



*Complete  
Guardianship  
and Life  
Care Services*

## **HOARDING:**

**WHEN THE ESTATE TAKES ON A LIFE OF ITS OWN!**

**DURING THE CURRENT PANDEMIC, IS THIS A GREAT  
TIME TO ORGANIZE AND PURGE?**



COLLECTION VERSUS HOARDING

## Hoarding by Definition:

**A disorder characterized by an individual's behavioral pattern of excessive acquisition, collection of items (stuff), and the unwillingness to discard large objects or a collection of items; with little or no value, that cover the living areas of the home, and causes significant distress and impairment to that individual living in their home environment.**

**The other name that is used in society is: COMPULSIVE HOARDING.  
One and the same!**

- **Hoarding is impacting:**
  - **5% of the U.S. population**
  - **20 million people**
  - **3x more common than Schizophrenia or Bipolar disorder**
  - **18% to 40% of OCD (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder) clients**
  - **20% of cases include animal hoarding**
- **The prevalence of hoarding is greater in older age groups than in younger age groups.**

**ACCORDING  
TO RECENT  
RESEARCH  
CONDUCTED  
BY  
PREVALENCE  
SAMUELS ET  
AL. 2020...**

# **Hoarding is Associated with the Following Disorders:**

- **Alcohol Abuse**
- **Paranoia**
- **Schizophrenia**
- **ADHD (Attention Deficit- Hyperactivity Disorder)**
- **Avoidant and Anti- Social Traits**
- **Excessive Physical Discipline before the Age of 16**
- **Parental Psychopathology**
- **Specific Childhood Adversities**

