

Collaboration, technology, and support in hoarding

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Collaboration in Psychology

- Experts experience can help in many different sectors
 - Commercial
 - Disability technology
 - Mental health
 - Etc.
- This kind of engagement can improve MH services
 - Ensures acceptability and feasibility of services

Collaboration in Hoarding

- Interventions for hoarding often suffer from a lack of motivation
 - Leading to high dropout rates
- Collaboration can help us to address this
- Can change the way in which we conceptualise hoarding and the surrounding issues

Use of technology

- Technology can allow for more collaboration and creativity
- Convenient, low cost, round-the-clock, outreach, accessibility etc.
- Apps can work alongside traditional therapies
 - Enabling at-home activities, increased information
- Online Support groups
 - Helps work around self-stigma
- Support groups have been particularly valuable for hoarding

VR in Psychology

- VR can be useful in psychology- both research and clinical settings
- Realistic- Ecological validity
 - While maintaining control
- EG Used in treatment of social and addiction disorders
 - Ensures safety and minimises risk of distress



VR in Hoarding

- VR is promising for addressing some of the strong attachments in hoarding
- Extreme emotions
 - Forced clearances are unhelpful and likely to be traumatic
- “I just feel like I want to die”
 - Discarding books that have never been read
- VR allows for participants to experience their home differently
 - But safely
- But would it still result in distress?



My project

- Understand how those with hoarding issues make sense of seeing their home recreated in VR
 - But with reduced clutter
- Participants sent images of their home
- Used this to recreate a room in their home







Results

- Participants discussed four key ideas as part of the interviews
- Virtual Reality Quality
 - We had used a cheap VR solution
 - But the accuracy was considered good
 - Contributed to feeling of “presence” – “...felt like my room”
 - Comfortable
- Envisioning Goals
 - “think it helps you to see what you're aiming for, because sometimes you can't really picture that very well”
 - Often discussed future house plans

Results Continued...

- Emotional response
 - Positive emotions-
 - “calming and soothing”, “self-motivating” and “encouraging”
 - Awareness of negative emotions
 - Contributing trauma- “Clutter does distract”
- Importance of small details
 - Personal items were key
 - Not feeling “sterile” but lived-in



Support in hoarding- where do we go from here?

- Increasing collaboration
- Putting those who experience hoarding issues at the forefront of research and policy making
- This will contribute to fair and effective society that will best support those who face hoarding issues
- Creativity
 - Try new ways of addressing issues, but learn from individuals throughout

Thank you for listening!

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