

Understanding Hoarding Behaviors: A Brief Overview

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Objectives

1. Participants will gain a better understanding of the mental health aspect of hoarding disorder.
2. Participants will become familiar with practical assessment tools used in hoarding situations.
3. Participants will learn how value-based goals impact motivation and outcomes.

Hoarding, Clutter, Collecting, or Squalor?

- The next four slides have no audio.
- Each slide will not advance for 60 seconds to allow time to read information.
- Resource link:
<https://hoarding.iocdf.org/about-hoarding/is-it-hoarding-clutter-collecting-or-squalor/>

Hoarding, Clutter, Collecting, or Squalor?

	Types of Items	Method of Acquiring	Appearance of Home	Life Impact
Hoarding	Items do not have a specific theme, usually many different types of items.	Items are not acquired in a planned fashion. Acquisition is often excessive. Items may be free (e.g., from the side of the road, giveaways, etc.) and/or purchased.	Disorganized clutter, taking over living spaces (bedroom, living room, kitchen, etc.) and preventing them from being used as intended.	Efforts to get rid of the items and not acquire items causes distress. Spending may be excessive, causing financial distress. Can cause conflict in social/family relationships, in addition to general withdrawal from society. State of home may have a broader impact on surrounding homes (e.g. sanitation concerns, structural issues, etc.).

Hoarding, Clutter, Collecting, or Squalor?

	Types of Items	Method of Acquiring	Appearance of Home	Life Impact
Normal Clutter	Items may or may not have a specific theme.	Items are not acquired in a planned fashion; acquisition is not excessive.	Disorganized clutter, generally located in storage spaces (e.g. attic, basement, etc.). May also occur in living spaces, but does not prevent them from being used as intended.	Items may cause mild distress, but generally do not have broad or lasting impact on finances, work, social life, etc. The thought of getting rid of items or not acquiring any more does not cause distress.

Hoarding, Clutter, Collecting, or Squalor?

	Types of Items	Method of Acquiring	Appearance of Home	Life Impact
Collecting	Items center around a specific theme, e.g. stamps, models, figurines, etc.	Items are acquired through planned searches. Items are mainly purchased and are limited in number.	Items are arranged, stored, and/or displayed in an organized fashion. Items do not take over living spaces.	Items usually have a positive or pleasurable impact. Collecting usually does not cause financial distress, nor impairment in work, social life, etc.

Hoarding, Clutter, Collecting, or Squalor?

	Types of Items	Method of Acquiring	Appearance of Home	Life Impact
Squalor	No intentional saving of items.	No intentional saving or acquiring of items. Build-up is instead due to neglect or inability to remove them.	Home is generally in a state of disrepair, may look unclean or unkempt.	State of home may or may not cause distress, depending on the individual's mental status. State of home has a negative impact on the health and wellbeing of all inhabitants and may have a broader impact on surrounding homes.

Perfectionism and Hoarding



FAQs

- Most frequently hoarded items:
 - Paper
 - Clothing
 - Gifts
- Most prevalent careers:
 - Teacher
 - Attorney
 - Social Worker

Prevalence of Mental Health Issues

Annual prevalence among
U.S. adults, by condition:

- Major Depressive
Episode: 7.8%
- Anxiety Disorders: 19.1%
- Posttraumatic Stress
Disorder: 3.6%
- Obsessive Compulsive
Disorder: 1.2%

(NAMI, 2019)

A study by John Hopkins showed that an estimated 3 – 5% of the population suffers from Hoarding Disorder however; it is considered a low representation of the actual percentage.



Types of Attachments

- **Sentimental** – representation of self and life memories (grief attachment)
- **Instrumental** – item has value for future use, could be repaired
- **Intrinsic** – seeing the beauty in an item



Excessive Acquiring

Bought something you didn't need or really like or more than you needed because:

- It's such a great deal!
- It's too good to pass up!!
- I could wear it at some point.
- Aw, I know who would love this.
- It's brand new!
- I could sell it and make money!



