



So You Want to Start a Housing Program?

stories and lessons by

Jennifer Moises, Jeff Gruver, and Jon DeCarmine

GRACE, Gainesville, FL (gracemarketplace.org)

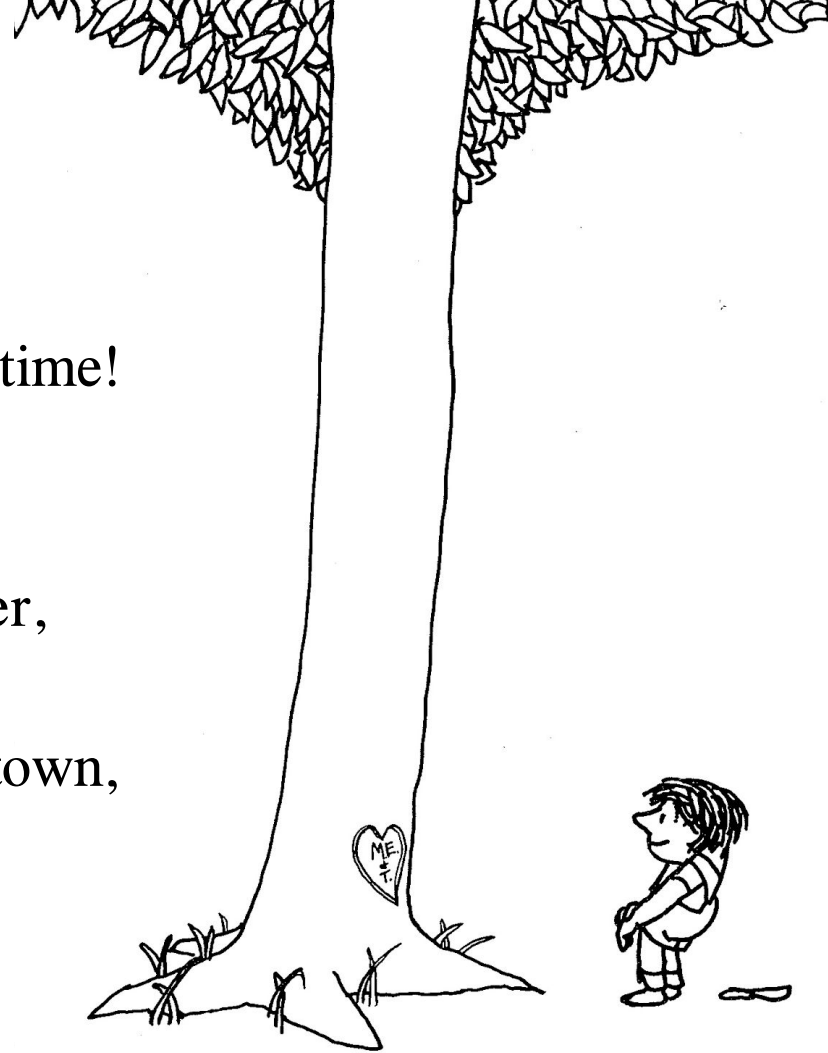


Learning Objectives

- Identify the most common pitfalls chronically homeless people face when moving into housing.
- Develop local strategies to anticipate potential problems before they pop up
- Use available evidence-based tools to guide decision-making and enhance housing stability

The Honeymoon

Don't move everyone in at the same time!
Within a month, you'll start to think
That housing was the only thing.
That the days of worries are now over,
And all your people just got sober
That you're done searching all over town,
And everything will settle down...

