

## Elements that Contribute to Hoarding Problems of Acquiring, Saving, and Clutter

### Personal and Family Vulnerabilities

Components	Examples
Family history of hoarding	Hereditary traits, biological underpinnings
Comorbid problems	Depressed mood, social anxiety, obsessive-compulsive symptoms, attention problems
Parental values and behavior	Acquiring, difficulty discarding, clutter in the home, decision making, beliefs and values about waste, sentimentality
Physical constraints	Health, time, household space
Adverse life events	Loss of caregiver, moving, deprivation, assault

### Information-Processing Problems

Components	Examples
Attention	Difficulty sustaining attention on a difficult task
Categorization	Problems grouping and organizing objects into categories
Memory	Poor verbal or visual memory leading to reliance on visual cues
Perception	Strong visual attraction to objects, failure to notice clutter
Associative or complex thinking	Generates lots of ideas about or uses for objects, creative ideas, focus on nonessential details, inability to separate important from unimportant details
Decision-making problems	Considering too many facets of a problem, ambivalence; may be related to fear of making mistakes

### Meaning of Possessions (Reasons for Saving)

Components	Examples
Beauty	Finding beauty and aesthetic appeal in unusual objects
Memory	Belief/fear that memories will be lost without objects or that objects contain or preserve memories
Utility/opportunity/uniqueness	Seeing the usefulness of virtually anything; seeing opportunities presented by objects that others don't
Sentimental	Attaching emotional significance to objects; anthropomorphism
Comfort/safety	Perceiving objects (and related behaviors like shopping) as providing emotional comfort; objects as sources of safety (safety signals)
Identify/validation of self-worth	Belief that objects are part of the person or represent who the person can become; objects as representation of self-worth
Control	Concern that others will control one's possessions or behavior
Mistakes	Perfectionistic concern about making mistakes or about the condition or use of possessions
Responsibility/waste	Strong beliefs about using possessions responsibly, not wasting them, not polluting the environment
Socializing	Buying or collecting items provides social contact not available in other ways

### Emotions

Components	Examples
Positive	Excitement, joy, pleasure, comfort, satisfaction
Negative	Anxiety, guilt, grief, sadness, anger

### Learning Processes

Components	Examples
Positive reinforcement	Saving and acquiring produce positive emotions.
Negative reinforcement	Saving permits escape or avoidance of negative emotions.
Effects of hoarding behaviors	Prevent the opportunity to test current beliefs and develop alternate beliefs

Source: *Hoarding: What Everyone Needs to Know* (Bratiliotis & Steketee, 2020)