



# Renfrew County Housing Corporation

Wednesday, October 16, 2024 at 1:00 PM

Council Chambers

## Agenda

Page

**1. Call to Order**

**2. Land Acknowledgement**

**3. Roll Call**

**4. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof**

**5. Adoption of the Open Minutes**

- a. Minutes - September 10, 2024

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[Renfrew County Housing Corporation - Sep 10 2024 - Minutes](#) 

**Recommendation:** THAT the minutes of the September 10, 2024, meeting be approved.

**6. Adoption of the Closed Minutes - September 10, 2024**

**Recommendation:** THAT the Closed minutes of the September 10, 2024, meeting be approved.

**7. Delegations - None at time of mailing**

**8. Director's Report**





- a. [RCHC Director Report](#) 

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[RCHC Project Status](#) 

**Recommendation:** THAT the Director's Monthly Report be approved as presented.

**9. Manager of Community Housing Monthly Report**

- a. [RCHC Manager Report](#)   
[County of Renfrew - 2024-25 COHB Allocation Letter](#)   
[RCHC Buried In Treasures](#)   
[Collaborative Response to Hording Training](#) 

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**Recommendation:** THAT the Manager of Community Housing's Monthly Report be approved as presented.

**10. New Business**

**11. Closed Meeting - None at time of mailing**

**12. Date of next meeting (Wednesday, November 13, 2024) and adjournment**

**Recommendation:** THAT this meeting adjourn and the next regular meeting be held on Wednesday, November 13, 2024.

**NOTE:** Submissions received from the public, either orally or in writing may become part of the public record.



## Renfrew County Housing Corporation

Tuesday, September 10, 2024 at 1:00 PM

Council Chambers

### Minutes

**Directors Present:** Chair Anne Giardini, Warden Peter Emon, Councillor David Mayville, Councillor Neil Nicholson, Councillor Gary Serviss

**Absent:** Vice-Chair Debbi Grills, Councillor Ed Jacyno (City of Pembroke Representative)

**And Others:** Councillor Michael Donohue

**Officers Present:** Craig Kelley, Chief Executive Officer, Andrea Patrick, Chief Operating Officer, Daniel Burke, Manager of Finance/Treasurer

**Also Present:** Michael Blackmore, Director of Long-Term Care, Jennifer Dombroskie, Manager of Community Housing, April Muldoon, Manager of Community Supports, Margo Smith, Manager of Children's Services, Kevin Raddatz, Manager of Real Estate, Dennis Lazary, Supervisor of Technical Services, Gwen Dombroski, Clerk, Tina Peplinskie, Media Relations and Social Media Coordinator, Evelyn VanStarkenbug, Administrative Assistant

#### 1. Call to Order

Chair Giardini called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

#### 2. Land Acknowledgement

The land acknowledgement identifying that the meeting was being held on the traditional territory of the Omàmiwininì People was recited.

#### 3. Roll Call

The roll was called.

#### 4. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof

No pecuniary interests were declared.

**5. Adoption of the Open Minutes - August 14, 2024**

- a. [Renfrew County Housing Corporation - Aug 14 2024 - Minutes](#)



**RESOLUTION NO. RCHC-C-24-09-55**

THAT the minutes of the August 14, 2024, meeting be approved.

*Moved by:* Warden Peter Emon

*Seconded by:* Gary Serviss

**CARRIED**

**6. Adoption of the Closed Minutes - August 14, 2024**

**RESOLUTION NO. RCHC-C-24-09-56**

THAT the Closed minutes of the August 14, 2024, meeting be approved.

*Moved by:* Gary Serviss

*Seconded by:* Warden Peter Emon

**CARRIED**

**7. Delegations**

- a. The Director of Development and Property introduced Majid Shegow, and Ayden Townsend, of Roth IAMS (Integrated Asset Management) and advised that Roth IAMS was the successful consultant to complete the Building Condition Assessments on several Renfrew County Housing Corporation units.

**8. Closed Meeting**

**RESOLUTION NO. RCHC-C-24-09-57**

THAT pursuant to Section 239 (2) of the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended, the Renfrew County Housing Corporation Board of Directors move into a closed meeting to discuss (a) the security of the property of the municipality or local board, and (b) a proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of land by the municipality or local board (Building Condition Assessment). Time 1:08 p.m.

*Moved by:* Warden Peter Emon

*Seconded by:* David Mayville

**CARRIED**

**RESOLUTION NO. RCHC-C-24-09-58**

THAT the Renfrew County Housing Corporation Board of Directors resumes as an open meeting. Time: 2:22 p.m.

*Moved by:* Warden Peter Emon

*Seconded by:* Gary Serviss

**CARRIED**

**RESOLUTION NO. RCHC-C-24-09-59**

THAT the Renfrew County Housing Corporation Board of Directors directs staff to develop a renewal and replacement strategy to maintain and grow the community housing solution in Renfrew County.

*Moved by:* Neil Nicholson

*Seconded by:* Warden Peter Emon

**CARRIED**

**9. Director's Report - None**

**10. Manager of Community Housing Monthly Report**

a. [RCHC Manager Report](#) 

[Take Back the Night](#) 

[10-Year Homelessness and Housing Plan](#) 

The Manager of Community Housing provided a presentation on the 10-Year Homelessness and Housing Plan.

[10 Year HHP Presentation](#) 

**RESOLUTION NO. RCHC-C-24-09-60**

THAT the Renfrew County Housing Corporation Board of Directors accepts receipt of the 10-Year Homelessness and Housing Plan; AND THAT staff be instructed to develop housing-focused initiatives in alignment with the plan's recommendations, Mesa, and the County of Renfrew's Strategic Plan.

*Moved by:* Neil Nicholson  
*Seconded by:* David Mayville

**CARRIED**

**11. New Business - None**

**12. Date of next meeting (Wednesday, October 16, 2024) and adjournment**

**RESOLUTION NO. RCHC-C-24-09-61**

THAT this meeting adjourn and the next regular meeting be held on Wednesday, October 16, 2024. Time: 2:50 p.m.

*Moved by:* Neil Nicholson  
*Seconded by:* Gary Serviss

**CARRIED**

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Anne Giardini, Chair

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Gwen Dombroski, Clerk

**COUNTY OF RENFREW  
COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
RENFREW COUNTY HOUSING CORPORATION**

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**TO:** Renfrew County Housing Corporation Board of Directors

**FROM:** Andrea Patrick, Director of Community Services

**DATE:** October 16, 2024

**SUBJECT:** Director's Report

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**INFORMATION**

1. **Community Housing Capital Projects Update**

Attached is the Renfrew County Housing Corporation 2024 Capital Projects update as of September 30, 2024.

2. **700 Mackay Street (Carefor) Facility Renovation Update**

Construction has commenced as planned on the fit-up at the 700 Mackay Street facility in Pembroke and remains on track to meet the projected early November completion date. All contractors have submitted quotes, and the necessary work has been scheduled accordingly. There are no significant delays or concerns at this time, and we expect to complete the project as outlined.

3. **Snow Tender for 1 MacKercher Drive, Cobden**

A tender was issued for snow clearing services at 1 MacKercher Drive in Cobden, with scope of work addressing the parking lot and sidewalks. The contract is for three years. One submission from McCrea Excavating Ltd., Pembroke, was received. The total bid is \$25,725, which equates to approximately \$8,575 per year. This pricing is in line with industry standards and is considered fair for the scope of work required.

