THE COST OF FEAR-BASED APPROACHES:

- You become "the enemy"
- Their brain shuts down
- They avoid you entirely
- They may spiral into crisis



HOW TO HELP EFFECTIVELY?

- Ask: "What does real help look like for you?" Let them define what support feels good
- Be curious about what is blocking people from letting go - visible or invisible disabilities can sometimes be the cause
- Speak with kindness, not authority — be warm and clear.
- Avoid rattling off YOUR list — instead, work with them, at their pace.





Don't assume that when you say "you need to declutter and get rid of your rubbish", that the person knows where to start. Make a plan **with** them



We all see the world differently, your version of mess is someone else's tidy.

The world of hoarding is new to the research community and resources are scarce. If you need help, have any queries, are interested in training, funding options, support groups and more, please e-mail Making.Space@wecr.org.uk

We Care

Home Improvements

Dear kind caring professionals,
YES, this means YOU!!

Please Read This Before You Support a Hoarder...

💡 Most people you support with hoarding behaviours are neurodivergent (specifically ADHD or autism)

🧠 Their brains work differently

🏠 Their sense of safety is different

⏰ Time limits and pressure can feel terrifying.

💖 Your approach can make all the difference.

Judgement separates, compassion unifies

Written and inspired by Barbara, our sparkly support group member

Their perceived sense of the world as a safe place could be very different from yours.

❌ PLEASE DO NOT:
• Threaten eviction
• Enforce unrealistic deadlines
• Speak with disapproval or frustration.
These actions may trigger trauma, shut down communication, or even lead to mental health crises.





Be a Hero:
✅Speak with kindness
✅Clear, calm, compassionate communication
✅Patience and presence

BE A SPARKLINGLY GOOD COMMUNICATOR!

When visiting

- Be friendly, relaxed, and encouraging
- Celebrate every bit of progress
- NEVER punish slow progress

Leave a visit summary

- Include what was discussed
- Add the time & date of your next visit

If you call and there is no answer

- Always leave a warm voice message or text
- This avoids spirals of anxiety and guilt

Neurodivergent people often

- Process information visually
- Experience phone call anxiety
- Need extra time to respond

REMEMBER: Decluttering is NEVER just about stuff.

It's an emotional excavation through:
- Childhood memories
- Past traumas
- Unhealed wounds
- Every object is a memory
- Decluttering can feel like grieving and bring up feelings of shame, guilt and fear.
- Rushing or pressuring someone through this is deeply damaging



- Your empathy and patience can save lives
- Become a trusted ally, not a feared authority
- Let your support be the reason someone begins to heal — not the reason they shut down 💞