Buried In Treasures (BIT)

Facilitators at CMHA Champlain East - SDG&A

Anne-Marie Leger

Claire Dalgleish

Hoarding Disorder Today

- Added to the DSM-V in 2013 which was a big change as it had previously been seen as symptom of OCD but is now recognized at being distinct.
- There is often a defining moment in someone's life when Hoarding started becoming a problem – a traumatic event, often from a monumental loss. However, heredity and co-morbidity with other mental health disorders can also be a factor.
- It affects 2-5% of the total population, for example in PR population is 95,639- affecting 1913 to 4782 people.

History of BIT

- The BIT workshop developed from the book written in 2007 by David Tolin, Randy Frost and Gail Steketee: Buried In Treasures – Help for Compulsive Acquiring, Saving and Hoarding.
- This was a pioneer resource for Hoarding Disorder which was relatively unheard of, at the time of the initial publication, by both the general public and medical professionals. The book had a facilitators guide for therapists available to accompany it.
- As Hoarding Disorder gained awareness, small groups formed to work on the book together.
- A new edition of the book was released in 2013 with a revised facilitators manual available in 2014 for both professionals and non-professionals to be able to run a group.

CMHA & BIT

- Dr. Randy Frost came for a Hoarding Disorder training at CMHA and spoke about BIT. Workbooks and facilitator manual were provided and staff assigned to lead the group at our office.
- First group at CMHA Champlain East – October 2018
- Since then we average 2 groups a year, spring and fall. We average 10-15 participants per group and encourage clients to take the group again. Our next one begins early November.
- As clients are accepted in Hoarding-ICM program after staff has assessed eligibility. They are all required to take the BIT group. Obviously exceptions happen.

BIT Group
Criteria

- People who find it difficult or distressing to discard items that seem to be of no use or of little value.
- Who are not able to use the space in their home as desired, due to the accumulation of clutter.
- Who are negatively impacted by their hoarding tendencies.
- People who feel they may be ready and willing to work on their personal clutter challenge.
- It is **NOT** for family, friends or professionals who want to learn about Hoarding Disorder.

Buried In Treasures – Format

- The group program consists of two-hour long workshops to enable gradual but consistent progress.
- Each week experienced mental health workers or lived experienced representatives facilitate a discussion around a specific skill, followed by the completion of challenging and rewarding exercises.
- Individual progress, challenges, successes and goals are also monitored throughout the course of the program.
- Participants are expected to commit to attending all the sessions in the program as well as to participate actively.

Format- Cont.

- Highly structured and time limited (Follows manual, Weekly 2 hour sessions over 12 weeks)
- Provides self-help and peer support in a non-judgmental, compassionate, safe space.
- Allows for insight and accountability
- Helps attendees learn to deal with acquiring, discarding, and disorganization
- Free/Accessible
- Can be taken multiple times

The hoarder self-medicated with things the way other trauma survivors self medicate with drugs or alcohol –.
Randy O. Frost
quotefancy

Group – Week by Week

- Every week there is group check in and ice breaker
- A Peer contact list is created the first week and is voluntary. Clients are encouraged to write their name and contact number so they go home with this sheet at the end of group. Goal is to provide clients with peer support throughout and after group.
- Every week they are required to read the next chapter and complete homework from that chapter.

Week 1-4

- Week 1- What is hoarding? Insights. Do I have a problem?
- Week 2 - Introduction to Bad Guys: unhelpful beliefs get in your way. Examples: responsibility, attachments to possessions.
- Week 3 - The Good Guys. Examples: Keeping your eye on the prize. Awareness of problem. Using your practice muscle.
- Week 4 – How did this happen? Examples: problems with attention, categorization, Decision Making and Memory. Self assessments are completed on their own to determine which category they struggles most in.

Week 5-7

- Week 5- Enhancing Motivation. What to do when motivation changes.
- Week 6 – Understanding Compulsive Acquiring, changing thoughts on Acquiring. Do I have immediate use of it? Can I get by without it? They will be challenged to do a non acquiring shopping trip and come back the following week to discuss.
- Week 7 – Discussion of challenges to non acquiring and review of the shopping trip. Then the cycle of acquiring- Beginning Emotional State, Aquiring triggers, Development of regret.

Week 8-10

Week 8 – Systematic approach to problem solving. Life Happens" How to stay on track when "Life Happens". Strategies for sorting/organizing/decluttering

Week 9 – Goal Setting and where to start. Decision making Questions and Decision making plan. Experiment with letting go.

Week 10 - In Class Experiment – 3 items are brought in that are easy, medium, hard to get rid of. Discussion and plan is to get rid of all 3 items.

Week 11 and 12

- Week 11 – Self assessments are completed again to compare to initial responses to evaluate progress.
- Week 12 – Graduation- Reflection and Discussions.

How do we determine success?

https://youtu.be/uXKptVRLeMo?si=xJCrfwmHDVDuv_6x

Thank You!

Questions?