RCHC-2024 Capital Projects

Location	Work Description	Status			Comments
		Budget	Quote Total	Status	
202 Cecil - Pembroke	New Duplex	\$545,471.00	\$531,947.17	Project 100% complete	Project completed - May
229-231 Albert St. Arnprior	B2010 - Exterior Walls	\$25,000.00	\$17,800.00	Project 100% complete	Project completed - Sept
72 Sullivan Cr. Arnprior	B2010 - Exterior Walls	\$25,000.00		Reviewed	Deferred 2025
204-242 Cecil St. Pembroke	G2050 - Landscaping	\$30,000.00	\$19,500.00	Project 100% complete	Project completed - Oct
63 Russell Arnprior	B30 - Roofing	\$30,000.00		Awaiting quotes	Schedule Oct
150 Elizabeth St. Pembroke	B1013 - Balcony Construction	\$34,000.00		Quotes received - over budget	Retender in 2025 - additional funding required
26 Spruce Arnprior	G2049-B - Sheds	\$40,000.00		Cancel	Deferred 2026
44 Lorne St. Renfrew	Garage Extension	\$50,000.00	\$37,400.00	Project 100 % complete	Project completed
41 Vimy Boulevard Renfrew	B2010 - Exterior Walls	\$60,000.00		Design completed	Tender - mid Oct
19 Smith St. Beachburg	B2030 - Exterior Doors	\$86,250.00	\$51,275 .00	Project 100 % complete	Project Completed - May
59 Wallace Eganville	C1060 - Kitchen Upgrade	\$184,000.00		On Hold	
41 Vimy Boulevard Renfrew	A10 - Foundations	\$300,000.00		Awarded to consultant	Awating report from consultant
Various Apartment Buildings	Balcony Inspection & Repair	\$400,000.00	\$161,000.00 to date	Inspections ongoing with Engineer Burwash, Nelson ,Wallace Palmer - complete	Deficiencies identified at 8 buildings , ongoing repairs and inspections on remainder of balconies continuing
Various Apartment Buildings	Electrical Panel Upgrades	\$95,000.00		Proposal requested	Schedule for mid Q4



**COUNTY OF RENFREW  
COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
RENFREW COUNTY HOUSING CORPORATION**

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**TO:** Renfrew County Housing Corporation Board of Directors

**FROM:** Jennifer Dombroskie, Manager of Community Housing

**DATE:** October 16, 2024

**SUBJECT:** Monthly Report

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**INFORMATION**

**1. Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB)**

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) determines COHB funding allocations based on population, and the amounts provided to the County of Renfrew are comparable to those of municipalities of similar size. These allocations have fluctuated from year to year in line with the Province's nine-year funding plan for the program. It is important to note that the yearly allocation amounts reflect only the funds available for new households and do not account for the financial support continuing year after year for the ongoing and growing COHB caseload. By the end of this fiscal year, the County of Renfrew will have 325 households receiving COHB support—an increase of 40 households since April 1, 2024.

The County does not receive the funds directly; they are distributed by the Province to eligible households. Community Housing staff assist new COHB applicants in determining their eligibility and submitting their applications to the Province. Staff also support ongoing COHB recipients with annual eligibility reconfirmation if required. The County is reimbursed an administrative fee of \$250 per application, up to 5% of the total allocation.

The County of Renfrew has completed the required COHB Take-Up Plan for 2024-25, and the attached letter dated September 26, 2024, regarding the COHB allocation was initially to be held confidential but is now able to be shared publicly. An email received from the MMAH on October 2, 2024, confirmed that applications could begin being processed.

For the 2024-2025 allocation, new eligibility criteria have been introduced. A beneficial change in provincial policy is that Special Priority applicants (survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking) who are approved for COHB, will retain their position on

the Renfrew County Housing Corporation (RCHC) centralized waitlist. This year, prioritization will shift from a first-come, first-served approach based on financial eligibility to focusing on survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking as indicated by provincial direction. COHB will be prioritized for households who have disclosed these situations through the RCHC centralized waitlist or Ontario Works. Applications are not open to the general public due to the limited funding.

**COHB Fiscal Allocations:**

- 2020-2021: \$204,099
- 2021-2022: \$63,331
- 2022-2023: \$331,900
- 2023-2024: \$287,600
- 2024-2025: \$193,300

**2. Professional Development – Buried in Treasures**

On September 19, 2024, Community Services staff participated in training focused on hoarding supports, following the "Buried in Treasures" approach. This training was part of the Renfrew County Housing Corporation's (RCHC) hoarding supports pilot project, conducted in partnership with Pembroke Regional Hospital. Effective April 1, 2024, RCHC entered into an agreement with the hospital's Mental Health Services, with the broader objectives of enhancing referral pathways, improving service coordination, and increasing the capacity of RCHC to support tenants. A significant part of this initiative is equipping staff with the knowledge to become in-house experts in addressing and supporting tenants whose mental health challenges are affecting their living conditions, particularly in cases of high content or squalor.

Hoarding disorder is a mental health condition characterized by persistent difficulty discarding possessions and was officially recognized as a distinct diagnosis in 2013 by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-5). While not all cases of high content or squalor are officially diagnosed as hoarding disorder, the client-centered and trauma-informed care practices we are enhancing through this project are applicable to tenants with a variety of diagnoses or circumstances.

Attached as information is the slide deck shared with staff during their training. Lisa Schuler, Hoarding Case Manager from the hospital's Mental Health Services, facilitated the training and has been mentoring staff through bi-weekly case conference meetings. Concurrently, Ms. Schuler has met with tenants and successfully onboarded approximately 15 individuals into formal ongoing hoarding disorder care. Furthermore, several Community Services staff members joined Ms. Schuler and other hoarding disorder experts at a conference titled "A Collaborative Response to Hoarding in Our Community" on October 4, 2024 (training flyer attached as information).

While Community Housing staff do not provide therapy or make diagnoses, they play a vital role in identifying concerns, making referrals, and ensuring that tenants feel safe and are safe in their homes. They help manage high-content situations as part of the care pathway, assisting tenants with content reduction and fostering ongoing connections to provide long-term support and stability. Interventions focused on hoarding or high-content issues not only address and mitigate damage to units but also enhance safety, particularly regarding fire egress, pest control, and mold.

**Ministry of  
Municipal Affairs  
and Housing**

Office of the Minister

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Toronto ON M7A 2J3  
Tel.: 416 585-7000

**Ministère des  
Affaires municipales  
et du Logement**

Bureau du ministre

777, rue Bay, 17<sup>e</sup> étage  
Toronto (Ontario) M7A 2J3  
Tél. : 416 585-7000



September 26, 2024

Your Worship  
Warden Peter Emon  
County of Renfrew  
pemon@renfrew.ca

Dear Warden Emon:

**Re: 2024-25 Confirmed Funding Allocations for the Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB) Program**

I am pleased to write to you today with important details regarding your 2024-25 confirmed funding allocation for the COHB Program. I am sharing this information with you in confidence until it is announced publicly. As part of the protocol for Ontario Transfer Payment Agreements, all funding announcements must be made in consultation with the province, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), and the Service Manager(s).

As you know, our government understands the importance of housing that is affordable, and accessible, and that meets the needs of Ontario's diverse communities and populations. Since April 2020, over 26,500 households have been approved under the COHB program.

Thanks to your hard work over the last few years, as of April 1, 2024, the province is administering COHB benefits to approximately 285 households in your Service Manager area.

The province will continue to advocate strongly for additional federal funding under the National Housing Strategy (NHS), including its fair share for initiatives where Ontario is underfunded based on Core Housing Need. To this end, the province has finalized the terms of a COHB enhancement agreement that will result in \$14.7 million in additional federal funding for 2024-25 under the program's gender-based violence stream. This dedicated funding would be matched by the province. As such, Service Managers are encouraged to continue prioritizing survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking for COHB supports.

We are pleased to provide **your specific COHB funding allocation for the 2024-25 fiscal year to onboard new households**. Your confirmed allocation and target number of households is attached to this letter as Appendix "A" and is subject to the conditions identified below.