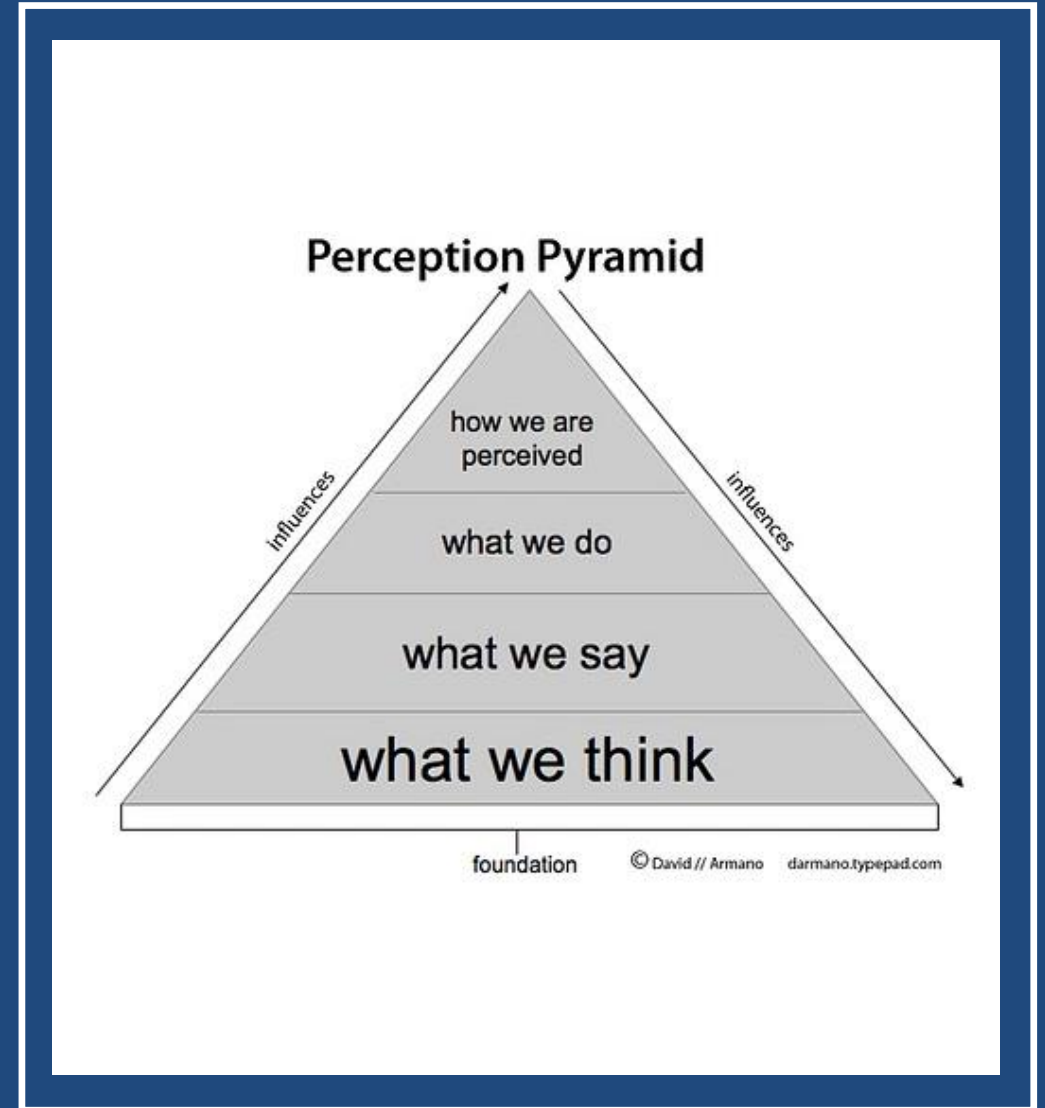
# **NOTHING APPEARS, AS IT SEEMS!**

## **How does a hoarder look to the outside world?**

- **Many of these people maintain a good outward appearance.**
- **Isolated and never allow people into their home.**
- **Use of their obsessions, in their professions (Accountants, Architects, Paralegals, Social Workers, Teachers)**
- **Low rate of marriage**
- **Familial tendency**
- **Able to maintain appearances until they are 50+**

# THE PERCEPTION OF OTHERS!

- **What's wrong with this person?**
  - **They are not very good housekeepers!**
- **Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.**
  - **Maybe? But maybe not?**
- **Contractors unable to service the client- plumbing, heat, electric, etc.**
- **Hiring of attorneys to assist them with numerous code violations.**



## Welcome to the Neighborhood!

- **Invasion of their neighbor's space.**
- **Outcasted- the person and the property is viewed as the master of disaster!**



## Welcome to the Zoo!

- **Animal control complaints.**
- **Hunting for game in the backyard!**
  - **Olympia Fields Example.**

## Welcome to the Jungle!

- **Complaints from the neighbors, to the area municipalities.**
- **Complaints of lowering the property values, of the entire neighborhood.**



**HOARDING**  
**AND THE 4X**  
**FACTORS!**

**1. Blocked Egress- The Paths to Nowhere!**



**2. Impaired ADL's**



**3. Isolation**



**4. Health Hazards**

# Inside the Mind of a Hoarder!

- **Every object is unique and valuable.**
  - **Why would I discard this? This piece of paper is from 7<sup>th</sup> grade!**

**Examples:**

- 1. The paper farmhouses!**
- 2. The estate of wooden chairs!**



**INSIDE THE MIND**  
**OF A HOARDER!**  
**(CONTINUED)**

- **Lack of insight**
- **Rationalization- but this belonged to my family!**
- **Warehousing- the organized collector.**
- **Churning**
- **Procrastination- we can do this tomorrow, or in 10 years.**
- **Object helps them remember- I need this!**

# **Inside the Mind of a Hoarder!** **(Continued)**

- Things replace relationships

**Example: The Doll Collection – VALLEY OF THE DOLLS!**

**Example: The Teddy Bear Chronicles- There is no place like home!**

# Assessment of the Hoarder

**The scale of 6 levels! What level would you fall under?**

**This ranges from:**

**Level 1: Either beginning stages of the disorder or there is still functionality, of living, in this mess of a room or home.**

**Level 6: The extreme cluttering that impairs the individuals ability to live and perform household tasks; external, internal, or foundation damage to the residence.**



**THE  
MASTERS  
OF  
DECEPTION**

- **Outside of the residence is well maintained with a neat trimmed lawn; what happened to the inside of the home?**
- **Clutter in the kitchen area or home office; wall to wall paperwork- outdated!**
  - **“I’m working!” “I’m paying my bills!” “Please don’t disturb my organization!”**
- **Self medication- “I always wanted to be a pharmacist! You mean, it’s illegal to share, or sell my excessive collection of meds?”**
- **Example: The friend to everyone, Ms. or Mr. Feel Good!**

