

Buried in Treasures Clutter Reduction & Accountability Group

Week 6: Enhancing Motivation

Slides Posted Online: <https://www.southshorecrc.org/sspch-bit-2026>

“Clutter is the physical manifestation of unmade decisions fueled by procrastination.”

(C. Scalise)

2026 Meeting Dates & Times: Wednesdays 4:00PM-5:30PM

- | | |
|-------------|-------------|
| 1. April 7 | 7. May 19 |
| 2. April 14 | 8. May 26 |
| 3. April 21 | 9. June 2 |
| 4. April 28 | 10. June 9 |
| 5. May 5 | 11. June 16 |
| 6. May 12th | 12. June 23 |

Group Comfort Agreement:

- We try not to ask other group members personal questions.
- What's said here, stays here.
- Please make “I” statements, only referring to your personal experiences.
- Participation is voluntary.
- The group will begin at 4:00 PM and end at 5:30 PM.
- Cell phones should be set to silent and important calls will be taken outside of the room.
- Please be on time. Contact Suzanne (so@SuzanneOtte.com) or leave a message at (508) 645-6883 for absences or late arrivals.
- Group cancellation calls will be made by noon on the day of the group.

Syllabus:

Week 1:

Introduction & Getting to Know the Group

Week 2:

Assessing Clutter and Hoarding Challenges

Week 3:

Meet the Bad Guys

Week 4:

Meet the Good Guys

Week 5:

How Did This Happen?

Week 6:

Enhancing Motivation

Week 7:

Help with Reducing Acquiring

Week 8:

Sorting & Discarding Preparation

Week 9:

Sorting & Discarding – Let's Go!

Week 10:

Bad Guys: Motivation and Working Time

Week 11:

Bad Guys: Taking on Your Brain

Week 12:

Planning Next Steps & Celebrating Success

Session to Session:

- Slides and handouts will be distributed at each session.
- Bring book to each session. Keep handouts and notes in one place.
- Write in your book
- Set goals!
- Practice sorting, decision making, and discarding.

Sources: (1) Shuer, L. & Frost, R.O. (2014). *Buried in Treasures Workshop Facilitator's Guide (Version 5.0)*;(2) 1
Tolin, D., Frost, R.O., & Steketee, G. (2014; 2nd ed.) *Buried in Treasures: Help for Compulsive Acquiring, Saving, and Hoarding*. New York: Oxford University Press.

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Check-In:

- Mood rating (0-10)
- How was your week related to clutter? Victories? Complications?

Comparing Your Perceptions to Those of Others

- Outcomes of the perception exercise (pg. 88-90)?
- Any answers on the questionnaire that are widely “off” from your friend/family member?
- Considering how others may value your possessions, consider ...
 - Do I view my possessions differently from how others view them?
 - Do I overestimate the significance, value, or usefulness of the objects?

Readiness and Ambivalence

- What is ambivalence?
- Share answers from pg. 94
 - If reasons NOT to change outweighed reasons TO change, what might happen?
 - How do you feel about how your scale is weighted right now?
 - Any more reasons to change or not to?

Personal Goals

Following is a list of personal goals from past group members. Do any of these resonate with you? What more would you add?

- ☐ Feel more joy in my life.
- ☐ Enjoy my home and enable my family to enjoy being there too.
- ☐ Have friends over without having to do a massive clean-up project first.
- ☐ Enjoy having space for a washing machine and dryer.
- ☐ Get rid of things I do not want or will not use.
- ☐ I want balance, order, routine, a schedule, and simplicity.
- ☐ There is a season to keep, to throw away, and to give away.
- ☐ To not be afraid of change.
- ☐ To show hospitality to family, friends, and to cook at home.
- ☐ Gain and maintain control of hoarding behaviors.
- ☐ Learn how to organize.
- ☐ Keep only what I need.
- ☐ Have a comfortable place to live.
- ☐ Get my paperwork in order.
- ☐ Set realistic goals and expectations.
- ☐ Be honest with myself.
- ☐ Learn how to be able to make decisions.
- ☐ Bring more joy and less stress to my relationships.
- ☐ Reduce stress or distress when I look at the home situation.
- ☐ Be able to feel proud of my place and show off my stuff.
- ☐ Want to be able to easily find things I need.
- ☐ Want my home to be tidy enough to have people over without embarrassment.

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- ☐ Streamline and organize my space.
- ☐ Have my grandchildren (or family, friends) over.
- ☐ Have fix-it people into the house to fix things (not live with broken things).
- ☐ Not have the first things be “this place is a mess!”
- ☐ Want to say “come on in!”
- ☐ No last-minute hiding of items.
- ☐ Buying time and peace of mind to open up possibilities.
- ☐ Gain peacefulness of balance and stress-free simplicity.
- ☐ Feel comfortable.
- ☐ Be safe.
- ☐ Change the conversation and ease the fatigue.
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

Small Group Discussion

1. My values (pg. 94 *Buried in Treasures*)
2. My personal goals for the program are (pg. 97 *Buried in Treasures*) ...
3. I want to beat hoarding/cluttering because (pg. 98 *Buried in Treasures*) ...
4. If I overcome my hoarding/cluttering problem, the following things are likely to happen (pg. 98 *Buried in Treasures*) ...
5. If I don’t overcome my hoarding/cluttering problem, the following things are likely to happen (pg. 98 *Buried in Treasures*) ...

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Visualization Exercises (*This may be substituted by a meditation led by Alison.*)

- Clutter Visualization Exercise (pg. 99 *Buried in Treasures*)
- Unclutter Visualization Exercise (pg. 100 *Buried in Treasures*)

Self Contract (pg. 101 *Buried in Treasures*)

I, _____ make this promise to myself:

- I will work on my hoarding/cluttering problem to the best of my ability.
- I will make beating hoarding/cluttering a priority in my life, and I will work hard not to let other things distract me from my goal.
- I will work on the problem actively for at least _____ minutes/hours per day, _____ days per week.
- I will praise and reward myself when I work hard on hoarding/clutter reduction.
- I will not criticize myself when I make mistakes, but I will renew my efforts.
- Other promises you would like to make to yourself:

Goals of the Program:

1. Understand why you save things.
 2. Create living space you can use.
 3. Find your things.
 4. Improve your decision-making skills.
 5. Reduce acquiring and enjoy other activities.
 6. Reduce clutter
- Which excite you the most?
 - What are your priorities?
 - Which do you think will be most difficult?

Goal Setting: At the close of each group, we will ask each person to set a short-term clutter-related goal for the 2 weeks between sessions.

- Identify the problem or area you'd like to work on. Be specific.
- Define what you want to achieve.
- Create your plan. Write your goal.
- Set a timeline. Scheduling your work may help.
- Learn by doing. If needed, adjust your goals along the way.
- Be realistic. Clutter likely didn't accumulate in a short period of time. Be thoughtful about taking on a goal that is too ambitious.
- Share your progress during group time.

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Preparing for Next Session:

- Read chapter 8 “Reducing Acquiring” in the Buried in Treasures (BIT) book before our next session.
- Complete Homework Form for Session 7 and bring to next group.
- Questions? Please e-mail Suzanne at so@SuzanneOtte.com

Check-out:

- Mood rating (0-10)
- Your decluttering goal for the upcoming week
- 1 encouraging word for the group

NOTE: All slides and handouts are posted here:

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