

# **Applying the Community Reinforcement and Family Training (CRAFT) Model to the Problem of Hoarding**



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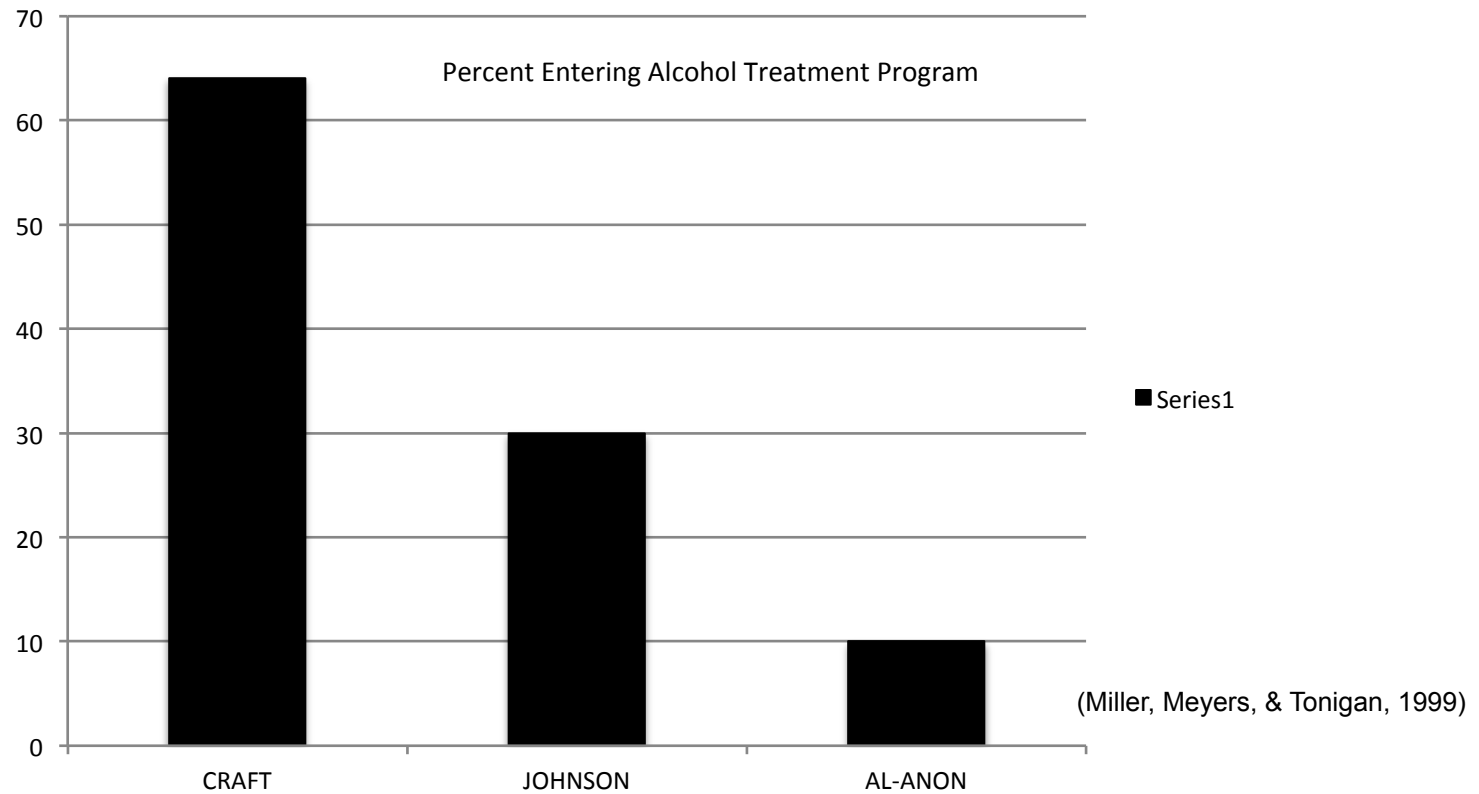
Michael A. Tompkins

