



**Master Your Disaster**

**Terry Sutton Consulting, Inc.**

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# ***“Hope for the Hoarder”***

**Presentation Outline**

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# Description and Objectives

## “Hope for the Hoarder”

### **Description:**

This class will discuss the growing issue of hoarding disorder and what distinguishes hoarding disorder from other forms of cluttered-ness and disorganization. Attention is given to the typical expressions of hoarding disorder manifested by the compulsion to gather as much “stuff” as possible. Insight will be given to the possible root causes of hoarding and the proven techniques hoarding resolution. Pictures used in this presentation are for informational purposes and presenter makes no claim to them.

### **Learning Objectives:**

#### **Objective 1:**

To increase the understanding of the patterns and pervasiveness of Hoarding Disorder; definition, types, styles and levels.

#### **Objective 2:**

To increase the understanding of the possible root causes of Hoarding Disorder; compulsion vs. addiction, social vs. emotional factors, internal vs. external promptings and free moral agency vs. the will.

#### **Objective 3:**

To increase the understanding of the successful remedy of Hoarding Disorder and associated Hoarding; resolutions in care, psychologic approaches and the notion of restoration.

## Course Developer & Presenter Information

Terry Sutton has developed a high level of expertise in the areas of restoration and hoarding resolution. For over 14 years he has been involved in property restoration both as an insurance agent and adjuster and as a marketing and education manager with *ServiceMaster Advanced Restorations* where he met and worked with Matt Paxton of the *Extreme Hoarders* TV show. He is the Regional Account Manager for Stephens Engineering Consultants for Florida and is President of the non-profit *Terry Sutton Consulting, Inc. dba Master Your Disaster*. Before that he served as a minister in five churches in Alabama and Texas where he successfully taught the principles of personal restoration. He is a sought-after speaker for civic groups, professional organizations and faith-based groups where he speaks on restoration, hoarding resolution, customer service and many other topics. He has several Work Shops including *Helping Those Affected by Hoarding Disorder*. He is also a former adjunct professor at Mountain View College in Dallas. He and his wife, Debby, are in the process of moving from Arlington, Texas, to Florida. You can find out more about him on his web site ([www.MasterYourDisaster.com](http://www.MasterYourDisaster.com)), Facebook (Master Your Disaster) and Linked-In (Terry Sutton) where he regularly posts articles on various aspects of restoration.

# Hoarding Disorder Overview



Figure 1 Hoarding: There is a lot to know

## I. Introduction

### A. Pervasiveness

### B. Hoarding vs. Cluttering (Terry's Clutter Spectrum)

## II. Hoarding Disorder Defined

*"Hoarding is a **compulsion**, not an **addiction**. It is marked by an obsessive desire to continue to gather a significant amount of **possessions**. It is almost always triggered by a **traumatic life event**. Hoarding varies in **intensity, style and type**."*

## III. Signs of Hoarding Disorder

### A. Isolation

### B. Possessiveness

- C. Broken relationships
- D. Compulsed to gather more
  
- E. Feeling overwhelmed with volume of possessions
- F. Uncleanliness
- G. Social irresponsibility
  
- H. Alternate forms of personal validation

#### IV. Some Types of Hoarding

- A. Information
- B. Collecting
- C. Memory Keeping
- D. Animal
- E. Food Saver
- F. Shop-A-Holic
- G. Trash Master



*Figure 2 Animal Hoarding*



*Figure 3 Trash Master Hoarding*



*Figure 4 Information Hoarding*



*Figure 5 Shop-A-Holic*



*Figure 6 Do It Yourselfer Hoarding*



*Figure 7 Food Saver Hoarding*

## V. Styles of Hoarding

### A. Patterned

- a. Pyramid
- b. Valley
- c. Stack

### B. Non-Patterned

- a. Launched
- b. Pathway
- c. Cave



Figure 8 Patterned Hoarding



Figure 9 Non-Patterned Hoarding

## **VI. Levels of Hoarding**

### **A. Level One-Humorless**

1. Clutter building (non-living)
2. Non-living space affected
3. Minor anxiety, embarrassed
4. Family makes fun

### **B. Level Two-Hapless**

1. Living space beginning to be affected
2. Pets in the home-smells
3. Weekly cleaning erratic or not at all
4. Beginning to feel overwhelmed
5. Family is embarrassed or pulling away-conflict

### **C. Level Three-Heartless**

1. Living space practically full
2. Kitchen and bathroom becoming unusable
3. Family disgusted and usually absent
4. Personal cleaning ceases
5. Both domicile and person have strong odors
6. Switches from human to animal validation/interaction
7. If still working-poor performance and absences
8. Family estranged

### **D. Level Four-Helpless**

1. Domicile completely full except for small space
2. Hoarder operates from a "cockpit"
3. Domicile is now unsafe structurally and biologically
4. Hoarder abandons societal rules (bills, hygiene, relationships)
5. Hoarder is depressed and withdrawn
6. No appropriate human interaction (everyone is an enemy)
7. Life is "lived" within feet of "cockpit (eating, sleeping, voiding)
8. Family is out of the picture
9. Overwhelming smells

### **E. Level Five-Hopeless**

1. House completely full
2. Hoarder living on porch or in car
3. House typically unsafe to enter
4. Hoarder living in psychological darkness
5. Hoarder completely overwhelmed, pseudo-catatonic state

6. House given over to animals and insects
7. Utilities typically have been cut off
8. Hoarder completely alone in a never-ending nightmare
9. Every human is an enemy
10. Their time is spent in menial tasks of where to poop, what to eat, etc.

