost, 2007, Frost et al, 2009, Koran et al, 2006

Manifestation #2: Compulsive Buying/Shopping

- **Characterized by:**
 - Preoccupation with shopping, or intrusive buying impulses
 - Clearly buying more than is needed/affordable
 - Distress
 - Interference with functioning
- **Women:** clothes, shoes, jewelery, makeup
- **Men:** electronics, hardware, car products

Steketee & Frost, 2007, Frost et al, 2009, Koran et al, 2006

Manifestation #2 cont.....

Saving

⦿ Reasons for saving

- > Sentimental “this helps me remember. This represents my life. It’s part of me.
- > Instrumental “I might need this. I could fix this. Somebody could use this. Think of the potential!”
- > Intrinsic “Isn’t this beautiful

⦿ Hoarders apply these reasons to more things

Steketee & Frost, 2007, Frost et al, 2009, Koran et al, 2006

Manifestation #3: Disorganization

◎ Condition of the home

- > Clutter
- > Mixture of important and unimportant items

◎ Behavior

- > Fear of putting things out of sight
- > Indecisiveness – churning
- > Categorization problems

May be slow at completing tasks, frequently late, use circumstantial/over-inclusive language

Steketee & Frost, 2007, Frost et al, 2009, Koran et al, 2006

Hoarding: Personality Traits

- ◉ Indecisiveness
- ◉ Perfectionism
- ◉ Procrastination
- ◉ Disorganization
- ◉ Distractibility
- ◉ Impulsivity
- ◉ Intense emotional attachment to objects

Beliefs about hoarding

- ◉ Possessions (value, emotional comfort, negative impact of loss)
- ◉ Vulnerability (ability to cope, face loss, grief without certain items)
- ◉ Responsibility (waste, protection and opportunity)
- ◉ Memory (reliance on extrinsic reminders to prevent mistakes)

Assessing Potential Hoarders

- ◎ **Questions to ask someone who acknowledges “clutter”:**
 - > *Are your belongings in piles along the sides of some/most rooms? How high?*
 - > *Are you limited to pathways in some rooms?*
 - > *Or are you walking on “goat paths” over piles?*
 - > *Are any rooms so cluttered that they’re difficult to use/unusable? i.e. no longer sleeping in bed, kitchen too full to use, no access to bathtub?*
 - > *Do you feel your clutter is a problem?*
 - > *Are you willing to work on getting rid of things?*

Hoarding Safety Assessment: Red Flags



- History of fires or fire hazards
- Falls history and falls risk assessment
 - > Consider mobility, frailty, medications, medical conditions, visual or hearing impairment
- Infestations and potential for infestation
 - > Especially in animals and pests
- Ability to enter and exit the home and essential rooms
 - > Kitchen, bathrooms, fire escapes
- Ability to access emergency services
- Hygiene/risk of infection/air quality

Hoarding Risk Assessment

HOMES[®] Multi-disciplinary Hoarding Risk Assessment

Health

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cannot use bathtub/shower | <input type="checkbox"/> Cannot prepare food | <input type="checkbox"/> Presence of spoiled food | <input type="checkbox"/> Presence of insects/rodents |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cannot access toilet | <input type="checkbox"/> Cannot sleep in bed | <input type="checkbox"/> Presence of feces/Urine (human or animal) | <input type="checkbox"/> Presence of mold or chronic dampness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Garbage/Trash Overflow | <input type="checkbox"/> Cannot use stove/fridge/sink | <input type="checkbox"/> Cannot locate medications or equipment | |

Notes: _____

Obstacles

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cannot move freely/safely in home | <input type="checkbox"/> Unstable piles/avalanche risk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inability for EMT to enter/gain access | <input type="checkbox"/> Egresses, exits or vents blocked or unusable |

Notes: _____

Mental health (Note that this is not a clinical diagnosis; use only to identify risk factors)

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Does not seem to understand seriousness of problem | <input type="checkbox"/> Defensive or angry | <input type="checkbox"/> Unaware, not alert, or confused |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Does not seem to accept likely consequence of problem | <input type="checkbox"/> Anxious or apprehensive | |

Notes: _____

Endangerment (evaluate threat based on other sections with attention to specific populations listed below)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Threat to health or safety of child/minor | <input type="checkbox"/> Threat to health or safety of person with disability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Threat to health or safety of older adult | <input type="checkbox"/> Threat to health or safety of animal |

Notes: _____

Structure & Safety

- | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unstable floorboards/stairs/porch | <input type="checkbox"/> Leaking roof | <input type="checkbox"/> Electrical wires/cords exposed | <input type="checkbox"/> No running water/plumbing problems |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flammable items beside heat source | <input type="checkbox"/> Caving walls | <input type="checkbox"/> No heat/electricity | <input type="checkbox"/> Blocked/unsafe electric heater or vents |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Storage of hazardous materials/weapons | | | |

Notes: _____

Getting Help/Treatment:

How do you help someone who does/does not want help?

