BUILDING WORKING RELATIONSHIPS WITH OUR CLIENTS AND TEAM THAT ARE BUILT TO LAST!

WITH YASMIN GOODMAN

PHTF CONFERENCE – “IT TAKES A TEAM” – 6-8-2018
About.....

- Yasmin Goodman

NAPO
National Association of Productivity & Organizing Professionals

PHILADELPHIA HOARDING TASK FORCE

INSTITUTE FOR CHALLENGING DISORGANIZATION

NAPO 2017
Bridging the World of Organization
PITTSBURGH, PA • APRIL 26–29, 2017
Built To Last! - Objectives

- Develop questions that deepen your understanding of:
  - what is important to your clients
  - reveals their life story woven throughout the collections around them
  - illuminate the possible underpinnings that result in their hoarding behavior.
- Assess their situation and discuss any concerns you may have and why.
- Create a vision for your work together that is consistent with their goals and aspirations to inspire and move them to take action.
- Design a plan grounded in their vision with guidelines and boundaries that reflect their goals to add meaningful direction and purpose to the tasks of sorting and letting go of their possessions.
- Keep a record of your goals, milestones and accomplishments
- Select a team that can best contribute and support the client in this process over time.
FLAVORS

- F = Familiar
- L = Life’s story
- A = Assessing the situation
- V = Value and Vision
- O = Objectives
- R = Record keeping
- S = Scheduling
Acknowledgements

- Michael Tompkins
- Christiana Bratiotis
- Randy Frost
- Gail Steketee
- Lee & Bec Shuer
- Jesse Edsell-Vetter
- Matt Paxton
- Judith Kolberg
- Phyllis Flood-Knerr
Hoarding Behavior

F L A V O R S

Familiar

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What Defines the Following?

- Clutter
- Chronic Disorganization
- Hoarding Behavior
- Squalor
Clutter Image Rating: Bedroom
Please select the photo that most accurately reflects the amount of clutter in your room.
Hoarding vs. Squalor

- Hoarding focuses on:
  - volume of clutter
  - emotional attachment to possessions
- Hoarding clutter may exist with or without poor sanitation
- Squalor is defined as a state of being extremely dirty and filthy, the result of decay and neglect.
  - Characterized as rotting food, infestation, dilapidated environments and sometimes human or animal waste
Phenomenon of Hoarding

- Any container gets filled up.
  - Rooms, homes, sheds, cars, relatives’ homes
  - The spread of stuff is constant and pervasive
Phenomenon of Hoardinging

- 15% of people who hoard have insight & acknowledge their behavior as irrational.
- 50% of people who hoard grow up in a hoarded home.
- 92% of individuals diagnosed with Hoarding Disorder also have another co-occurring disorder.
Phenomenon of Hoarding

- 2-6% of the population suffer from Hoarding Disorder
- 3-5% (15 million) in US - hoarding issues
- 31,000 - 77,000 (2-5%) Philadelphians exhibit hoarding behaviors.
- Without intervention the, rate of recidivism ("back-sliding") is nearly 100%.
Demographics

- Saving begins in childhood/adolescence
- Average age in treatment = 50
- Marital status: tend to be single
- Education: ranges widely
- Family history of hoarding is common
- Crosses all economic borders
Pop Quiz #1
Is this hoarding?

- Collecting?
- Clutter?
- Hoarding?
- Squalor?
Is this hoarding?

- Collecting?
- Clutter?
- Hoarding?
- Squalor?
Is this hoarding?

- Collecting?
- Clutter?
- Hoarding?
- Squalor?
Is this hoarding?

- Collecting?
- Clutter?
- Hoarding?
- Squalor?
Our Clients’ Behaviors

Building relationships that are built to last!
Manifestation of Hoarding

- Acquisition
- Saving
  - or difficulty letting go
- Disorganization

CLUTTER

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Clutter Above & Below the Surface

Above the surface, clutter is seen as stuff, the result of saving and acquiring habits.
Below the surface clutter is the result of:

- Executive functioning issues
- Family history
- Memory issues
- Mental health
- Neurobiology
- Physical health
- Trauma and loss

This is where the key lies to unlock these habits.
Understanding Hoarding Behavior

- **Vulnerability**
  - Mental Health
  - Physical Health
  - Trauma / Loss
  - Addiction
  - Family History