# CRAFT



- ❧ CRAFT focused on changing attitudes and behaviors of family members to decrease treatment resistance of family member with problem
- ❧ CRAFT first developed for people with alcohol abuse disorder and later applied to other substance abuse disorders
- ❧ Parents, children, partners, lovers, and friends participate
- ❧ Three-six months after beginning CRAFT, family members happier, less depressed, less angry, reported greater family cohesion and less family conflict (Miller, Meyers, & Tonigan, 1999)

# CRAFT Efficacy



# You're In It Together



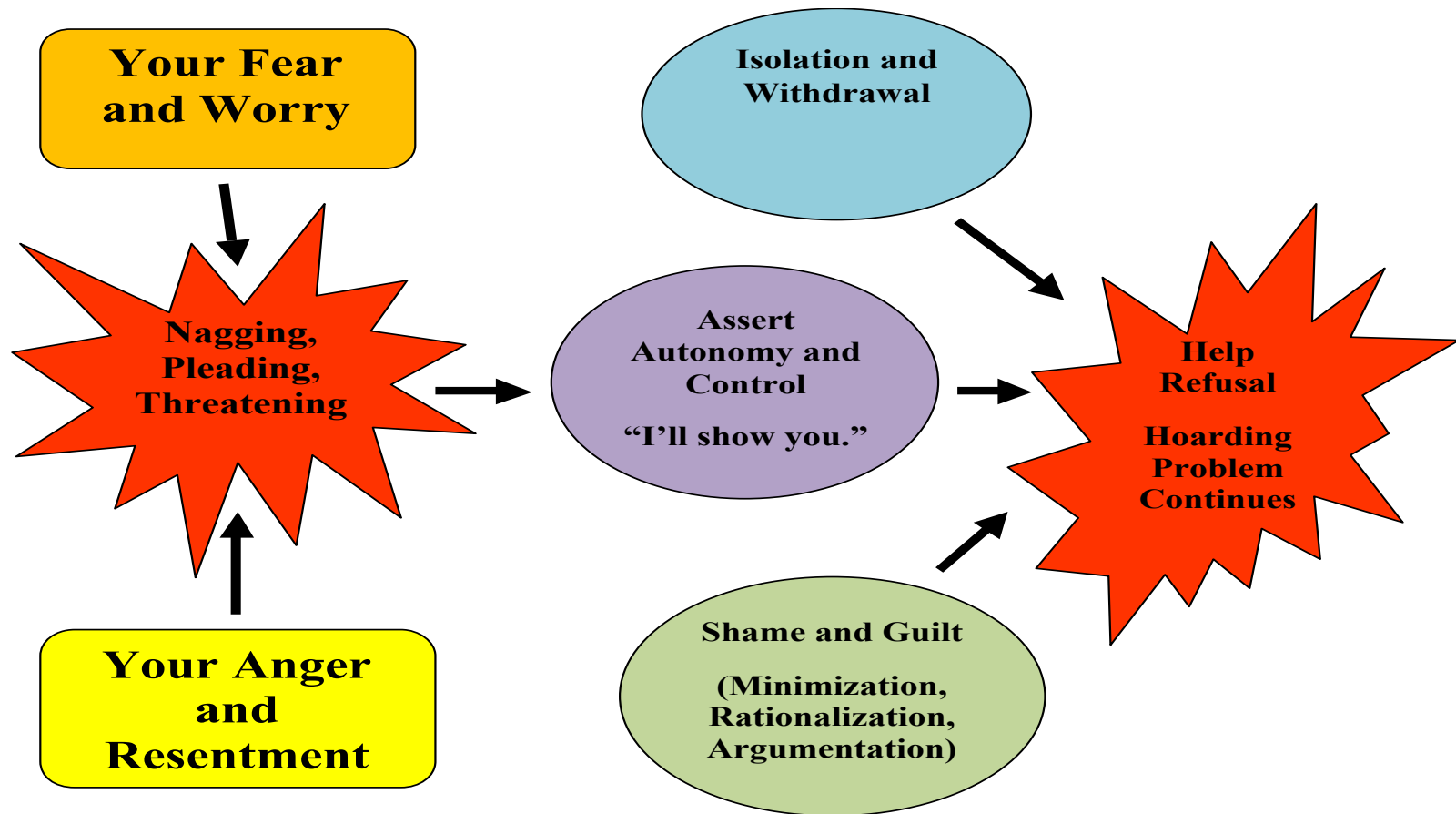
## Your Loved One

- ☞ Nagging -- for more storage space or money
- ☞ Pleading -- to store or purchase things for them
- ☞ Threatening – “I’ll never speak to you again”
- ☞ Blaming -- “I’d be okay if you left me alone”
- ☞ Deceit – hiding acquired things