**ASSESSMENT  
OF THE  
HOARDER  
(CONTINUED)**

- **Collections of anything.**
- **The paper house- Hallmark has nothing on me!**
- **We deal in recycled paper too! Where is Mr. Whipple, when we need him?**
- **Food storage**
- **Shop until you drop! – “I am a world class shopper! I only make consumer decisions based on the best deals. Home Shopping Network and Amazon have been wonderful to me!”**
- **“I have a job! I work from home and I’m self employed. I operate my own churning business! Churning is a full time job and then some! Moving this stuff requires my total focus and energy! I have a rotation of stuff that I move on a daily basis!”**

# How Can We Assist the Client with Improving their Quality of Living and Disrupt the Disorder?

**Is there a cure for the disorder?**

**No, but the appropriate strategies, intervention, care plan, and medications will drastically curb and slow the disorder down!**



# The Do's and Don'ts of Assessment

- 1. Understand the value that the person places on the object.**
  - Do not: devalue objects by referring to them as trash, garbage, junk, or baggage.**
- 2. Empathy goes a long way! Listen to the client's story.**
  - Do not: approach the client as a steamroller, or a bull in a china shop!**
- 3. Form an effective partnership with the client- like shared risk.**
  - Do not: approach the client, like the local trash and junk collector- you will earn a one way ticket, out of the client's residence!**
- 4. Replace with relationships, before moving objects- The Elite LCSW is a valuable asset here!**


**5. Rewards versus risk! Anything the client throws away is in their mind, assuming risk! Reward with positive praise or incentives, when the client acts.**

- **Do not: let that important decision to throw something away, go unnoticed!**

**6. Do not touch things without permission.**

- **Do not: again, come in as a general house cleaner!**

**Example: Items in the dumpster by nightfall! Items, mysteriously return to the house, by daybreak!**



**THE DO'S  
AND DON'TS  
OF  
ASSESSMENT  
(CONTINUED)**

# **This room is my room, this room is your room!**

**Strategically speaking, it is absolutely imperative that the  
Care Management Service:**

- 1. Make the connection to the person! Develop some rapport, and eventually trust. This seldom happens overnight, but is a process!**
- 2. Again, form the partnership and a synergy!**
  - Example: Instead of using the approach, of decluttering the entire room, the partnership is formed by suggesting, that you approach the client, with a section of the room; and proceed by discarding this item, and keeping this item! This strategy offers the greatest outcome, of success!**

**IT TAKES A VILLAGE  
TO MAKE A CHANGE!**

**THE MULTI-  
DISCIPLINARY  
APPROACH**

- **The Elite Life Care Services Expert Case Manager**
- **The Elite Life Care Services Social Worker, LCSW**
- **Legal Assistance**
- **Financial Management- Risk vs Reward strategies**
- **Municipalities - you have entered the land of no choice!**
- **HCPOA's or POA's**

# **THE MULTI- DISCIPLINARY APPROACH** **(CONTINUED)**

- **Guardians**
- **Elite Guardian Services**
- **Property Manager- If they have rapport with the client.**
- **Friend - A voice of reason, often, is like a Diamond in the rough!**
- **If, and when all disciplines come together, it can be successful for the client.**

## **DIVERSION STRATEGY**

**Replace objects with:**

- **Activities**
- **Relationships**
- **Events**

## **TREATMENT**

- **Cognitive Behavioral Therapy**
- **Medication for:**
  - **Anxiety**
  - **Depression**
  - **Psychosis**
  - **Sleep deprivation**
- **Life coaching with skills in organizational thinking and planning**
- **Project WRAP**
- **Deferring to alternate decision makers, if appropriate.**

## New Rules for Shopping:

- Take non- shopping trips to stores
- Learning to live through the anxiety- WRAP Program
- EWA= Exposure Without Acquiring= Success

## New Rules of Discarding

- Donate whenever possible- Be a giver, not a taker!
- Selling- Show me the money!
- Giving away- Be generous!
- Throwing away- It can be so rewarding to purge!

All of these strategies require positive reinforcement by the Care Manger.

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**Elite is a firm, that currently provides seamless services, throughout the state of Illinois, with a heavy concentration of clients, and wards in KANE County, DuPage County, DeKalb County, Kendall County, Cook County, LaSalle, Lake, and McHenry Counties, as well!**