## COHB Take-Up Plan

This year, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) is requiring Service Managers to complete a COHB take-up plan for new COHB households. The take-up plan is a projection of households to be onboarded to COHB for 2024-25. **Simply click on the link below for the take-up plan reporting template:** [2024-25 COHB Take-Up Plan](#)

In order to take up their allocations and onboard new households, Service Managers are required to first submit the take-up plans to the satisfaction of the ministry. The take-up plans must be submitted to the ministry within one week upon receipt of this letter.

To improve COHB resource planning, Service Managers are required to inform MMAH of any changes to the projected number of new households from the take-up plan per the existing quarterly reporting process.

## Changes to COHB Requirements for Special Priority Policy Households

As you know, Service Managers are currently required to ensure that households who are on their social housing waiting list are removed from the list if the household begins to receive a monthly benefit under COHB. Ontario is waiving this requirement for households who are included in the Special Priority Policy (SPP) category under the *Housing Services Act, 2011*. **This means that for SPP households only, Service Managers are no longer required to remove the household from the social housing waiting list even if they accept a COHB benefit.**

MMAH is **strongly encouraging** Service Managers to allow SPP applicants to remain on their social housing waiting lists while they receive COHB. This approach aligns with the intent of the SPP, which is to help ensure that housing isn't a barrier to leaving a situation of abuse or trafficking. The terms of the waiver are set out in Appendix B to this letter.

I am pleased that our government is able to support the important work that you do to improve housing outcomes in your community. I look forward to continuing our work together.

Sincerely,



The Honourable Paul Calandra  
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

c. Craig Kelley, CAO/Clerk  
Andrea Patrick, Director of Community Services  
Mila Kolokolnikova, Team Lead, Regional Housing Services  
Eastern Municipal Services Office

## **Appendix “A”**

### **Funding Allocation – County of Renfrew**

<b>Program</b>	<b>2024-25 Allocation*</b>	<b>Target number of new households for 2024-25</b>
Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB) Program	<b>\$193,300</b>	<b>40</b>

\*The COHB planning allocation amount is used for planning purposes and reflects funding available to support new participants in the program up to June 30, 2025, including Service Manager’s administration payments and rent deposit (“first and last”) payments, where applicable. Please note that February 28, 2025, is the last day to process applications using the 2024-25 planning allocation.

## **Appendix “B”– Changes to COHB Requirements for Special Priority Policy Households**

A significant number of SPP applicants decline COHB offers, which increases their risk of continuing to live in a dangerous situation as they wait for Rent-Geared-to-Income (RGI) assistance. The purpose of this waiver is to help remove barriers which may prevent survivors of abuse and trafficking from accepting COHB. MMAH is strongly encouraging Service Managers to allow SPP applicants to remain on their social housing waiting lists while they receive COHB. This approach aligns with the intent of the SPP, which is to help ensure that housing isn't a barrier to leaving a situation of abuse or trafficking.

Currently, under section 3.1(f) of Schedule C to the Ontario Transfer Payment Agreement (TPA) for the Canada-Ontario Housing Benefit (COHB) and under the COHB Program Guidelines, Service Managers are required to ensure that households who are on their social housing waiting list consent to being removed from and are removed from the list if the household is approved for and begins to receive a monthly benefit under COHB. Further, in order to be considered an “Eligible Household” for COHB, the household must agree to being removed from the Service Manager’s social housing waiting list if the household is approved for and begins receiving a COHB benefit.

Ontario hereby waives these requirements in relation to households who are included in the Special Priority household category under the *Housing Services Act, 2011*. For SPP households only, Service Managers are no longer required to remove the household from the social housing waiting list if they accept a COHB benefit. Service Managers may elect to treat SPP households as “Eligible Households” for COHB regardless of whether they have agreed to be removed from the social housing waiting list.

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# BURIED IN TREASURES

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## BASIC INTRODUCTION

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## AGENDA

- Language Review
- Chapters 1-3: Understanding Hoarding
- Chapters 4 & 5: The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly
- Chapter 6: CBT for Hoarding
- Chapter 7: Rocking Chairs to Roller Skates
- Chapter 8: Stop the Shop
- Chapters 9 & 10: Tools
- The Green Booklet
- Chapter 13: Maintenance





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## LANGUAGE REVIEW

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### CLUTTER IMAGE RATING SCALE:

9-point scale used to rate the amount of clutter in a unit.

Non-judgmental. It doesn't explain why there is clutter, it only rates the amount.

Universal: we are all using the same rating scale.

Free app that you can use on your phone.

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## HIGH CONTENT:

Using the Clutter Image Rating Scale, High Content is anything that rates as 4 or higher.

It is a fire term, use to identify when a residential unit has enough combustible material to burn like an industrial fire.

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## SQUALOR:

Refers to the dirt, filth, and/or biohazards present in a space.

Use a 1-10 rating with a brief description of the type of squalor present

In October we will have the HETH that will allow us to have a universal tool for screening home environmental health concerns (such as squalor)

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## HOARDING DISORDER: A SERIOUS MENTAL ILLNESS

As a diagnosable illness, it carries with it the protection of the law under duty to accommodate disabilities. Criteria for diagnosis:

1. Difficulty with parting with or discarding possessions regardless of their physical value.
  2. The lack of discarding results in an over accumulation of items cluttering the living space of the home impairing the intended use of space.
  3. The clutter causes a significant level of distress or is impairing the individual's ability to function in areas of life.
  4. The clutter is not better explained by another physical or mental health diagnosis.
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## HIGH CONTENT ASSESSMENT:

The intake assessment completed by Mental Health Services to assess:

- The functioning of the home
  - The functioning of the client in the home
  - The physical safety of the home
  - The safety of anyone entering the home
  - The perceived root cause of the concern
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## THE 3 TIERS:

As part of the High Content Assessment, all safety concerns, along with personal goals, will be placed in one of the 3 tier:

1. Imminent Risk: Immediate Threat to Life is a fire term for safety risks that are so great they need to be addressed immediately. This includes smoke alarms, CO alarms, and unblocking egress paths.
  2. Corrective Actions/Inspection Orders: Safety risks that need to be corrected in a timely manner. Can be enforced or have consequence if not completed.
  3. Recommendations to Improve Quality of Life: Staff or client driven goals to improve functioning and enjoyment in the home but are not mandated.
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## BIT / BURIED IN TREASURES:

Workbook used by Mental Health Services. Originally written to be a self-help guide to hoarding recovery. "Better" recovery results in a peer-lead group.

"Best" recovery results when supported by a trained professional.

Psychoeducational resource are used to promote recovery from hoarding disorder.

MHSRC offer BIT as a group when we have a pocket of clients who are geographically close and all group-appropriate. (literacy levels, good insight, congruent personalities traits, able to prioritize BIT)

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## THE GREEN BOOKLET:

A condensed version of the resources from BIT & the High Content Assessment.

Can be used in conjunction with BIT to help speed up the process or on its own for clients with lower literacy skills, attention challenges, or minor cognitive impairment.

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## UNDERSTANDING HOARDING

Chapters 1-3

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## CHAPTER 1-3

- The first 3 chapters explain: how the book works, what is hoarding disorder, and some quizzes to self-test if you have hoarding disorder – or at the very least - will this book benefit you.
- Reads like a textbook. Often very hard for clients to get through these chapters.
- I often assign all three chapters as the first week's homework assignment.

### Get the most out of your book:

1. Encourage clients to complete the quizzes in pencil and add the date. They will be encouraged at the end of the book to re-evaluate themselves. This allows them to complete these quizzes repeatedly to monitor their progress.
2. Family and friend files. There are pages that have pictures of file folders. Example on page 20. Encourage clients to have support from a trusted family member or friend – we call them a Clutter Coach. The clutter coach should read these file pages to ensure they are supporting the program and not working against it.