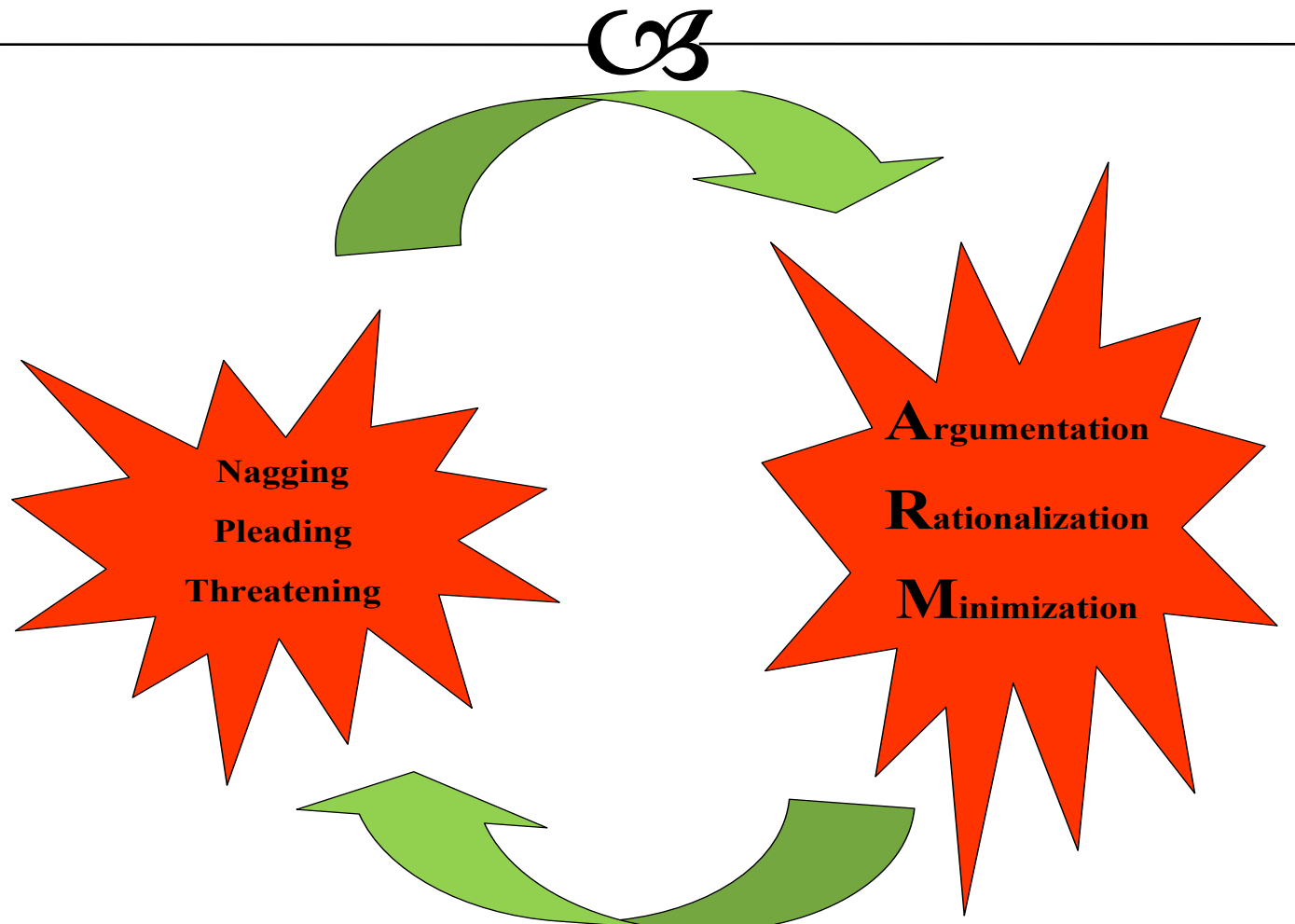
## You

- ☞ Nagging – to get help, to discard, to stop acquiring
- ☞ Pleading – “Do it for me (grandkids, dad)”
- ☞ Threatening – “I’ll call the authorities, I’ll tell Aunt Jo”