- ◉ View an invitation into the home as a sign that you are trusted, and as a request for some kind of help
- ◉ Be prepared to serve as a catalyst for change and action (Don't minimize or dismiss the opportunity)
- ◉ Assure confidentiality but focus on safety

Steketee & Frost, 2007, Frost et al, 2009, Koran et al, 2006

Treatment: Cognitive Based Therapy

Core components:

- Psycho education
- Must target
 1. Acquiring
 2. Discarding
 3. Clutter
- Cognitive strategies to address hoarding beliefs (meaning of possessions)
- Organizing/decision making (associated with information processing deficits)

Steketee & Frost, 2007, Frost et al, 2009, Koran et al, 2006

Therapy/Treatment Rules

In = Out

– Tackle excessive acquiring early!

- Therapist does not touch possessions without permission
- All decisions made by the client
- Categories established first
- Help client establish own rules for saving and discarding
- Clients must think aloud while sorting possessions
- Only Handle It Once....if possible!
- Treatment proceeds systematically

Steketee & Frost, 2007, Frost et al, 2009, Koran et al, 2006

A Comprehensive Approach: Targeting the Big Picture

- Psychoeducation for the client AND family
- Set appropriate expectations re improvement/recovery
- Discuss accommodation
- Multidisciplinary approach!
- Support, support, support
 - case management
 - home making
 - support groups
 - ongoing therapy
 - Meals on Wheels
 - Day treatment

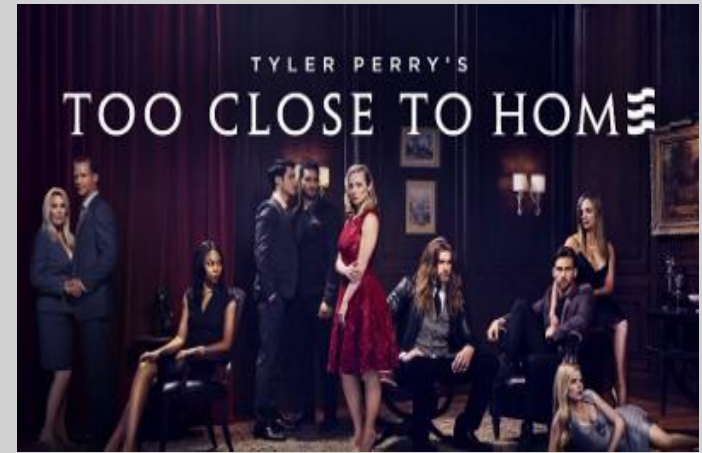
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What Does Not Work?

- Forced “clean out” is the last resort
 - > i.e. when poses fire/health hazard (vermin, rodents, toxins, or risk of falls)
 - > **POOR outcome long-term**
- Consider risk management approach if possible
 - > Slow gradual steps to establish trust, working relationship
 - > Gradual reduction of risk

Steketee & Frost, 2007, Frost et al, 2009, Koran et al, 2006

Whose Hoarding?



References

- **Buried in Treasures**

- > Tolin, Frost & Steketee, Oxford University Press, 2007

- **Overcoming Compulsive Hoarding**

- > Neziroglu, Bublick & Yaryura-Tobias, New Harbinger Press, 2004

- **Compulsive Hoarding and Acquiring (client and therapist workbooks)**

- > Steketee & Frost, Oxford University Press, 2007

- **Digging Out**

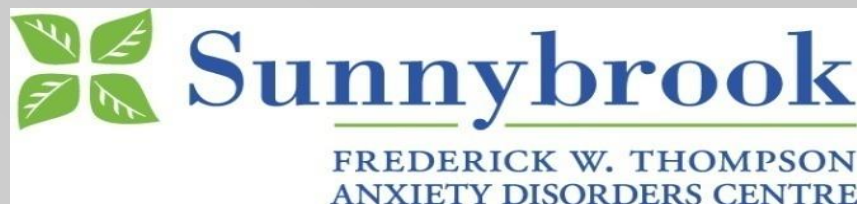
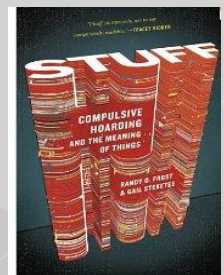
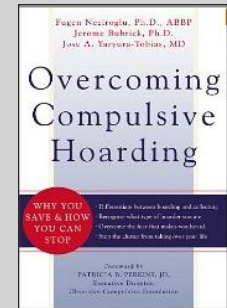
- > Tompkins, New Harbinger Publications, 2009

- **The Community Clutter & Hoarding Toolkit**

- > VHA Home HealthCare, 2011

- **Stuff**

- > Frost & Steketee, 2010



QUICK LINKS!

HOARDING CLEAN-UP

ANIMAL HOARDING CLEAN-UP

ONE ON ONE HELP

FINDING LOST ITEMS

SPECIALS

WHAT IS HOARDING?

TYPES OF HOARDING

HELP FOR FAMILIES

SUPPORT GROUPS

TRAINING

**HOARDING CLEANUP:
COMPASSIONATE AND
DISCREET LIVE HELP LINE
1-800-HOARDERS.
FIRST, AND MOST IMPORTANT,
DO NOT BE EMBARRASSED!**

Help is Available for Hoarding

Alabama Hoarding Treatment Resources

- Recovery.org – Clutterer's Anonymous – Twelve Step Recovery Program
- Psychology Today – Hoarding Therapists in Alabama
- National Association of Professional Organizers
- International OCD Foundation
- National Association of Productivity and Organizing Professionals

Questions and Answers



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