Understanding Hoarding Disorder

AguidefromFruitfulPurposeCounseling

What is hoarding?

Hoarding is an ongoing difficulty letting go of possessions, whatever their value. Parting wäh items can bring strong distress, so belongings build up until living spaces become hard to use as intended. Hoarding disorder is a recognised mental health condition. It is not laziness, a lack of willpower or a character flaw.

Common signs

Strong distress or anxiety at the thought of discarding items

Keeping items “just in case”, or because they feel meaningful or useful

Rooms, benches or pathways that can no longer be used for their purpose

Difficuly making decisions about what to keep

Ongoing acquiring (buying, collecting the items) beyond the space available

Embarrassment about ivaring visitors, or avoiding people coming over

Feeling overwhelmed and unsure where to start

Collecting or hoarding?

Collecting	Hoarding
Items are usually organised and displayed	Items are often piled up without a system
Brings pride and enjoyment	Often brings stress, shame or overwhelm
Space can still be used as intended	Living areas become hard to use
Acquiring is planned and within means	Acquiring can feel hard to control

What contributes to hoarding?

Thereis rarely one cause.Factors caninclude:

- Strong emotional attachment to belongings, memories or identity
- Difficulties with decision-making, organising and attention
- Anxiety, low mood or perfectionism
- Stressful or traumatic life events, grief and loss
- Family history of hoarding
- Isolation or loneliness

How counselling can help

Effectivesupport is collaborative and paced. Counselling can help you:

- Understand what your belongings mean to you
- Build skills for sorting, deciding and organising
- Manage the anxiety that comes with letting go
- Reduce the urge to acquire
- Set small, achievable goals and keep progress going

You stay in control. Nothing is discarded without your choice.

Getting support

Fruitful Purpose Counselling offers one-on-one counselling for adults, via home visits or telehealth. Self-referrals and GP referrals welcome.

Book a free 15-minute discovery chat: hello.fpc@hotmail.com
www.fruitfulpurposecounseling.com.au

In an emergency call 000. For 24-hour crisis support call Lifeline on 13 11 14.

This guide is general information only and is not a diagnosis or a substitute for individual professional advice.