- ☞ Blaming – “My life is miserable because of you”
- ☞ Deceit – discarding without permission

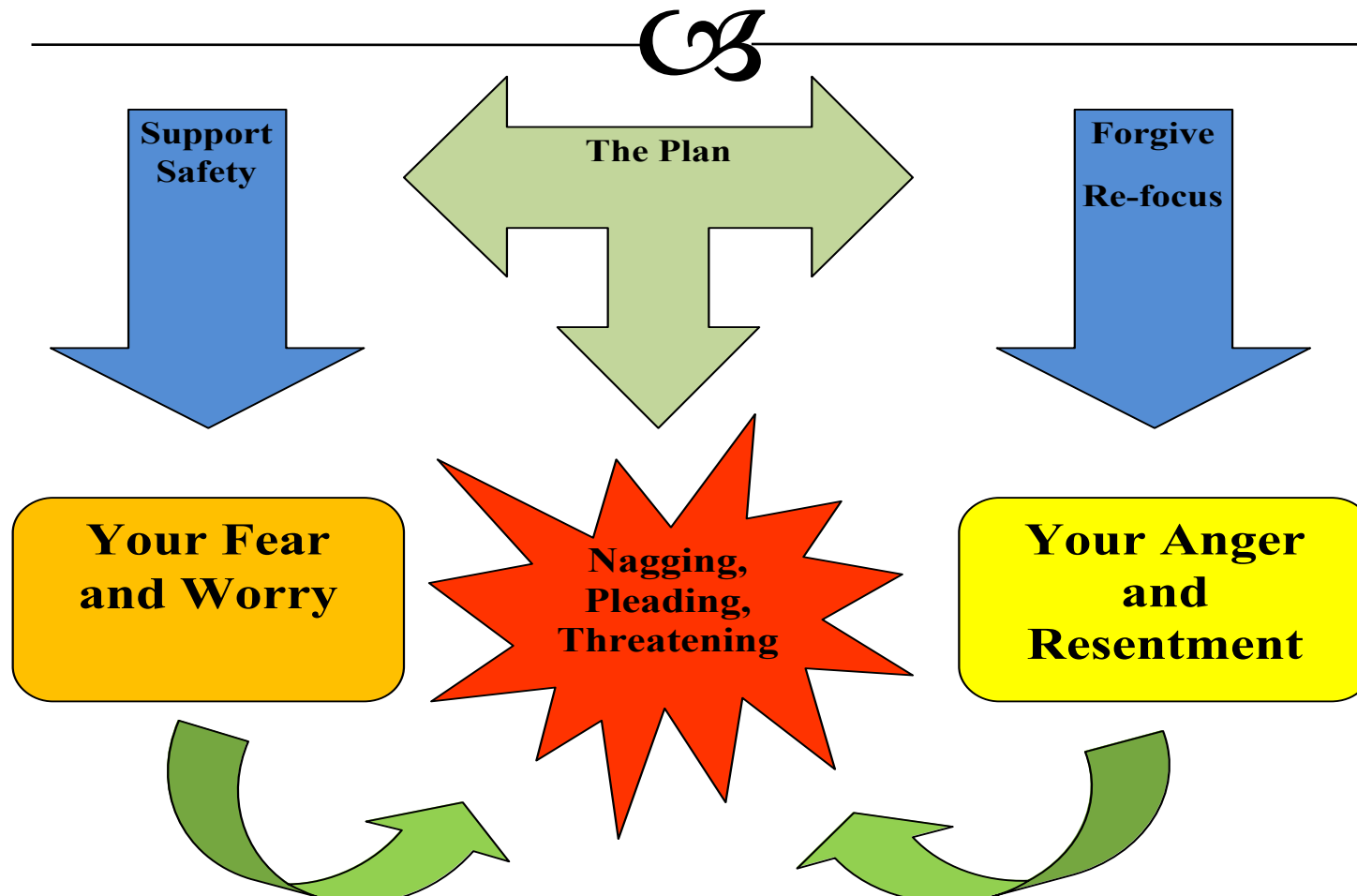
# Do Nagging, Pleading, and Threatening Work?