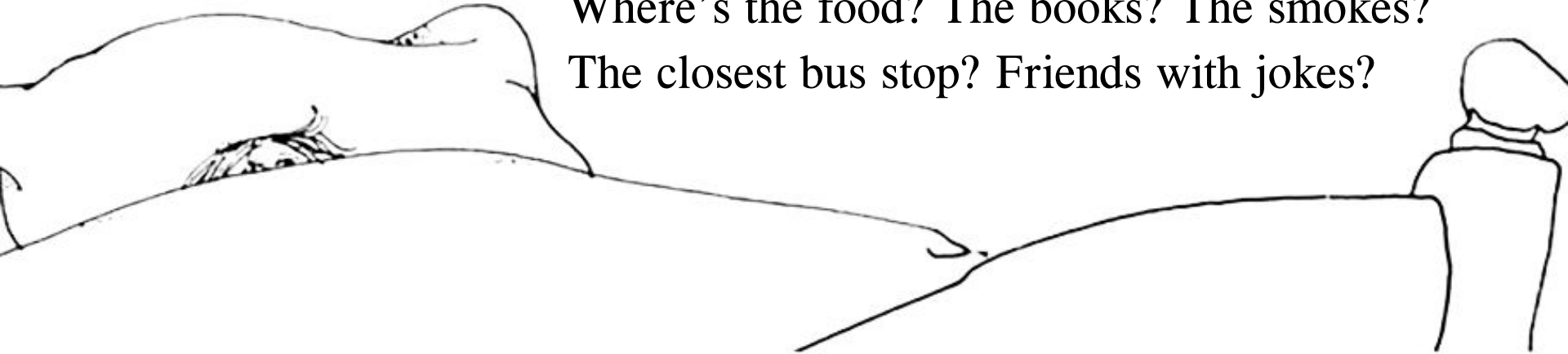


The Lonely

Now in housing! Seems so wholesome,
But by yourself gets mighty lonesome.

Mental health gets helter skelter when
All your friends live at the shelter.

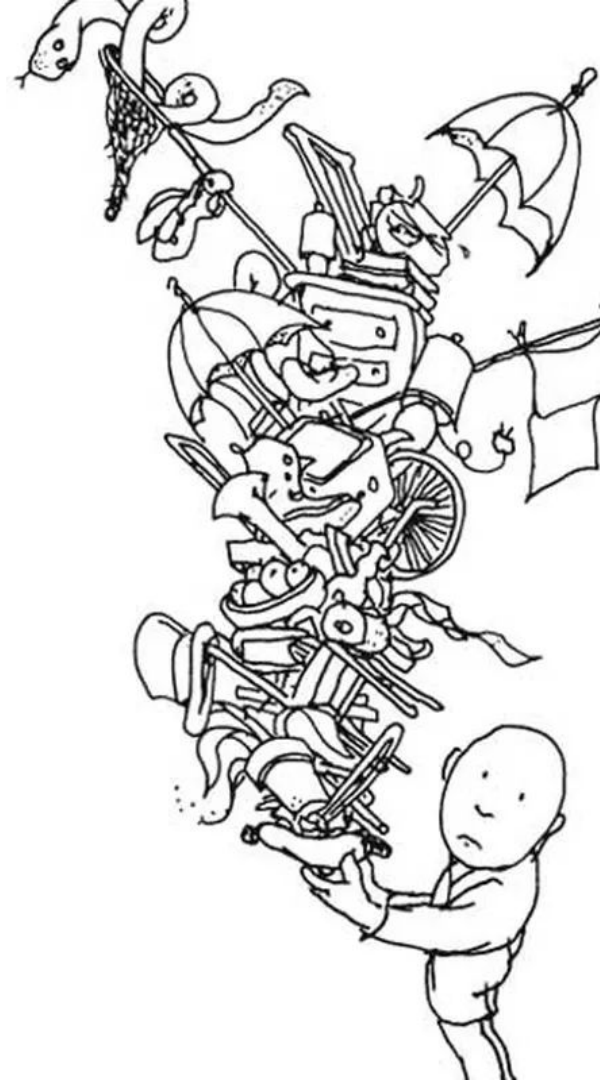
Where's the food? The books? The smokes?
The closest bus stop? Friends with jokes?



A New Resource

Broke, so broke, but now moved in
The food stamp card is “with a friend,”
The furniture has all been sold,
The bootleg store sells ‘em cold

With ink still wet upon the lease,
The skills learned to survive the street
Are assets that can be reframed
It’s just a different kind of game...



Theory, Meet Practice

We read all the research,
We learned what it said.
But after six months,
our budget was dead.
Our costs based on average
(Our caseloads were not),
SPDATs all came back much
worse than we thought.