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## KEY LEARNING POINTS OF CHAPTERS 1-3

- Executive functioning
- Beliefs
- Motivation





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## THE HOARDING TREE:

Hoarding disorder is like a tree. On the surface anyone can see the clutter and like every tree, there's a network of roots that are feeding the image above the surface. This visible part of hoarding disorder is the result of saving items, and in some cases, over acquiring items.

People may save for sentimental reasons, instrumental reasons, or intrinsic reasons.

The roots of hoarding disorder often contain many factors that influence the physical manifestation of hoarding. Some of the underlying influences include: memory issues, physical health limitations, mental health concerns, difficulties with executive functioning, previous trauma, loss, family history, or neurobiology.

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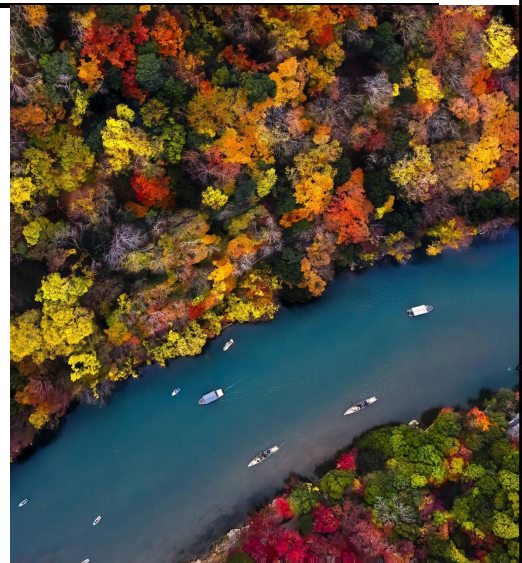
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## EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING

Individuals with hoarding disorder have difficulty with aspects of executive functioning. This may include:

- prospective memory
- attention
- categorizing
- task requiring complex thinking
- perception
- decision making

BIT, and clinical experience, provide the tools required to help individuals overcome these difficulties.



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## BELIEFS SHAPE ACTION

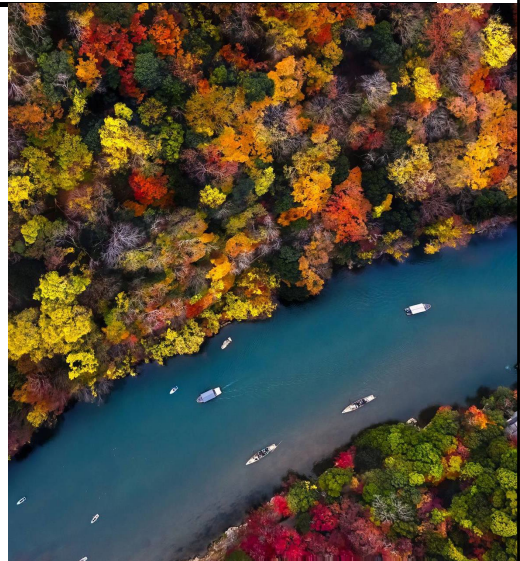
People with hoarding disorder have strong beliefs around various objects. Often these beliefs stand as an impediment for discarding items.

Beliefs shape our worldview. Our worldview shapes our: identity, connection to the world, values, sense of self worth, and safety. Often the objects in our home reflect our worldview.

People with hoarding disorder will cling to objects as if it were an extension of their own person. Their belongings are the objects that hold their identity instead of reflecting their identity.

Part of the work completed in this workbook is helping clients identify beliefs that are hindering the recovery goals. This will be explored more when we talk about cognitive behavioral therapy.

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## MOTIVATION

The high content assessment should yield some insight into their motivation for change.

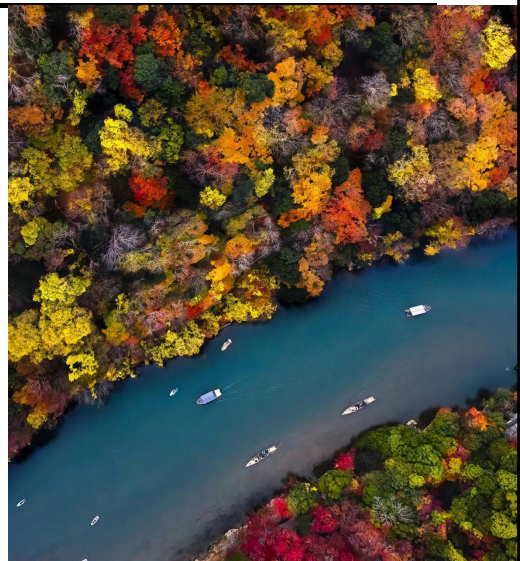
Motivation can be internal or external.

Internal motivation is often a tipping point for clients to become fully engaged in the intervention process.

When motivation is strictly external, they will often quit the process as soon as the external motivation is removed.

Finding motivation that is rooted in joy, excitement, or happiness, is always therapeutically more effective than motivation root in fear or anger.

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## THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE UGLY

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### THE BAD GUYS:

# #1

## It's not my priority

Often people with hoarding disorder have a lack of insight into the severity of the problem.

They simply don't see the need to complete work on their home, or in an area of concern.

They normalize their living situations. Changing it just isn't their priority.

We use education and strategies to help people reengage in their home and become enlightened to the concerns.

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THE BAD GUYS:

#2  
Letting  
unhelpful  
beliefs get in  
your way

In this part of the chapter there are some quizzes and lists of unhelpful beliefs in which people become trapped.

We want to begin by testing to see if there's any validity to this belief.

As needed, we introduce a tool or resource to better address the belief.

Belief: It is bad to waste food because someday you may be hungry and have no food. (often in clients who grew up with limited access to food)

Result/behaviour: Over accumulation of food. (expired food, more food than one person can reasonably use, using food bank while cupboards are still full, food they don't like...)

Corrective Response: Contact information for food bank and other community services that can provide immediate access to food to individuals in need. Testing out discarding small amounts of expired food they don't like and evaluating how that feels over time. Recognizing situations that may result in not having food and planning as to when you need to begin stockpiling or asking for help.

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THE BAD GUYS:

#3  
Overthinking  
/ confusing  
yourself

As we just talked about, executive functioning concerns are a large part of hoarding disorder. As you watch clients make decisions this deficit becomes more and more apparent. The green booklet contains several worksheets to help clients combat overthinking.

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THE BAD GUYS:

#4

## Avoidance

This can be a touchy subject. Most clients have been accused of not trying hard enough. We often fail to recognize just how hard someone with hoarding disorder is working.

Avoidance is a non-productive coping skill that clients develop to manage their distress. Hoarding is often called an illness of avoidance. It is too difficult to figure out how to discard, so clients will avoid it by creating other priorities that need to be addressed first.

A simple way of combating avoidance is recognizing it and encouraging any forward action no matter how small. Eliminating the distress eliminates the need to avoid.

The 3 tiers is another essential tool to help clients stay on track and not use avoidance by addressing lesser prioritized tasks.

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THE BAD GUYS:

#5

## Short-term payoff

The short-term payoff is cleaning your room by shoving everything into the closet. The floor space is clean, but the mess and disorganization is still there.

Another example is dieting all week and then rewarding yourself by binge eating all weekend and undoing all your calorie deficit.

We use a reward system to ensure that there is a payoff for the hard work, but it's a reward that isn't undoing all the hard work.

Example: Once I complete my 30 minutes of cleaning, I will sit outside on my patio and enjoy a cup of coffee.