# They ARM Themselves



# The Plan May DisARM



# The Plan



- œ Develop a Road Map for Change
- œ Solve Problems Along the Way
- œ Improve Communication with the Loved One
- œ Increase Help Acceptance a Step at a Time
- œ Take Care of Yourself
- œ Forgive and Support Safety



# Develop a Road Map for Change



No pessimist ever discovered the secret of the stars or sailed an uncharted land, or opened a new doorway for the human spirit.

Helen Keller

# The 5-Step Plan



- ∞ Step 1 – Teach CSO to identify help-refusal triggers
- ∞ Step 2 – Teach CSO how they might inadvertently increase help refusal behavior
- ∞ Step 3 – Teach CSO to solve problems and communicate effectively to respond adaptively to help-refusal and help-acceptance behavior
- ∞ Step 4 – Teach CSO to increase help-acceptance behavior by rewarding and ignoring
- ∞ Step 5 – Teach CSO to take care of self so that s/he can implement The Plan effectively

# Examples – Help-Refusal Behavior



- ❧ Do it myself behavior
- ❧ Arguing with you
- ❧ Lying to you
- ❧ Hiding things from you
- ❧ Withdrawing from you and others
- ❧ Cutting off communication with you and others
- ❧ Avoiding you and others
- ❧ Concealing the severity of the situation from you

# Examine the Old Map



- ☞ The first step in building a map to decrease help refusal behavior is to examine the old map to learn how you may have been inadvertently contributing to help refusal
- ☞ Think back over the most recent encounters (face-to-face or by telephone) and describe how your loved one refused your help and how you responded
- ☞ It's important to examine the old map objectively
- ☞ Remember, it's not your fault but you may be part of your loved one's pattern of help refusal

# Solve Problems Along the Way



It's so much easier to suggest solutions  
when you don't know too much about the problem.

Malcolm Forbes

# Basic Problem Solving



- ☞ Step 1 – Identify the problem, pay attention to what triggered the problem behavior (sadness, anger, feeling good, a friend who reinforces the problem behavior) to help clarify the problem to solve
- ☞ Step 2 – Brainstorm as many possible solutions (no matter how crazy) to the problem
- ☞ Step 3 – Examine advantages-disadvantages of each solution
- ☞ Step 4 – Select a solution and try it, don't give up until you're certain it's not working, then go to next solution on the list

# Examples of Solutions



## Problem

- ☞ When she's bored and lonely, she goes on a buying binge
- ☞ She buys too much food when she shops
- ☞ When she wants cash to shop, she calls my brother. He says yes because he can't say no

## Solution

- ☞ Think of alternative ways to decrease her loneliness and boredom
- ☞ Offer to shop for her
- ☞ Ask my brother to tell my mother that he wants to speak to me first before he gives her money and then I will speak to her

# Problem Solving



- ☞ Identify a common problem that occurs when you interact with your loved one
- ☞ Complete the the problem solving steps to step through the problem solving strategy
- ☞ Develop list of typical problems that arise with the hoarding behavior, develop solutions for each problem with the problem solving strategy
- ☞ If a solution requires communication, script your response and include that as part of the solution (be PIUS)
- ☞ Practice each script with friend or loved one until you're comfortable



# Improve Communication with Your Loved One



The most important thing in  
communication is to hear what isn't being said.

