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## Trauma and the Hoarder: An Update on Judi

03/24/2010

[From the TLC editors: Dr. Rebecca Beaton, founder and director of The Anxiety and Stress Management Institute, reflects on extreme hoarder, Judi (pictured here), as well as why hoarding can be a lifelong struggle for some.]



**TLC:** Judi seemed to be deeply traumatized from the sudden loss of her boyfriend. Is it common for death or illness to trip hoarding behavior?

**Dr. Beaton:** Yes, it is very common. Compulsive Hoarding Syndrome generally begins in childhood or early adolescence. It is a progressive illness that gets worse over time. Frequently, the person has had a history of acquiring clutter, but then a loss or a traumatic experience sets off a chain reaction and the disorder becomes much worse.

**TLC:** Has Judi been successful at keeping her nonessential items at bay, particularly since she ended up housing them in storage rather than parting with her hoard?

**Dr. Beaton:** Judi has actually become much more successful over the past few months. Additionally, she has thrown away about 45 large bags of trash and recycled about 20 large bags.

**TLC:** Do you think it's possible for Judi to quit hoarding over the long term?

**Dr. Beaton:** I definitely believe it's possible. However, the research clearly indicates that this is a lifelong issue that people need to contend with. The reason for this is that there appears to be neurological and neurochemical factors making the person "hard-wired" for this illness much like a learning disability. However, Compulsive Hoarding Syndrome is really a very new field and the research is still limited. We're learning more about it all the time, and I'm hoping we continue to discover new treatments and solutions.

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Technorati Tags: Can trauma trip hoarding behaviors?

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### About the Series

*Hoarding: Buried Alive* goes inside the homes of extreme hoarders to explore the psychology behind their compulsion to accumulate and store large quantities of nonessential things.

Get the follow-ups on the cases featured in the series right here in the show blog.

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Hi-Judi Believe it, "WE ARE ALL HERE TO HELP ONE ANOTHER" If i had happened thru your life somehow I would have reached out to you also ;without judgement, me and my people. Take it easy and do your best that's all u can do:)

Posted by: coolblkchic | 03/24/2010 at 10:23 PM

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