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## THE "HELPERS" BAD GUYS:

5 things we as "helpers" can do that hurt the recovery process

1. Working at our speed. Do not push your clients too fast. A small completed goal it's always better than 1/2 completed large goal. Success breeds success - failure breeds discouragement. Go slow enough that your client can succeed, and they will be encouraged to do more.
2. Failure to recognize when a client is not ready. A client must be at a point in their life where they can spend between 20 and 60 minutes a day working on this task. If they aren't ready to make this level of commitment, for whatever reason, it's not the right time to start.
3. Setting your clients up to fail. Do not assign homework or goals that are bigger than they are ready to take on.
4. Expecting perfection. As long as there is evidence of solid effort and some progress, we are on the right track.
5. Offering "helpful" advice. Never make the decision for your client. This will only support their desire to avoid decision making, robbing them of their own personal recovery success.

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## THE GOOD GUYS:

# #1

## Eye on the prize

It is important for a client to know what their motivation (or prize) is for doing this work.

Remind them of their motivation regularly.

Help them identify new goals or prizes as they come up.

Example: you really seem to like making model cars. Won't it be fun when you have your kitchen table cleared off and you can start building model cars again.

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THE GOOD GUYS:

#2  
The  
Downward  
Arrow

This helps clients challenge unhelpful beliefs. It's a game of playing "what if " or "worst case" scenario.

It helps clients unlock the root fears or beliefs that is causing them to keep unnecessary items.

One of the goals in this program is to breathe truth into unhelpful beliefs replacing fears with facts and giving solutions to concerns.

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THE GOOD GUYS:

#3  
Think it  
Through

We challenge clients to think through general questions during the discarding process to help open up their thinking highways in the brain.

It stops the automatic thought process of "keep or throw out" which usually leads to a behavioral response of keeping items.

We'll go over some examples of these questions when we look at the green booklet.

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THE GOOD GUYS:

#4

## Testing it out

Experiments can be extremely helpful.

If a client is unsure if they're ready to get rid of an object, you can ask them to store it at a friend's house, or if appropriate, you can offer to store it at your office. This allows the client to test out life without this object.

As they learn that they can survive without the item, they may be more inclined to discard it and other items in the future.

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THE GOOD GUYS:

#5

## Developing the right skills

Discarding can be very difficult. Sometimes we need to bring in additional supports, such as occupational therapy, to help identify specific needs and develop specific skills to address those needs.

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THE GOOD GUYS:

#6  
Develop  
your practice  
muscle

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It takes time to build up stamina to stay focused on discarding work. After years of avoidance, making a shift into a daily practice of home maintenance can be very challenging for people.

We want to start small, so we don't burnout our clients. As they developed their practice muscles, they will be able to work for longer periods of time.

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THE "HELPERS" GOOD  
GUYS:

3 things we as "helpers" can do that help the recovery process

1. Praise! Always point out and celebrate any change or progress your client has made. Not only do they need to hear this, but soon they will view your visits as a source of joy.
2. Reality checks. There are two sides to this good guy. We may have to confront a continual lack of follow through. On the other hand, we sometimes need to give our clients a reality check about how much great work has been completed. Both can be very helpful at the right times.
3. The green booklet. Be familiar with its contents and remind your clients of various tools and strategies. They may be feeling burnt out because they forgot their motivation or rewards. Or there's a particular tool inside that you think might help them through this part of their recovery journey that you can suggest.

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# COGNITIVE BEHAVIOURAL THERAPY: CBT FOR HOARDING



33

# CBT IN A NUTSHELL: EXTREMELY DISTILLED

Our thoughts impact how we behave.

Change your thoughts and you can  
change your behaviours.



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Chapter 6 teaches how to identify the underlying thought/belief that is leading to undesired behaviour.

We then identify the processing challenges and put resources/tools in place to support them.

We identify the rewards/reinforcement that are supporting the negative behaviour. We put in place new rewards/reinforcement that support the positive behaviour.

Outcome: a change in their behaviour (reducing the clutter) with resources and support to see lasting change



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This is the core work of the hoarding program.

(We don't help people clean up.)

We help people change how they are processing and interacting with the world around them.

The natural biproduct of someone changing their thoughts from unhelpful thoughts to helpful thoughts is socially appropriate behaviour.

CBT for hoarding: the behaviour change is THEM cleaning and maintaining a safe and functional home.



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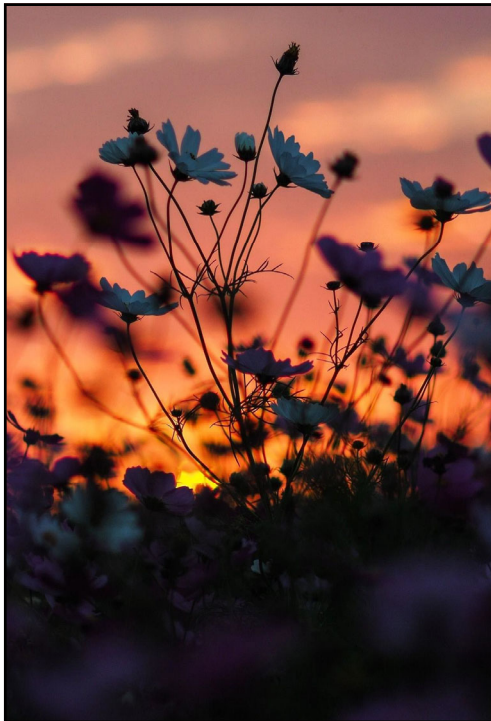
It takes time to change automatic thoughts.

It is really easy to slip back into old thought patterns and behaviours – especially when we are tired, stressed, or experiencing loss.

What I have distilled to 4 slides is the true weight of the entire recovery program. Hoarding clients have to fight their natural/automatic thoughts and behaviour responses for the rest of their lives in order to maintain recovery. Be kind and gentle with these clients. They have a nearly impossible task ahead of them.



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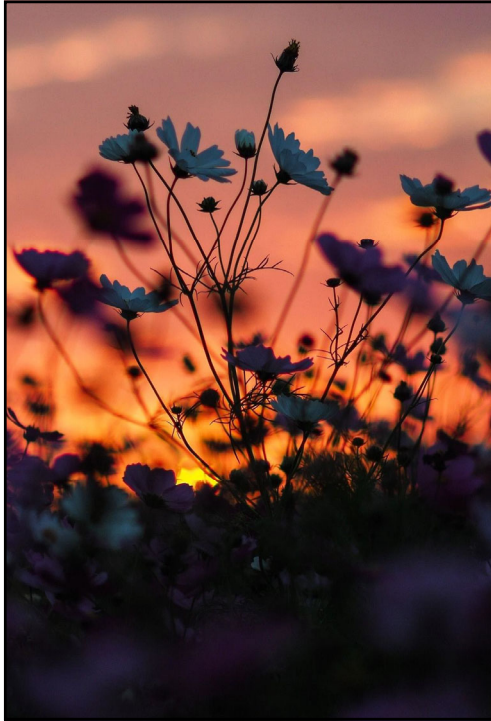


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## ROCKING CHAIRS TO ROLLER SKATES: CHAPTER 7

**Motivation** is key to get people from staying stuck in the same spot rocking back and forth, doing the same thing over and over again, never going anywhere.