Peter Drucker

# PIUS Communication



**P**ositive statement

**I** statement

**U**nderstand statement

**S**hare the responsibility statement

Meyers, R. J., Miller, W. R., Hill, D. E., & Tonigan, J. S. (1999). Community reinforcement and family training (CRAFT): Engaging unmotivated drug users in treatment. *Journal of Substance Abuse*, 10 (3), 291-308.

# Plus Communication



- ☞ **Positive** statement – whenever possible, phrase your message in positive terms so that it is more likely to be heard; focus on the here and now and not the past; phrasing things positively is not the same as ignoring the problem, nor are you sugar-coating the message, you're just trying to overcome the defensiveness to be heard
- ☞ **I** statement – **you** statements signal a punch is coming, given that your loved one is likely already on the defensive you can expect a quick negative response, tell him how you feel or what you want not what he is doing wrong

# Positive Statements



## With the sting

- ❧ **You** shouldn't take that home.
- ❧ **You** are a slob.
- ❧ **You** never listen to me when I'm talking to you.

## Without the sting

- ❧ I would be so happy if you would leave that here.
- ❧ I worry that the state of your home makes it hard for you to keep yourself clean.
- ❧ I understand that some of our discussions are upsetting, but I'd love if we could work them out together.

# PI US Communication



- 🌀 **Understanding** statement – tell your loved one that you understand, showing you understand helps your loved one hear you, “I understand how important these things are to you but I’ m worried that too many important things make your home uncomfortable and unsafe.”
- 🌀 **Share responsibility** statement – even though you didn’t cause the hoarding problem, you do influence it, don’t take responsibility for everything but take share responsibility for what’ s happening now, “I know it’ s partly my fault that we argue about your stuff so much. I’ m trying to be more understanding and I hope you’ ll try to see my side things.”

# PIUS Planning



- ☞ Take one past argument or negative interaction with your loved one and describe the interaction as objective and specifically as possible
- ☞ Write a PIUS plan for the interaction and a PIUS response
- ☞ Develop PIUS plans and responses for typical arguments or negative interactions you have with your loved one
- ☞ Practice the PIUS responses with a loved one or friend and fine tune it until it feels right

# Assertiveness



- ☞ Step 1 – Describe problem behavior in a neutral and objective manner, keep your cool and (remember to be PIUS)
- ☞ Step 2 – Describe how the problem behavior makes you feel (feelings are single words, sad, frustrated, guilty)
- ☞ Step 3 – Describe the change you desire
- ☞ Step 4 – Ask, “Would you do that for me?”
- ☞ Step 5 – State consequence (optional) if loved one refuses to comply (remember to be PIUS) after several requests or refuses out right

# Assertiveness Example



- ☞ Step 1 – “I’ve asked you not to put your things in my room and I see that you placed several of your boxes there.”
- ☞ Step 2 – “I know you’re trying to make some space for yourself but this is my room and I feel frustrated that you don’t respect my wishes to keep my room neat.”
- ☞ Step 3 – “I would like you to remove these boxes within the hour and not store you things in my room again.”
- ☞ Step 4 – “Will you do that for me?”
- ☞ Step 5 – “If your boxes are still in my room in an hour, I’ll remove them myself and place them in the front yard.”



# Assertiveness Scripts



- ☞ Identify several typical situations where assertiveness would help you not maintain help refusal behavior or would help you take care of yourself
- ☞ Script assertive responses to these typical situations
- ☞ Remember to be PIUS
- ☞ Practice the scripts with a therapist, friend, or loved one until the assertive responses feel natural

# Increase Help-Acceptance Behavior a Step at a Time



Human beings, viewed as behaving systems, are quite simple. The apparent complexity of our behavior over time is largely a reflection of the complexity of the environment in which we find ourselves.

