

CLEARING PROBLEM ITEMS

Some items are harder to give up than others and most hoarders have a particularly difficult item that is the core of their hoarding addiction. This exercise allows focusing on a single item to break resistance to clearing it out.

Most difficult-to-let-go-of unused item _____

Reasons I can't let go _____

(see Chapter Five for every thought you listed here)

The last time I actually used the(se) item(s) was _____

Pain caused by item _____

Actual (not potential benefit from item) _____

Risks created by item(s) _____

If I let go of all or most of these items, _____

_____ (real event – 'I might need it' is not a real event) would happen

How realistic is my belief? _____

Objectively describe the item (ex., old paper is yellowed, crumbly, sometimes smelly or stained, full of dust and often bugs, worms and sometimes rodents, is hard to read, and has an unpleasant texture) _____

How much time would be required to sort through all of the items rather than just discarding most or all of them? _____

What else could I be doing with my time rather than sorting these items? _____

What can I do to prevent a potential bad result (including upsets) from getting rid of these items?

___ change my expectation _____

___ change my self-talk _____

___ remember that all upsets are purely internally generated _____

___ transform my demons _____

___ change my body _____

___ relaxation session ___ massage ___ exercise/stretch/yoga/Pilates ___ calm breath ___ bath

___ straighten posture ___ other _____

___ find other sources of pleasure _____

___ find the humor in the situation _____

___ create systems to organize my things _____

___ visualize myself coping without the item _____

___ get help: ___ talk with someone ___ study book ___ go to meeting ___ other _____

___ focus on benefits of giving up item(s) _____

___ focus on the pain that the item causes (see above) _____

___ use de-sensitization techniques (pg. 116) _____

___ apply mental health first aid to stay calm _____

___ distract ___ counter ___ dismiss ___ laugh ___ gratitude ___ transform ___ mantra

___ review my motivations for overcoming hoarding _____

___ focus on the future I want _____

___ maintain perspective _____

___ other _____