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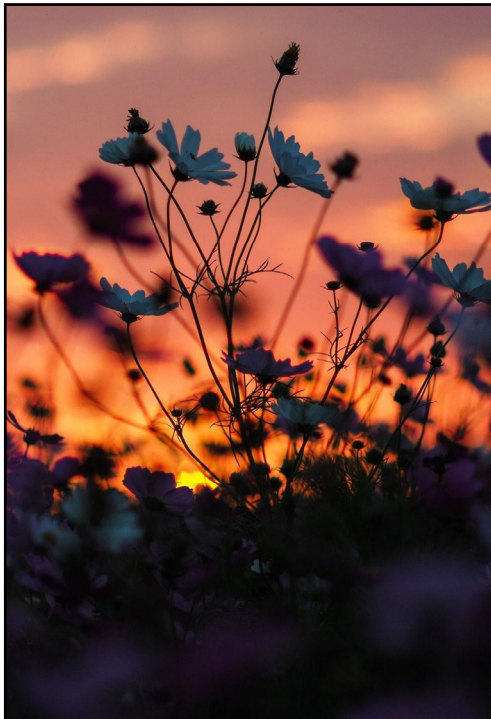
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## WAYS TO HELP FIND MOTIVATION

List all the people impacted by the client's hoarding:

- Friends no longer feel comfortable visiting,
- fractured family relationships,
- first responders that are put at risk in the event of emergency,
- support services that have to enter the home to deliver service,
- utility or repair companies,
- Neighbors,
- Employer and co-workers .....

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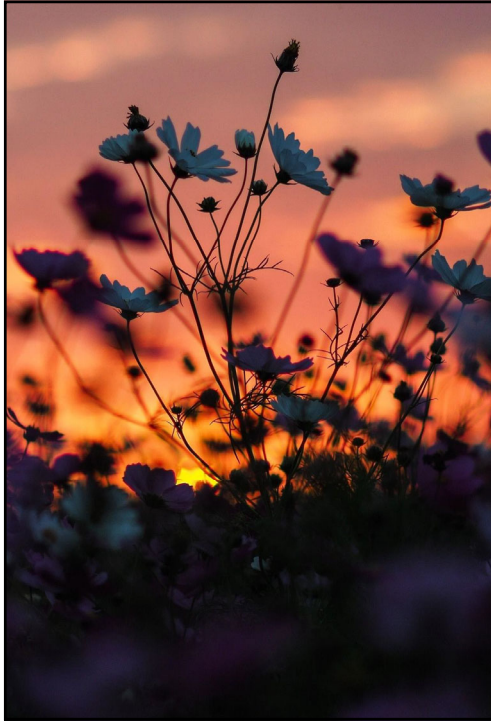
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## WAYS TO HELP FIND MOTIVATION

List all the things gained by engaging in this work:

- Ability to replace the broken washer or dryer
- feeling of control over your life
- having a greater social life with friends being able to come over
- a place to engage in personal hobbies
- being able to have your family over for the holidays
- feeling at peace in your home
- not being afraid to open the door when somebody knocks
- restoring broken relationships

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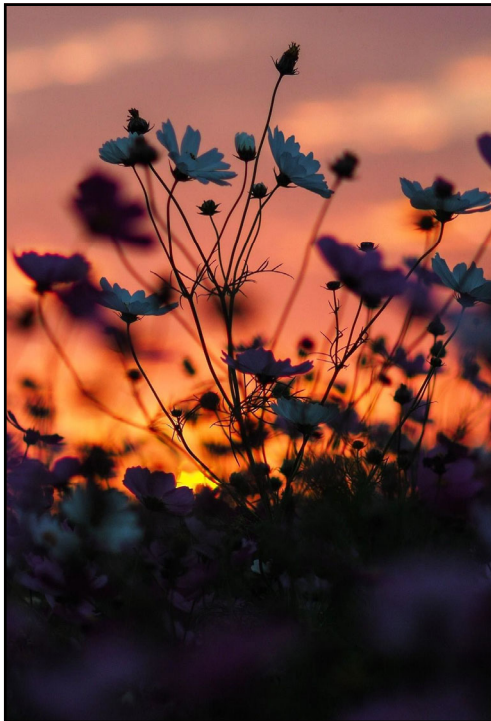
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## WAYS TO HELP FIND MOTIVATION

List all the potential consequences of not engaging in this work:

- Having my children removed
- knowing that nothing will ever change
- being fined by the fire department
- being evicted
- continuing to fight with my family
- infestation concerns
- never seen my grandchildren again
- being unable to get in home nursing care
- being terrified that someone someday is going to come in and see the mess

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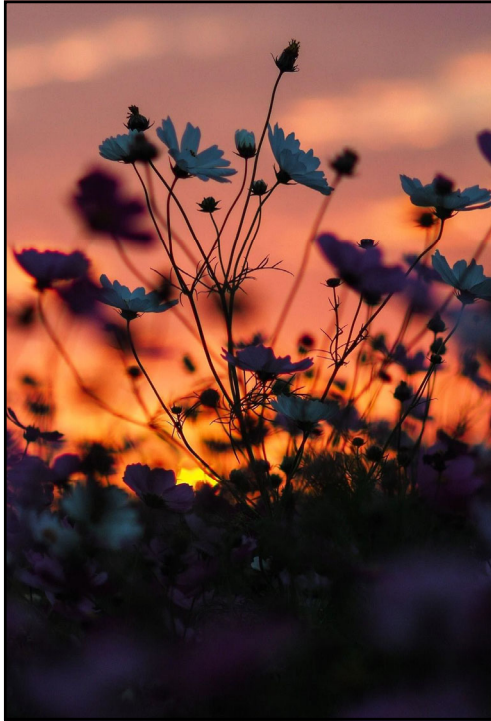
## AMBIVALENCE

Ambivalence is when we have two conflicting feelings about the same thing at the same time.

Example: *"I know my husband is mad that I keep everything, and the fire department is monitoring our home because we are a safety risk because of my hoarding, but it just feels wrong to throw out things that I know our family could use someday."*

Acknowledge ambivalence. Encourage your clients to talk about the reasons for embracing the change as well as the outcomes for not embracing the change. This allows your client to be heard and validated in their feelings, which often leads to positive change.

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## SMART GOALS

When asking a client to engage in change we must use SMART goals:

**Specific** – List the specific task to be completed. No ambiguous language

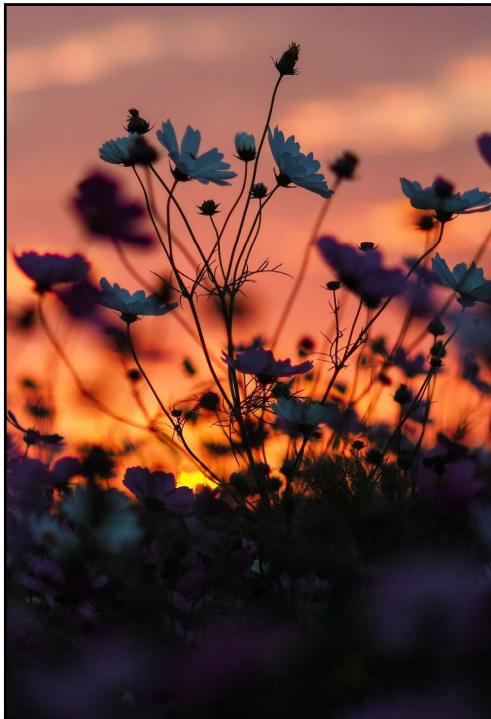
**Measurable** – List how you will measure its completion.

**Achievable** – Make sure the client has the resources to achieve the task

**Realistic** – Is it realistic with the other factors going on in life

**Time** – When is it due

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## SMART GOALS

Examples of SMART goals, using the 3 tiers:

Example of tier one SMART goal: By tomorrow at noon John Doe will have purchased and installed (in accordance with manufacturers instructions) a smoke alarm outside the sleeping area in the basement. John has confirmed that he has the finances to purchase the alarm, the tools to install the alarm, and the means to get to the store to purchase the alarm.