- **Core Beliefs**
  - Identity
  - Values
  - Responsibility

- **Cognitive Processing**
  - Decision Making
  - Attention
  - Memory
  - Problem Solving
  - Executive Functioning
Understanding Hoarding Behavior
Cognitive Processing Issues

Difficulties with:

- Categorization/association
- Decision-making
- Attention
- Memory
- Carrying out tasks with multiple steps
- Carrying out tasks that require problem solving
- Impairment carrying out daily life activities
Manifestation of Hoarding
Complexity of Thoughts

- **Acquisition**
  - Vulnerabilities
  - Core Beliefs

- **Saving**
  - or difficulty letting go
  - Vulnerabilities
  - Core Beliefs

- **Disorganization**
  - Cognitive Processing
Manifestation of Hoarding
Why is Clutter Chronic and Persistent?

- Feeling responsible for objects
  - Inanimate objects have feelings
- Denial of a problem
  - Even when the clutter interferes with normal activities of everyday life and life in general
- Clutter Blindness
  - Not bothered by the clutter or notice it
Manifestation of Hoarding
Why is Clutter Chronic and Persistent?

- Difficulty organizing possessions
- Acquiring and Saving
  - Provides strong positive feelings (joy, delight)
- Discarding or Letting Go
  - Produces strong negative feelings (guilt, fear, anger)
- Acquiring, Saving and Discarding
  - Strong beliefs that items are “valuable” or “useful”, even when other people do not want them
Manifestation of Hoarding Emotions – Both Positive and Negative

- Positive Reinforcement
- Negative Reinforcement
- Saving / Acquiring

Strong negative and positive emotions interact with beliefs to produce behaviors.
Strong Negative and Positive Emotions Interact with Beliefs to Produce Behaviors

Positive Emotions
- Pleasure
- Excitement
- Pride
- Relief
- Joy
- Fondness
- Satisfaction

Negative Emotions
- Grief / Loss
- Anxiety
- Sadness
- Guilt
- Anger
- Frustration
- Confusion
Avoidance Conditioning

- Distress
- Decisions
- Attending to
- Clutter
- Feelings of loss
- Feeling vulnerable
- Worrying
- Memory
- Memories

- Not inviting people
- Making mistakes
- Losing opportunities
- Losing information
- Depression
- Out of sight, out of mind
Manifestation of Hoarding
Complexity of Thoughts

- **Acquisition**
  - Sentimental acquiring
  - Instrumental acquiring
  - Intrinsic acquiring

- **Saving**
  - or difficulty letting go
  - Sentimental saving
  - Instrumental saving
  - Intrinsic saving

- **Disorganization**
  - Randomness of piles
Special Meaning Given to Possessions

- Beauty / Aesthetics
- Memory / Memories
- Utility / Opportunity
- Uniqueness
- Sentimental
- Comfort
- Safety
- Identity / Potential
- Control
- Mistakes
- Responsibility / Waste
- Completeness
- Validation of Worth
- Socialization

A unique way of seeing the world and the things in it!
Gift or a Curse?

“People who hoard might have a special ability to see uniqueness where others do not...

It is not an item’s use but its potential and perceived uniqueness that is the appeal. This special ability is both a gift and a curse.”

– Randy Frost, PhD, Smith College Department of Psychology
FLAVORS

Life Story

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Life Story - Be Curious

Ask Open-Ended Questions

☐ What?
☐ Why?
☐ How?
Life Story - Be Curious

- Get to know your client
  - What are their interests? What brings them joy?
  - What are their accomplishments they are most proud of?
  - What do they care most about?
    - Family, friends, honesty, achievements, etc.