# Why Do People Hoard?

## I. General Factors

- A. Compulsion vs. Addiction
- B. Social vs. Emotional Factors
- C. Internal vs. External Promptings
- D. Free Moral Agency and the Will

## II. Specific Life Events-Life Trauma

- A. Death of spouse
- B. Death of Child or Close Relation
- C. Divorce or Major Relational Failure
- D. Traumatic Event (wreck, war, catastrophe, etc.)
- E. Serious Illness or Injury to them or loved-one
- F. Loss of Job or other Failure

## III. Emotional/Spiritual Factors

### A. Unresolved Conflicts

- 1. Painful Emotional Wounds
  - a. Brokenhearted
  - b. Victimized
    - 1. Directly
    - 2. Indirectly
  - c. Defeated
- 2. Void Filled with Bitterness
- 3. Downward Spiral of a Soured Soul
  - a. Refusal
  - b. Rejection
  - c. Resentment
  - d. Retaliation
  - e. Rage
  - f. Retribution
  - g. Removal

4. Unresolved Conflicts are ALWAYS Acted Out (actively or passively)



*Figure 10 Aggressive Rage*



*Figure 11 Passive Rage*



*Figure 12 Personal Violence Will Follow*

## B. Unsettled Security

1. Sources
  - a. Abuse
  - b. Neglect
  - c. Deprivation
  - d. Loss
  - e. Victimization (real or perceived)
2. Results
  - a. Fearfulness
  - b. Phobias
  - c. Drivenness
  - d. Anxiety
  - e. OCD patterns
  - f. Panic
3. Pattern
  - a. Seek solace in possessions
  - b. Drive for safety
    1. Escape reality
    2. Compulsion for a safe place
    3. Inward urge for order
    4. Insulation and Isolation



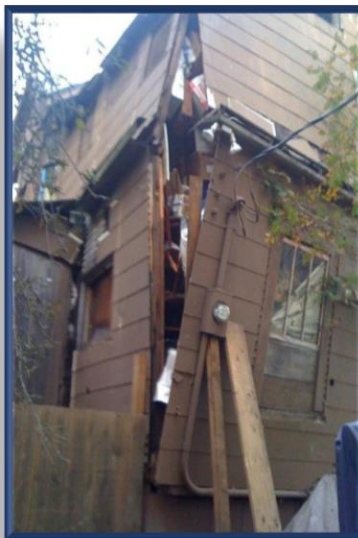
*Figure 13 The Hiding Place by Charles Burton Barber*

#### 4. Promptings

- a. Self-Worth
- b. Validation
- c. Self-Punishment
- d. Protection from pain
- d. Will NOT let go



*Figure 14 Their Treasure Becomes Their Tomb*



*Figure 15 The End Result*

## **IV. Value System**

### **A. Valuation**

1. Moral/Theoretical Values (Who Am I?)
2. Material Values (What do I acquire?)
3. Cultural Values (What values have I been taught/caught?)
4. Political Values (What will give me power?)
5. Aesthetic Values (What do I find beautiful, pleasing?)
6. Universal Values (What produces, to me, justice and equality?)
7. Intrinsic Values (What is important to me?)

### **B. Consumerism**

1. Goods give meaning to individual
2. Goods define social roles

# The Remedy- “Hope for The Hoarder”

## I. Create an Atmosphere of Safety and Respect

### A. What You Should Do

1. Be Gentle
2. Be a Listener-Understand Their Pain
3. Lovingly Challenge Their Valuation
4. Be Careful Physically and Emotionally
5. Acknowledge Their Right to Live as They Please
6. Assure Them They Control Their Possessions
7. Encourage Their Compassion Constructively
8. Develop a Plan to De-Clutter
9. Play on Their Need for Safety, Health and Accessibility
10. Exhibit Radical Sympathy

### B. What You Should Not Do

1. Do Not be Aggressive
2. Do Not Force Them to Abandon Items
3. Do Not Shame
4. Do Not Remove ANYTHING Without Permission
5. Do Not Fail to Protect Yourself

## II. Creatively Bring “Energy” Into Their Situation

### A. Epiphany of Self Awareness

1. Family Considerations
2. Health and Safety Considerations
3. The Power of Self-respect

## **B. The Power of Identification**

1. Find or Begin a Hoarding Disorder Support Group
2. Offer Appropriate Physical Contact
3. Find or Become an Advocate
4. Suggest Appropriate Books or Reading Materials
5. Meet Them Where They Are

## **C. The Life Changing Notion of Forgiveness**

1. The importance of the realization of their condition
2. The necessity of verbal agreement and confession

## **D. Help Offer Them a New and Better “Hiding Place”**

1. Radical Remedy from Fear
2. The Eternal Pursuit of Acceptance and Self-Worth



*Figure 16 The Power of Positive Touch*

## Resources and References

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