Herbert Simon

# Behavior Basics



- ☞ **Reward** – the more often you reward or reinforce your loved one for accepting help, the more often she will repeat the behavior
- ☞ **Punishment** – remove rewards, use this approach cautiously and sparingly, and never use this as a threat
- ☞ **Ignoring** – the big chill is safer (less likely to inadvertently reward help refusal behavior) and more powerful

# Rewards and Punishments



## Rewards

- ❧ A reward is only a reward if your loved one desires it
- ❧ The more desirable the reward the more likely your loved one is to repeat the rewarded behavior
- ❧ Do not undervalue small rewards (smile, thank you, hot meal)
- ❧ Pair reward with praise, praise what you like, be specific

## Punishments

- ❧ Perhaps your loved one finds the arguments rewarding rather than punishing?
- ❧ Adrenaline rush after argument
- ❧ Arguing is better than absence
- ❧ Making up may be rewarding
- ❧ Last choice

# Reward Plan



- ☞ Think through typical help refusing and help accepting behaviors, which are the most frequent, which are the biggest obstacles to your loved one accepting help
- ☞ Describe the behaviors in neutral and objective terms
- ☞ List rewards you think your loved one would like, make the rewards easy to give and that you can give often without burdening you (time and money), focus on activities and experiences rather than things as rewards
- ☞ Write the reward script, include praise, remember PIUS

# Example of Removing Rewards



☞ Your picking up your love one to take him to lunch and you offer to move some things out of the way of the front door so that you can get inside. He tells you, “Don’t tell me what to do.”

☞ You say, “I’m sorry that you don’t want my help. I understand doing things on your own is important to you and I don’t want to argue with you. I’m going to go back home now and perhaps we can have lunch another time.”

# The Big Chill (Ignoring)



- ❧ Ignoring helps you avoid inadvertently rewarding help refusal behavior
- ❧ Ignoring helps you avoid arguments with your loved one
- ❧ Ignoring helps you manage your own emotions in difficult situations

- ❧ Example – You’re enjoying the day with your mother when she sees a yard sale and heads toward it. You say, “Please don’t,” and she ignores you.
- ❧ Big chill – “I’m sorry you can’t resist the yard sale. I’d rather be with you when we’re not buying so I’m leaving now.”

# Share Plan with Your Loved One



- ☞ Sharing the plan alerts your loved one that changes are coming, do NOT threaten your loved one with the plan, nor tell him that you are following a program
- ☞ Instead, tell your loved one that you love him and want to improve your life together
- ☞ Be sure to use PIUS communication to convey the message lovingly, with a focus on how you feel, and clearly show you understand the difficulties involved and share the responsibility, practice the script with a friend or loved one until your comfortable and confident



# Take Care of Yourself



Take care of the luxuries and the necessities will take care of themselves.

Dorothy Parker

# Toll on You



- ☞ Do you worry intensely and don't sleep well?
- ☞ Are you feeling demoralized and powerless about the situation such that you often feel sad or depressed?
- ☞ Are you spending so much time on the hoarding situation that you give little or no time to enjoying your life?
- ☞ Have you stopped seeing friends because you feel too anxious or embarrassed about your loved one's situation?
- ☞ Have you given up hobbies, interests, or fun because you feel guilty that you are enjoying yourself while your loved one is "miserable"?

# Take Care of Yourself Plan



- ☞ Create a social circle
- ☞ Find a confidante (friend, family member, therapist)
- ☞ Create a self-reward plan for yourself and do it
- ☞ Create a pleasant activity plan for yourself and do it

# Forgive



A wise man will make haste to forgive, because he knows the true value of time, and will not suffer it to pass away in unnecessary pain.

Samuel Johnson

# Forgiveness



- ❧ Forgiveness is for you – forgive to help yourself let go of past resentments, hurts, and disappointments
- ❧ Forgiveness does not mean that you condone the unkind, inconsiderate, or selfish acts that hurt you
- ❧ Forgiveness does not mean that you have to think what happened was okay
- ❧ Forgiveness means you make peace with a bitter part of your past and no longer blame your experiences on the offender

Luskin, F. (2002). *Forgive for good: A proven prescription for health and happiness*. San Francisco, CA: HarperCollins.

