

WHY DO I ACQUIRE AND KEEP SO MANY THINGS?

Check the letter in front of each statement below that you have used to explain your hoarding, either to yourself or others, even if it is not exactly phrased the way you would say it. Write a number in the blank before each statement that is part of your thinking on a scale of one to ten, with one being the highest to indicate the frequency or intensity of the thought. There is room below each statement to write in alternative phrasings or related thoughts. The letters in front of each thought correspond to a section in Chapter Five.

- A. I am afraid that if I throw things out I will need them.
- B. I am planning to do a project with these things someday. There are a lot of things I am interested in.
- C. I have a hard time making decisions about throwing things out. I am afraid of making and throwing something important.
- D. I have a compulsion to shop or to pick things up on the street. I can't stop myself.
- E. Acquiring or keeping these things is part of my personal identity. They represent me, my past and my life.
- F. I inherited a lot of things from a loved one and it would be disloyal or disrespectful to their memory to get rid of their things. People bring me things and I can't refuse without offending them; if I didn't keep the things they give me, their feelings would be hurt.
- G. I feel responsible for recycling things that other people waste.
- H. My things will be valuable someday and I will sell them and make a lot of money
- I. Getting rid of things or not getting new things makes me anxious. I cannot handle any upsets, unpleasantness, pressure or stress.
- J. My things make me feel safe and secure.
- K. If I get rid of this item or put it away, I will forget to do the task it reminds me of. Without all my things, I would forget important parts of my life.
- L. I cannot get rid of anything until I have time to do the clearing out correctly or can properly store my things.
- M. Being spontaneous is important to me. I like to act on the spur-of-the-moment. I do not want to be hemmed in by a lot of restrictions. I give in to impulses.
- N. I never have enough energy to work on clearing things out. Just looking at it all makes me tired and I have to go rest.
- O. I have really mixed feelings about giving up my hoard. I know it would make my life easier if things were cleared out, but decisions are difficult and I'm just not ready.
- P. I am too depressed to work on clearing things out. Thinking about the mess makes me even more depressed.

Q. ___ I do not want to do this work. I have better, more interesting or important things to do. I am too busy.

R. ___ These are MY things and no one but me has any right to decide what is done with them.

S. ___ I really just need more space. I need to put things in storage.

T. ___ Getting new things is exciting. I feel a thrill when I find a bargain or something great on the street.

U. ___ Having a lot of things makes me feel rich. If I give up things that I don't use, I would feel poor and deprived. I buy things to keep up with neighbors or friends

V. ___ I acquire things so that I can give them to other people. Others will benefit from the items I am saving.

W. ___ I wanted to save money by buying on sale

X. ___ I like to stay in fashion

Y. ___ If I pass up the opportunity to get this, it might not come again.

Z. ___ I deserve to have a lot of things because I have suffered.

AA. ___ I want to use the things I paid for before I get rid of them. I can't get rid of this until I have finished using it

BB. ___ I might be interested in it.

Other: _____

The thoughts listed above will be the focus of work in the next chapter. Referring back to your answers here as you read Chapter Five will help you see where to concentrate your efforts. The letters will help you match the thoughts on this list with the material in the chapter. The thoughts here are given in a compressed form to fit on the page but are expanded in the chapter text.

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