Example of tier two SMART goal: By next Friday at 1:00 PM I will have read Chapter 9 of BIT, remove 3 bags of garbage from the kitchen counter, and have taken these bags to the garbage room. (Client given three garbage bags by staff)

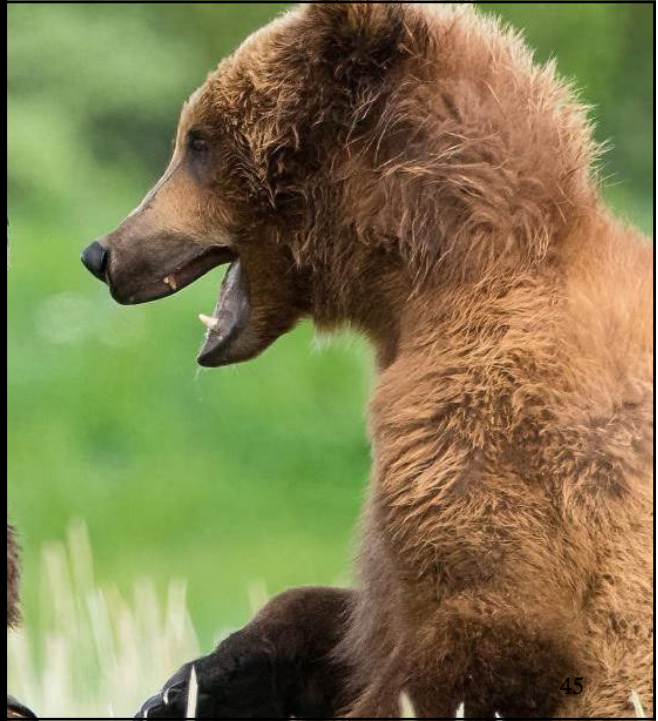
Example of tier 3 SMART goal: By the end of the month, I will have sorted all my clothes into summer and winter wardrobes. Summer clothing will be put in my closet and dresser, while winter clothing will be moved into the closet spare room.

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# STOP THE SHOP

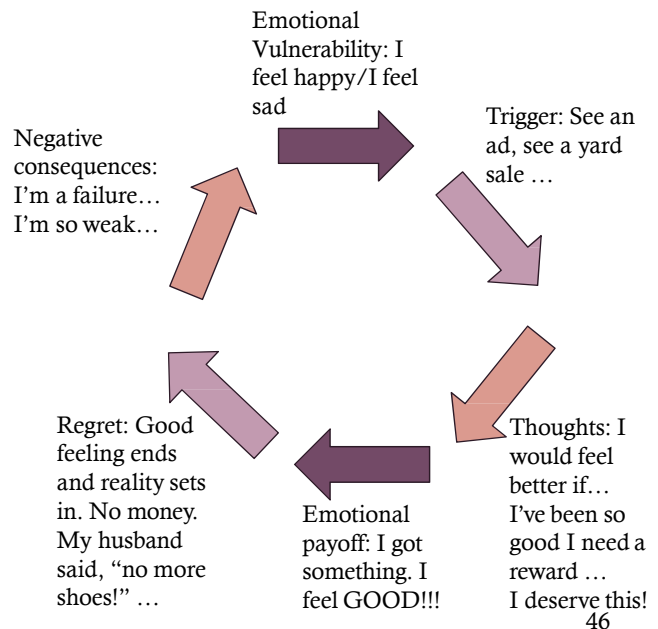
Chapter 7



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## THE ACQUIRING CYCLE



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## NON- ACQUIRING TIPS



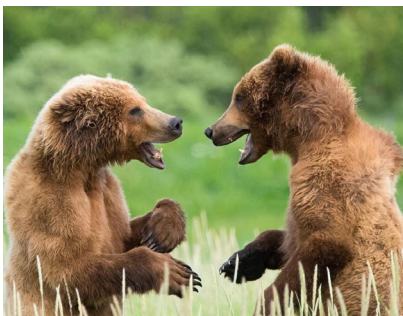
- Plan your trip. Be aware of what you need and what you will be tempted by. Make a plan to succeed.
- Make a list. Agree to stick to your list. Focus on finding those items and you will spend less time shopping and looking around.
- Chose your cart. 1-2 items, don't grab a basket. 3-5 items, only take a basket. 6-10 items, take a small cart. A large cart makes it easy to hid impulse purchases.
- Use the green Booklet tools!

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## NON- ACQUIRING TRIPS



- Practice going to a store and leaving with nothing. Bring a friend to help hold you accountable.
- Leave your wallet in the car. That brief pause of having to go back for your wallet might help you gain clarity.
- Cash only.
- Delete payment information from your mobile devices.
- Practice saying NO!

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THE TOOLS OF  
DECLUTTERING:

CHAPTERS 8 & 9

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CHAPTERS 8 & 9 BREAK  
DOWN THE INDIVIDUAL  
STRATEGIES WE USE TO  
HELP SUPPORT CLIENTS.

THE CORE STRATEGIES  
ARE COVERED IN  
THE GREEN BOOKLET

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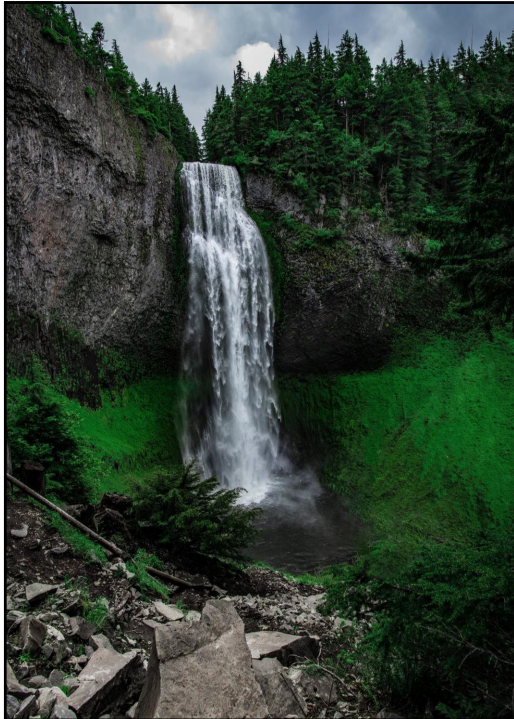


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# THE GREEN BOOKLET:

Prepare to be amazed!

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FIRST PAGE:  
MOTIVATION FOR CHANGE  
3 TIERS

SECOND PAGE:  
REWARDS  
SUPPORT SERVICES

THIRD PAGE:  
GETTING READY TO WORK  
3 PILES  
SMART GOALS

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HOW TO WORK USING 3 PILES:

WORK IN 1 PLACE. DON'T MOVE AROUND UNTIL YOUR TIME IS OVER.

GO THROUGH THE STUFF IN FRONT OF YOU. IF YOU ARE KEEPING IT, PLACE IT IN A "KEEP" PILE. DO NOT PUT IT AWAY. JUST STAY AND KEEP WORKING.

IF IT'S AN ITEM YOU WANT TO DISCARD, PUT IT IN THE DISCARD PILE.

IF UNCERTAIN, PUT IT IN THE "I DON'T KNOW" PILE.

WHEN YOU'RE WORKING ITEM IS OVER, GO THROUGH YOUR "I DON'T KNOW" PILE AND MAKE YOUR FINALE DECIDE. WHEN IN DOUBT, KEEP IT. TAKE ALL THE KEEP ITEMS AND PUT THEM AWAY AS BEST YOU CAN. TAKE ALL THE DISCARDS AND GARBAGE, RECYCLE OR DONATE THEN AS NEEDED.



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## READY TO WORK: GREEN BOOKLET WORKSHEETS

### Questions About Possessions

Encourage clients to ask themselves and answer questions about their belongings.

Examples:

How many do you have?

How often do you use this item?

Is it in good condition?

Does keeping this item help me reach my overall goal?

### The Pros and Cons

Encourage your clients to talk about the pros of keeping or discarding an item as well as the cons of keeping and discarding an item.

As they do this out loud and hear their reasoning, often they can come to a very clear conclusion as to what they should do with this object.