Active vs Passive Acquiring

Mental illness is often hard to consider when faced with a hoarding situation.

Why

Can't

You

Just.....

Clean

Up

Get

Rid

Of

It

Just

Throw

It

Out

No one can force you to clean out your home. This is a common misconception of

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Hoarding Disorder

A. Persistent difficulty discarding or parting with personal possessions, even those of apparently useless or limited value, due to strong urges to save items, distress, and/or indecision associated with discarding.

B. The symptoms result in the accumulation of a large number of possessions that fill up and clutter the active living areas of the home, workplace, or other personal surroundings (e.g., office, vehicle, yard) and prevent normal use of the space. If all living areas are uncluttered, it is only because of others' efforts (e.g., family members, authorities) to keep these areas free of possessions.

C. The symptoms cause clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other important areas of functioning (including maintaining a safe environment for self and others).

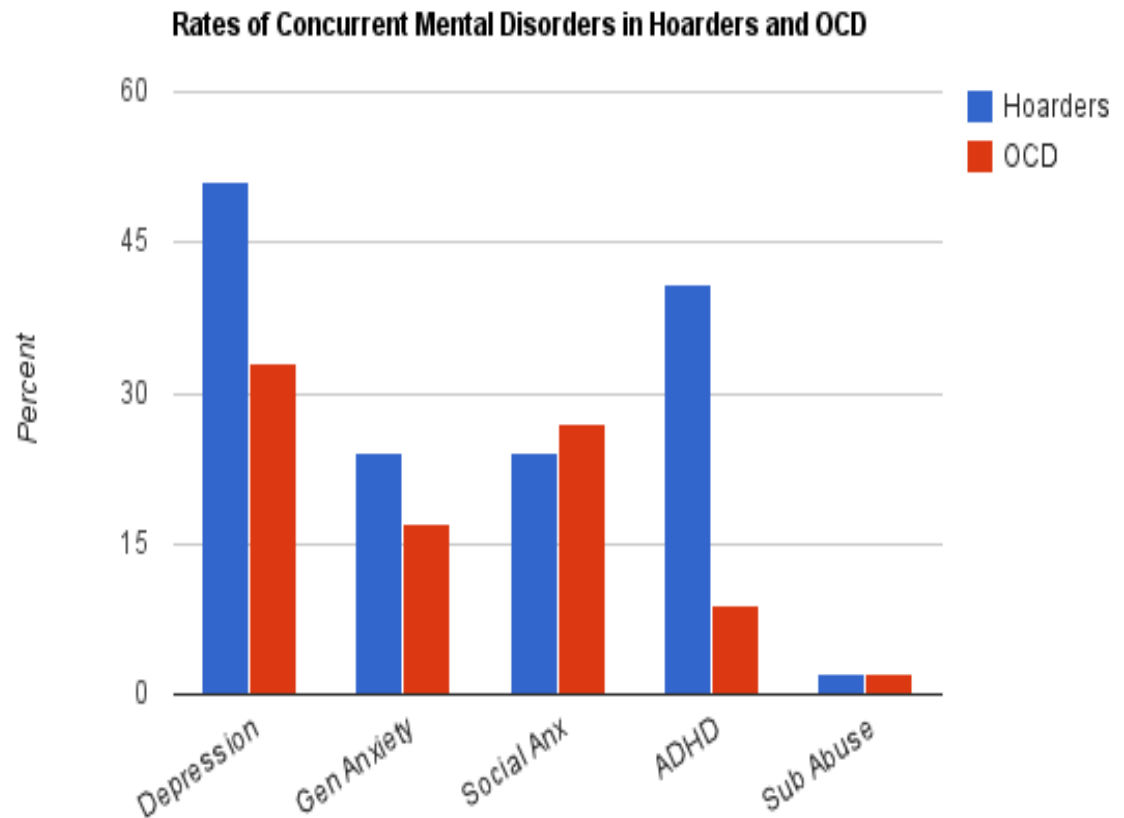
D. The hoarding symptoms are not due to a general medical condition (e.g., brain injury, cerebrovascular disease).