Flies on the Blinds

You open the door, and oh! What a sight!
The apartment looks nothing like it did last night!
You take a deep breath and remember your goal --
“stable in housing” not “cleaning patrol.”
Celebrate what you got - they’re actually home!
No attempt to impress!
(or clean up the bones!)

Intermission

Landlord or Program Participant?



- Prone to kicking in doors
- Major Substance Abuse Disorder
- Possible borderline personality issues
- Likely SPDAT range: 48-57

Landlord or Program Participant?



- Screams derogatory language
- Frantic phone calls at all hours
- Sees you as a sounding board and cash cow
- Desperate need for validation
- Likely SPDAT range: 40-48

Landlord or Program Participant?



- Major issues with personal boundaries
- Often “too broke” to handle basic needs, but not too broke to party
- Violent tendencies, often tries to provoke fights
- Likely SPDAT range: 35-44

The Landlords on Your Caseload

Landlords are people
And people have problems
But landlords have you!
And they think that will solve 'em

The relationships built (and rebuilt again)
Form the foundation that get you the win!



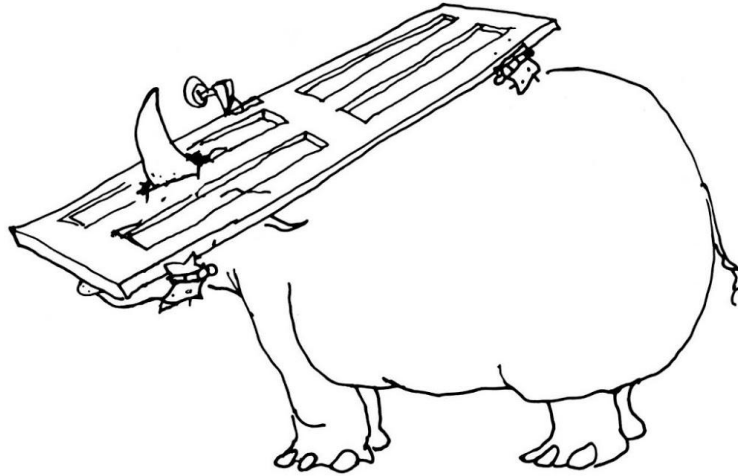
(things no one told us to expect)

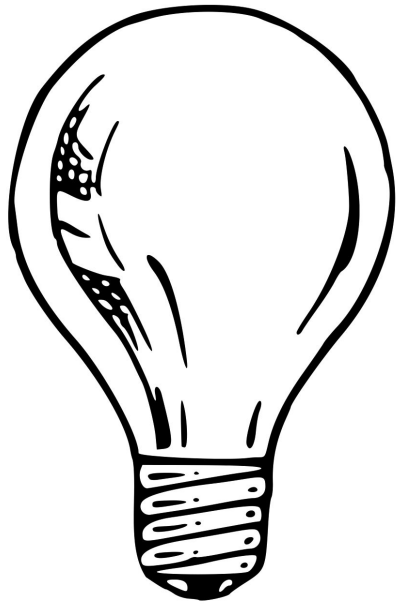
You will see
people naked.

Lots and lots of
people, naked.