Pros and cons allow the client to acknowledge why they want to keep something. But it also allows them to start exploring some reasons why maybe they should get rid of it.

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## READY TO WORK: GREEN BOOKLET WORKSHEETS

### Roadblocks

When you come across a large group of similar items and the client doesn't know what to do we call this the roadblock. Clients are to work through the following steps:

1. Identified the roadblock
2. List all the possible solutions, even if they seem silly.
3. List the pros of each solution
4. List the cons of each solution
5. Reflect on the solutions and find one that feels right.

### Rules for Discarding

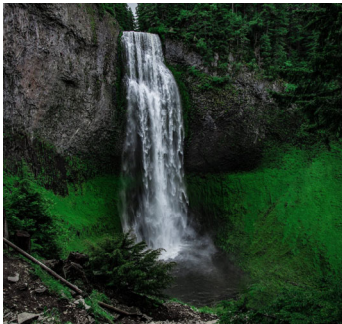
When you have a large group of items that you want to sort through, or you'd like to enlist the help of a family member or friend, using rules can be very helpful.

Pick a category of items. Now list all the reasons that you would discard something in that category. Those become your rules.

Moving forward, anytime you, or someone else, comes across an item from that group that fits within your reason for discarding, the item is thrown out without further debate.

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## READY TO WORK: GREEN BOOKLET WORKSHEETS

### Solution Focused Goals

When you have a goal that has many smaller steps involved, it can become overwhelming. Drawing a line chart can help.

First name your goal. Now think through what steps you need to take in order to get there. Remember SMART goals. Now write out the steps from 1-10 that you will need to take in order to achieve your ultimate goal.

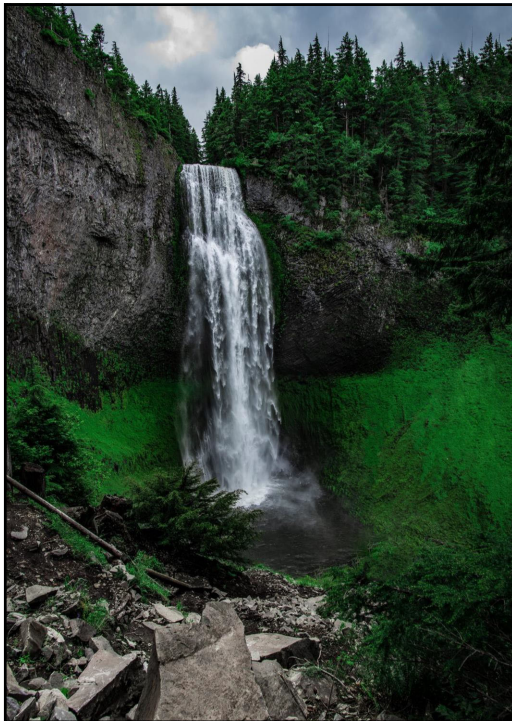
Example: cleaning the living room

1. Pick up all garbage and throw it out
2. remove any items that belong in the bedroom
3. remove all items that belong in the kitchen
4. go through all the items piled on the couch and put them away
5. go through all the items on the chair and put them away
6. go through the bookshelf and remove unwanted items and organize the remaining books
7. clear off the end table and coffee table
8. clean the windows and dust the furniture
9. clean the floors
10. hang up artwork on the walls and add final decorative touches

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THERE IS A  
COPY OF THE  
CBT CHART  
FROM  
CHAPTER 6.



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LET'S RETURN TO "SUPPORT SERVICES WHEN I'M WORRIED".

AFTER DOING THE CBT, IT WILL BE MORE CLEAR WHAT THOUGHTS OR UNHELPFUL BELIEFS YOUR CLIENT WILL HAVE.

USE THE SUPPORT SERVICES SECTION OF THE GREEN BOOKLET TO LIST SERVICES THAT CAN HELP COMBAT THESE FALSE BELIEFS.

EARLIER WE TALKED ABOUT A CLIENT HAVING A FEAR OF THROWING OUT FOOD BECAUSE THEY FEARED BE HUNGRY IN THE FUTURE. THIS PAGE IS WHERE WE WOULD LIST ALL THE SERVICES THAT PROVIDE FOOD FOR THE HUNGRY.

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### **HOMEWORK TRACKING SHEETS**

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE GREEN BOOKLET IS FILLED WITH HOMEWORK SHEETS.

EACH APPOINTMENT WE WRITE DOWN THE SMART GOAL TO BE COMPLETED FOR NEXT APPOINTMENT.

THIS BECOMES A RUNNING LIST OF ALL THE CLIENT'S PROGRESS AND SUCCESS.

CLIENTS CAN ALSO RECORD QUESTIONS IN THIS SPACE, SO THEY DON'T FORGET THEM AT THEIR NEXT APPOINTMENT.

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# **MAINTENANCE AND RELAPSE PREVENTION**

## **CHAPTER 13**

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## MAINTAINING YOUR SUCCESS



Chapter 13 talks about how to maintain the success of recovery.

Some key points:

- Early intervention is best. If you see someone beginning to backslide, step in right away.
- Have people in the home every week. Whether a formal agency visit or a neighborhood book club, visitors encourage us to keep on top of our maintenance work.
- Review before and after photos regularly and compare your current space.
- Review the check lists and quizzes in the book every few months

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## MAINTAINING YOUR SUCCESS



If you have a RCHC tenant that has achieved positive change in their unit, they need to have someone check in on them regularly. At least once a month – maybe more often in the beginning.

Check-ins can be from your staff, our staff at MHSRC, neighbors, friends, family, clutter coach, hosting a book club or girls night... anything that involves people in the home on a regular basis.

Relapse happens 90% of the time. If we expect it, and plan for it, then getting back on track is much easier.

When people have completed the full program and relapse, the clean-up work is often faster next because they already know the therapeutic strategies. They often just need motivation and accountability.

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**WE REACHED  
THE END!**

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October 4, 2024

# COLLABORATIVE RESPONSE TO HOARDING IN OUR COMMUNITY

This day of learning is one in a series of Knowledge Exchanges hosted by the Centre for Collaborative Research on Hoarding at The University of British Columbia with support from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

The OPHN is a collaboration between non-profit agencies & local hoarding coalitions in Ontario. Our scope includes education, best practices, improving outcomes, and advocacy.



**Christiana Bratiotis, PhD**

The University of British Columbia

She is the leading global authority on implementing community-based interventions for hoarding and her current research interests center on hoarding treatment and intervention efforts in the context of affordable housing and community-based organizations.



**Sheila Woody, PhD**

The University of British Columbia

Dr. Woody is the director of the Centre for Collaborative Research on Hoarding. Her research focuses on hoarding disorder with the goal of better understanding hoarding behaviour and its associated problems in order to improve the outcomes of intervention.

### **Morning – A WORLD CAFE:**

Join professionals who work with hoarding in a uniquely facilitated discussion.

We aim to generate ideas for collaborative responses by engaging both people who work in social services (“carrots”) and code enforcement (“sticks”). Learn about what others in the community can contribute to cross-agency solutions for hoarding.

**Afternoon – The HEATH:** The Home Environment Assessment Tool for Hoarding is a newly-developed research-based tool for assessing health and safety risks in hoarded homes. It is designed to be used by professionals in any field, and we are delighted to be one of the first communities to receive training in using the HEATH.

### **Allure Hotel & Conference Centre**

20 Fairview Road,  
Barrie, ON, L4N 4P3



[The conference registration](#) fee is \$50 per person - Full Day, lunch included. For more information: Sheri Hatherly - [shatherly@lcmh.ca](mailto:shatherly@lcmh.ca) Lisa Mackay - [lisa.mackay@wesley.ca](mailto:lisa.mackay@wesley.ca)



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