- What is their legacy? What do they want to be known for?
  - What does the client most want to do in the remainder of their life?
  - What legacy do they want to leave behind?
    - List their goals and aspirations moving forward.
Life Story - Be Curious

Initial Meeting

- Tell me about this room.
- What kinds of things will we find in this area?
- How long has the room been filled like this?
- Tell me about this?
- What do you use this for?
- How did you come up with that idea?
- How often do you find yourself using or needing this?
Let’s Get Curious

What questions would you ask?
Assessment

FLAVORS

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Assessment

Open-Ended Questions

Establishing Their Understanding and Needs

☐ What had you call me?
☐ Why has your family called me?
☐ What are your priorities?
☐ What would change look like?
☐ What support do you need?
☐ How do you see me helping you?
☐ Are there ways that the clutter prevents you from doing things that are important to you?
☐ Has anyone offered to help you address your clutter before?
Assessment Tools – Creating A Common Language

- Clutter Image Rating Scale
  - Assesses the volume of clutter
- HOMES Multi-disciplinary Risk Assessment
  - Assesses the health and safety risks
- Activities of Daily Living Assessment
  Also an essential component when building a team that is build to last!
Clutter Image Rating: Bedroom

Please select the photo that most accurately reflects the amount of clutter in your room.
HOMES® Multi-disciplinary Hoarding Risk Assessment

**Health**
- Cannot use bathtub/shower
- Cannot access toilet
- Garbage/Trash Overflow
- Cannot prepare food
- Cannot sleep in bed
- Cannot use stove/fridge/sink
- Presence of spoiled food
- Presence of feces/Urine (human or animal)
- Cannot locate medications or equipment
- Presence of insects/rodents
- Presence of mold or chronic dampness

**Obstacles**
- Cannot move freely/safely in home
- Inability for EMT to enter/gain access
- Unstable piles/avalanche risk
- Egresses, exits or vents blocked or unusable

**Mental health** (Note that this is not a clinical diagnosis; use only to identify risk factors)
- Does not seem to understand seriousness of problem
- Does not seem to accept likely consequence of problem
- Defensive or angry
- Unaware, not alert, or confused
- Anxious or apprehensive

**Endangerment** (evaluate threat based on other sections with attention to specific populations listed below)
- Threat to health or safety of child/Minor
- Threat to health or safety of older adult
- Threat to health or safety of person with disability
- Threat to health or safety of animal

**Structure & Safety**
- Unstable floorboards/stairs/porch
- Leaking roof
- Electrical wires/cords exposed
- No running water/plumbing problems
- Flammable items beside heat source
- Caving walls
- No heat/electricity
- Blocked/unsafe electric heater or vents
- Storage of hazardous materials/Weapons

Notes:
“HOMES” - Accessing the Risk

H = Health (wellbeing)
O = Obstacles
M = Mental health
E = Endangerment
S = Structural safety

Safety
- Fire hazard, exits blocked, stairways clear, room for emergency personnel & equipment, clutter outside
- Condition of the home
  - Squalor - Home Environment Index
  - Structural damage
- Hoarding’s impact on activities of daily living
Assessment Tools

- Activities of Daily Living Assessment
Assessment
Using Photographs

- Take photographs of the cluttered rooms.
- Review photos with client to gain a perspective of their viewpoint and understanding of the situation.

This will provide a foundation for your work together grounded in their vision for their future.
Value & Vision
Value & Vision

Use Open-Ended Questions

- What benefit would reducing your clutter provide you?
- What does change look & feel like to you?
- What would be possible in your life that is not possible now if you had less clutter?
- Who else in your life would benefit if you had less clutter in your home?
- What would be hard for you about reducing the amount of clutter?
- What support would be good for you, if any, if you were to reduce the amount of clutter in your home?
Dr. Gail Steketee, PhD at Boston University

Enhancing Motivation

Motivational Interviewing (MI)

A client-centered, directive method for enhancing people’s natural motivation to change

Focus on the value gained from change
Value & Vision - Motivation

Why don’t people change?
- Cost of change
- Benefit of change

What makes people motivated to change?
- Importance
- Confidence
Establish Personal Value & Vision

- Engage with the client - Value
  - What their interests are.
  - What brings them joy.
  - What do they care most about
    - Family, friends, honesty, achievements, etc.

- Identify - vision for the future
  - What does the client most want to do in the remainder of their life? What legacy do they want to leave behind
    - List their goals and aspirations

- Refer back to their values, vision & goals to clarity & reduce indecision
Value & Vision – Motivation

Client Responses: “I want to…."

- “Enjoy entertaining again.”
- “Sleep in my bed again / have the whole bed to myself.”
- “Have a place for family and friends to sit when they visit.”
- “Have my grandchildren come to stay with me.”
- “Have a kitchen that is safe and one that I can cook in again.”
- “Not panic if someone rings the door.”
- “Have a bathtub I can use to take a bath in.”
Value & Vision

Ambivalence & Motivation

- Don’t resist it or try to talk the person out of it
- Recognize & acknowledge the ambivalence
- Reinforce change talk & action
“I don’t know how I'd feel if I got rid of it.”