E. The hoarding symptoms are not restricted to the symptoms of another mental disorder (e.g., hoarding due to obsessions in Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder, lack of motivation in Major Depressive Disorder, delusions in Schizophrenia or another Psychotic Disorder, cognitive deficits in Dementia, restricted interests in Autistic Disorder, food storing in Prader-Willi Syndrome).

Example of Hoarding Behavior

Research shows that over 53% of individuals suffering from hoarding disorder are also diagnosed with Major Depressive Disorder, approximately 40% are diagnosed with ADD or ADHD, and another 27% are diagnosed with Social Anxiety Disorder...

(Steketee, 2007)



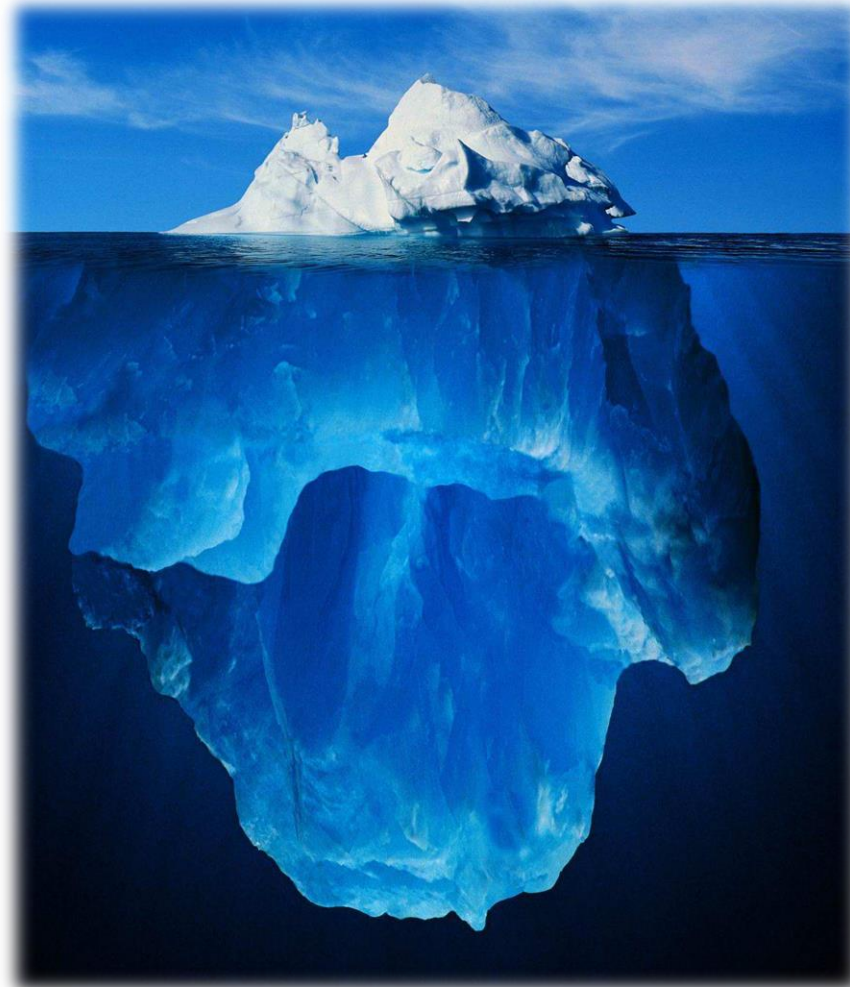
To complicate things more, individuals with hoarding disorder experience trouble in processing information. These processing deficits affect attention, memory, categorization, and decision-making. (Frost, 2008)



How does it get that bad?

- Hoarding is a progressive and chronic disorder.
- Level of insight.
- Hoarding behavior can start in early adolescence.
- Hoarding behavior is triggered or exacerbated by trauma or loss.
- Isolation
- Embarrassment
- Shame

When trying to understand hoarding, imagine an iceberg.



