



Compulsive Clutter - Getting Unburied From Treasure

On July 24, the Health Department hosted a Community Dialogue on “Getting Unburied from Treasures” in partnership with the Cape Cod Hoarding Task Force. Guest speaker, Lee Shuer, Director of Mutual Support Services and an expert in compulsive clutter, led the discussion. The goal was to reach out to compulsive clutterers and/or their family members to begin a community dialogue and gauge whether residents wished to participate in follow-up activities such as peer support. It was a huge success, with dozens of people attending and sharing their personal stories and struggles. The dialogue was filmed by cable access and featured in the local newspaper.

Since then we have been working with numerous organizations throughout the City to begin planning the training of coaches who can lead a “Buried in Treasures” peer support group. The coaches’ training will take place in early October and be conducted by Lee Shuer. A number of professional and City employees in New Bedford and Fairhaven are scheduled to take the day-long training. The course is currently full.

Once trained, the coaches will be ready to convene a peer support group starting in late October or early November of 2014. Based on the “Buried in Treasures” model, the peer support group will meet each week for 15 weeks and then continue to keep in touch for another five weeks.

We will update our website as we have more details on when and where the peer support group will be held. Please feel free to call us at 508-991-6199 if you have any questions, or if you would like to be added to our list to receive more information.

In the meantime, here is more information:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p3-7UB7OWHo>
- [Seven Hills Behavioral Health](#), New Bedford
- [Child and Family Services](#), New Bedford
- [Bristol Elder Services](#)
- [MassHousing Hoarding Resources](#)
- [International OCD Foundation – Hoarding Center](#)
- https://www.masshousing.com/portal/server.pt/community/property_managers/239/hoarding_resources/3089