“If I am not going to subscribe to more magazines, I should hold on to the ones I have.”

“It doesn’t make sense / it’s crazy to throw something away that is perfectly good.”

“How do I remember what I want to get if I don’t get it at that moment?”

“I don’t know who to give my stuff to.”
Objectives

FLAVORS

[Image of ice cream cones with different toppings]
Objectives – From Vision to Action

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your Vision / Dream</th>
<th>In General</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What this would provide you in your life</td>
<td>What’s working</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What’s not working</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas of Concern</th>
<th>Ideas &amp; Suggestions:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What’s working</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>What’s not working</td>
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[Organized At Last!](#)
## Objectives – From Vision to Action

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your Vision / Dream</th>
<th>Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What this would provide you in your life</strong></td>
<td>Day 1 – 0.5 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A den that provides fun for our family</td>
<td>Sort right corner for sorting area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and friends</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Connection, good times, lasting memories</td>
<td>Day 2 – 0.5 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Areas / Activity Zones</strong></td>
<td>Sort games and puzzles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Movie night</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reading nook</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Activity table</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(puzzles, games &amp; Lego)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sorting area</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Ideas & Supplies:
- Recycling bags, trash bags
- Giveaway box
- Bookcase
- Activity table
What personal guidelines can “I” use?

- I will get rid of anything I have not used in the past two years.
- I will give some of my keepsakes to my family so I can see them enjoy them now.
- I will keep only the amount of this item that will fit in this closet.
- I will keep only those things that bring me joy.
- For every one thing I keep, I will discard something.
- For every one thing I bring home, I will discard something.
Objectives

Questions to Ask to Reduce Clutter

What questions help with sorting and discarding? These questions will be unique to the client and be a reflection of their vision.

- Does keeping this here allow me to move around comfortably and safely?
- Where will I put it if I buy it?
- Could I get this again if I found I really needed it?
- Have I used this in the past year?
- Does this bring me joy?
Objectives

Questions to Ask to Reduce Clutter

What questions help with sorting and discarding? These questions will be unique to the client and be a reflection of their vision.

- What benefit does this provide me?
- Is there someone who could use this more than I can?
- Is there another place I could put this that would be more helpful?
- How many of these do I already have?
- Do I have enough of these?
Objectives – From Vision to Action

WRAP

Wellness Recovery Action Plan

- Lee Shuer – “Buried in Treasures Workshop”
- Wellness Toolbox
- Trigger Action Plan (Saving, Acquiring, etc.)
  - What are your triggers
  - Eye on the Prize – Goals for Decluttering
  - How to Keep Yourself Motivated
Objectives – From Vision to Action

Motivational Interviewing

- Dr. Gail Steketee, PhD at Boston University
- Enhancing Motivation
- Motivational Interviewing (MI)
  - A client-centered, directive method for enhancing people’s natural motivation to change
  - Focus on the value gained from change
  - Brainstorming ways to change behaviors that are not in line with their values and goals.
Objectives
Safety First

Harm Reduction Model – Jesse Edsell-Vetter

- Blocked egress
- Fire load (volume of items is too great)
- Fire hazards (items in oven, near heat source, etc.)
- Trip hazards
- Crush hazards
- Infestation
Objectives – Picking a Team

Using family and friends on the team

- Educate family and friends about the phenomenon and characteristics associated with hoarding behavior
- Explain to family and friends that the goal is to reduce the risks associated with hoarding
- Explain that the worst thing to do is to go in and throw things away for them or go in and throw things away when the owner is not there.
- Be compassionate, be respectful and being the same level of curiosity to their time with your client.
- Rediscover who they are and what bonds you to them.
Objectives – Picking a Team
Help From Community Agencies