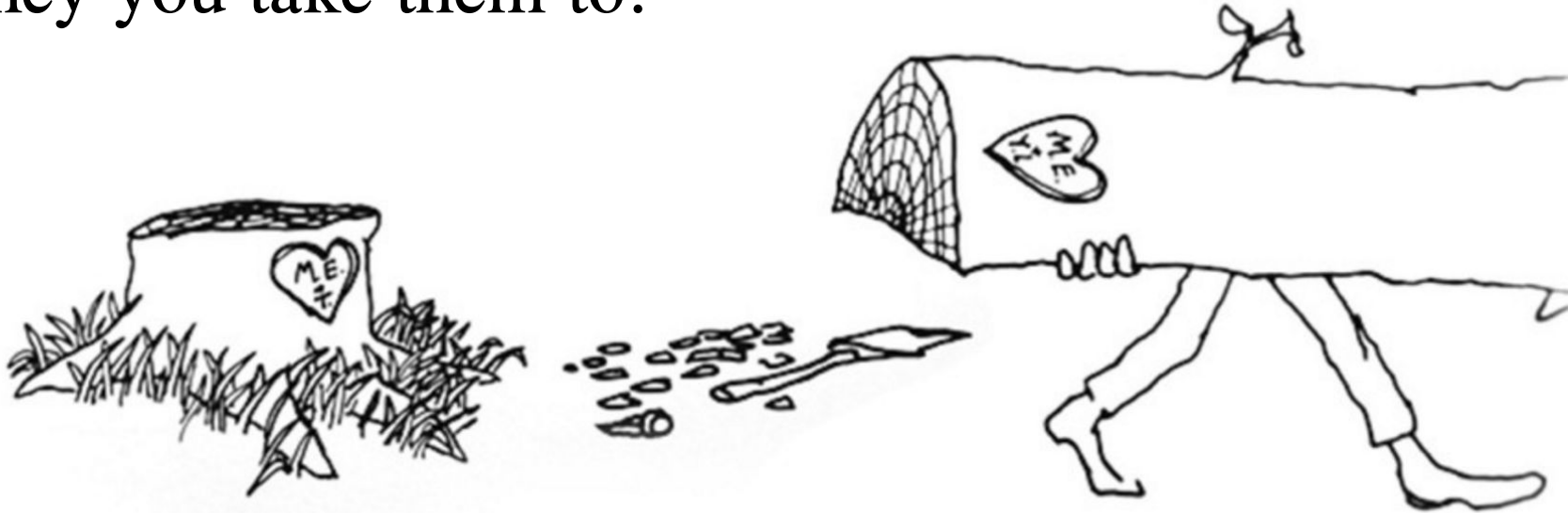
Landlords, when looking for dead bodies,
are prone to kicking doors like a SWAT team.





The idea that, if your kitchen light bulb burns out, one might just use the burners on the stove as a light source (and a lighter).

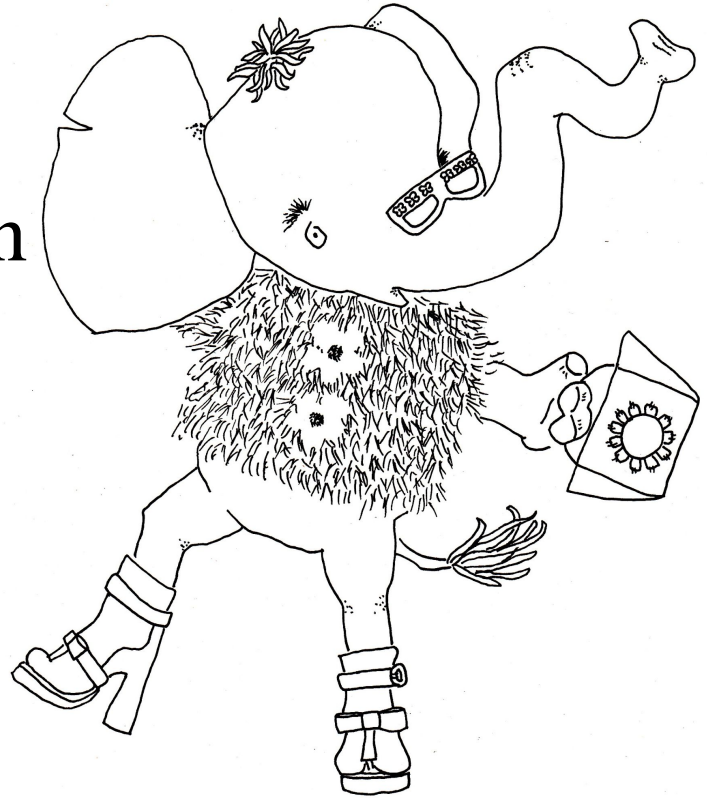
When you take people out into the community, be prepared for them to threaten to kill everyone at the agency you take them to.





The sheer number of
people we'd find
hiding in closets.

“The time when I walked
into a room and saw a man
in a golden wig and
holographic sunglasses
surrounded by knives.
Also, genitalia.”



GRACE



hello@gracemarketplace.org



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