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Assessment Tools

- Clutter Image Rating
– Assessing ‘volume’
- Uniform Inspection Checklist – Quick Reference
– Minimum safety and sanitation standards

**As humans, we
respond to
situations based on
our perceptions of
the situation, not
necessarily to an
objective review of
the facts. Our
perceptions are
influenced by our
life experiences,
culture, values, and
beliefs.**

Clutter Image Rating: Bedroom

Please select the photo that most accurately reflects the amount of clutter in your room.



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9

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Hoarding vs. Squalor

Uniform Inspection Checklist - Hoarding/Excessive Clutter - Quick Reference

For Additional Information and Support visit the following page:

<http://www.centerforhoardingandcluttering.com/uniform-inspection-checklist-2>

Date Completed:		Person Completing This Form:	
Address:		Town:	

RESIDENT The purpose of inspection is to ensure housing is decent, safe, sanitary, & in good repair. Inspector must be able to view, reach, and test all items on inspection checklist.

INSTRUCTIONS For STATUS, use **P** to indicate **Pass** if item **MEETS STANDARD** or **F** to indicate **Fail** if the item **DOES NOT MEET STANDARD**. Use **UNK** to indicate **Unknown** if item unobserved or **N/A** to indicate if item Not Applicable. Use column on right for specific

STEP 1	STATUS	The following items must be UNOBSTRUCTED ~ completely clear of any items ~	SPECIFIC AREA NEEDING TO BE ADDRESSED (EX: BACK DOOR, BEDROOM WINDOW, PATH FROM BEDROOM TO KITCHEN, ETC.)
HARM REDUCTION TARGETS		<u>Egresses</u> - means of exit - must be unobstructed, egress doors must open full 90 degrees or from door frame to door stop, whichever is wider	
		<u>Pathways</u> - Minimum of 36"/91cm wide unobstructed and continuous pathways throughout residence	
		<u>Staircases</u> - must be unobstructed (if applicable)	
		<u>Smoke detectors, CO detectors, sprinkler heads</u> - (all that apply) must be unobstructed with front & surrounding clearance of 18"/91cm	
		<u>Internal Doors</u> - must be unobstructed - (Applies primarily to residences requiring inspection for tenancy) closet, cabinet, pantry, etc. Inspector must be able to open & close doors fully & freely, & be able to latch if	
		<u>Windows</u> - 1 window per room must be unobstructed, includes every room with a window measuring over 20"/51cm width x 24"/61cm height	
		<u>Heat & Electrical Sources</u> - stoves, ovens, refrigerators, washing machine/dryer, a/c units, heat thermostats (all that apply) must be unobstructed	
		<u>Heat & Electrical Sources</u> - clearance requirements - open flame heat sources, fireplaces, furnaces, oil tanks, water units, electrical panels must be unobstructed with front and surrounding clearance of 36"/91cm	
		<u>Emergency Pull Cords</u> - (if applicable) must be unobstructed, end of cord must be no more than 18"/46cm distance from the floor	
STEP 2	STATUS	The following items must be ACCESSIBLE ~ easily able to be reached by inspector ~	
PRIMARY INSPECTION TARGETS		<u>Windows</u> - must be accessible (any window not included above)	
		<u>Electrical outlets</u> - must be accessible	
		<u>Plumbing fixtures & pipes</u> - must be accessible, including under sinks	
		<u>Toilets, sinks, bathtubs, & showers</u> - must be accessible	

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Harm Reduction Approach

Engagement and Motivation

1. If you woke up tomorrow and your home was just the way you want it to be, how would your life be different?
2. What is something you want to do that you currently are not doing or cannot do because of the clutter in your home?





Example of Motivation



OZ vs. Kansas

What we
want
success
look like.



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What
success
really
looks like.



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What success really looks like.



RESOURCES

- [Center for Hoarding and Cluttering](#)
- [Facebook Groups:](#)
 - [Hoarding Task Force Network](#)
 - [The Clutter Movement Individual Support](#)
 - [The Clutter Movement Family Support](#)
- www.masshousing.com/hoarding
- [International OCD Foundation Hoarding Resource](#)