- Animal Care & Control Team
- Center for Advocacy for the Interests and Rights of the Elderly
- Clutterers Anonymous
- Community Behavioral Health
- Columbus Property Management
- Community Legal Services
- Department of Behavioral Health
- Department of Human Services
- Department of Public Health
- Jewish Family and Children Services
- Liberty Community Connections
- Licenses & Inspections
- Mental Health Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania
- National Association of Professional Organizers/Institute for Challenging Disorganization
- Office of Supportive Housing
- Pennsylvania SPCA
- Philadelphia Corporation for Aging
- Philadelphia Housing Authority
- Philadelphia Fire Department
- Senior Law Center
- Tenant Union Representative
- Visiting Nurse Association
Record
Record Tasks and Action Plan

- Important for your work with your clients
  - Important to discuss individual tasks and to write it out
    - Helps them remember the task and own the process
  - Important for the continuity of your work over time
    - Charting progress
    - Identifying pitfalls and roadblocks

- Coordinating with other organizations and team members
Creating A Team that is Built to Last!

Integrity: Without it Nothing Works

MICHAEL C. JENSEN - Jessie Isidor Straus Professor Emeritus, Harvard Business School

Workability and performance hinges on the level of integrity maintained by the team.
Managing the team

- Need a structure for recording what actions the client and team members say they will do and by when (action plan / accountability log)
- Agree on a way to communicate and display action plans and accountability logs
- Review at the start of each session
- What gets done or doesn’t is always an opportunity for learning
  - Reveals where the action plan needs to be tweaked or revised
Schedule
If actions and task are not scheduled in time, most likely the vision will not become a reality, at least no time soon!

Here's a Tip!
RESOURCES AND ORGANIZATIONS
Ongoing Support

- **Support Groups**
  - Clutterer’s Anonymous
    - [https://clutterersanonymous.org/](https://clutterersanonymous.org/)
  - Buried in Treasures Groups
    - [http://www.mutual-support.com/the_buried_in_treasures_workshop_and_facilitators_guide](http://www.mutual-support.com/the_buried_in_treasures_workshop_and_facilitators_guide)
  - Anxiety Support Groups

- **Counseling/Therapy**
  - Cognitive/Behavioral Therapy
  - Exposure Therapy
Ongoing Support

- **Sorting, Organizing and Discarding**
  - Professional Organizers
    - National Association of Productivity & Organizing Professionals (NAPO) [www.napo.net](http://www.napo.net)
    - Institute for Challenging Disorganization (ICD) [http://www.challengingdisorganization.org](http://www.challengingdisorganization.org)
  - Case managers
  - Home Health Aides
  - Family or Friends

- Work with other agencies to maximize resources.
Philadelphia Hoarding Task Force

Website & Resource Guide

www.PhiladelphiaHoarding.org

Helplines

- Two helplines based on the age of the person with hoarding behaviors:
  - Under 60 years of age: 215-751-1800
  - 60 years of age and above: 215-545-5728
Websites

- Institute on Compulsive Hoarding & Cluttering
  www.mentalhealthsf.org/programs/ichc
- Help for Hoarders www.helpforhoarders.co.uk
- International OCD Foundation
  www.ocfoundation.org/hoarding
- Children of Hoarders - www.childrenofhoarders.com
- National Association of Productivity & Organizing Professionals - www.napo.net
- Institute for Challenging Disorganization (ICD)
  http://www.challengingdisorganization.org
Resources

Research and Information

- International OCD Foundation (IOCDF), PO Box 961029, Boston, MA 02196, 617.973.5801 [http://www.ocfoundation.org](http://www.ocfoundation.org)
- Boston University School of Social Work [www.bu.edu/ssw/research/hoarding](http://www.bu.edu/ssw/research/hoarding)
- Smith College Department of Psychology [www.science.smith.edu/departments/PSYCH/rfrost](http://www.science.smith.edu/departments/PSYCH/rfrost)

Assessment Tools

Books

- **For anyone**
  - Stuff (Steketee & Frost)
  - The Secret Lives of Hoarders (Matt Paxton)

- **For people with hoarding behaviors**
  - Buried in Treasures (Steketee, Tolin & Frost)

- **For family members and loved ones**
  - Digging Out (Tompkins & Hartl)

- **For children who grew up in a hoarded home**
  - Coming Clean (Miller)
Books

- **For service providers/clinicians**
  - The Hoarding Handbook (Bratiotis, Schmalisch & Steketee)
  - Compulsive Hoarding and Acquiring Workbook (Steketee & Frost)
  - ICD Guide to Collaborating with Professional Organizers (Knerr)
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