# Why Forgive



- ❧ Forgiveness leads to less stress for you
- ❧ Forgiveness leads to fewer health problems for you
- ❧ Forgiveness leads to greater psychological and emotional health
- ❧ Forgiveness leads to less anger, resentment, frustration, and rumination

# Strategies to Forgive



- ☞ Focus on a positive moment, mindfully
- ☞ Let go of unenforceable rules and HEAL\*
- ☞ Forgive yourself

\* Luskin, F. (2002). *Forgive for good: A proven prescription for health and happiness*. San Francisco, CA: HarperCollins.

# Hope and Educate



- ☞ **Hope** – a hope statement is the specific positive outcome that you desired in the hurtful situation, “I wish my father would clean his mess so my kids could visit him.”
- ☞ **Educate** – an educate statement reminds you that there are limits to your control over other people, yourself, or life events, “Even though I wish my father would want to do this for his grandkids, I understand and accept he may not have the kind of relationship with my kids that I desire.”



# Affirm and Long-Term



- ☞ **Affirm** – an affirm statement is a positive intention focused on reclaiming our lives from hurt and resentment and that we can grow from any hurtful experience, “My positive intention is to use my experiences with my father to become a more caring father and grandfather to my kids.”
- ☞ **Long-term** – a long-term statement reminds you that forgiveness takes practice and that you are making a long-term commitment to practice forgiveness, “I make the long-term commitment to follow my positive intention.”

# HEAL Practice



- ☞ Think of an unresolved grievance in your life. Pick one that you can at least imagine you could feel different
- ☞ Focus on a positive and pleasant moment, mindfully
- ☞ Reflect on what you would have preferred to happen in this specific situation, “I hoped my mother would let me help her.”
- ☞ Educate yourself about the limitations in demanding things work out the way you want, accept you are okay even though your hopes cannot be gratified
- ☞ Affirm your positive intention, the positive long-term goal underneath the hope you had for the specific situation
- ☞ Hold your affirmation statement and repeat your positive intention a couple of times

# Support Safety



Where duty is plain, delay is both foolish and hazardous; where it is not,  
delay may provide both wisdom and safety.

Tryon Edwards

# Relationship and Helping



# Re-Building the Relationship



- œ Short telephone calls focused on improving relationship
- œ Short visits focused on improving relationship
- œ If your loved one won't let you in, stand at door and chat
- œ Use communication skills you've learned (PIUS)
- œ Avoid arguments, ignore and refocus conversation
- œ Share the responsibility (PIUS) in battered relationship
- œ If you're ready, seek forgiveness
- œ Bring photos of kids, grandkids, talk about good times
- œ Thank loved one for chatting with you

# Support Safety



- ☞ Face-to-face wellness checks as social visits
- ☞ If you are not available, ask others who know about the problem to check your loved one, keep it transparent
- ☞ Provide meals in home (pick up empty containers)
- ☞ Call to maintain social connection to keep door open
- ☞ Encourage overnight visits (meal, hot shower, clean clothes)
- ☞ Spend as much time in your loved one's home with your loved one as you can tolerate
- ☞ If loved one is open to collaborative helping, focus on safety

Tompkins, M. A., & Hartl, T. L. (2009). Digging out: Helping your loved one manage clutter, hoarding, and compulsive acquiring. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications.

# Conclusion



- ❧ Modified CRAFT approach may help family members shift the attitudes and behaviors that may inadvertently reinforce help-refusal behavior
- ❧ Modified CRAFT approach may assist in the recovery of the family members from the shame, fear, powerlessness they feel in the face of the hoarding problem
- ❧ Modified CRAFT approach may help, or may not, but it's not likely that the CRAFT approach will make things worse
- ❧ CRAFT approach is a marathon not a sprint, think in terms of months and years, not days and weeks

# Thank You



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