



**ASSIST TRAUMA  
CARE**



**ASSIST TRAINING**

## **INTRUSIVE IMAGERY & THOUGHTS**

- **The one factor which is invariably present for PTSD sufferers is that of intrusive thoughts and imagery.**
  - **The problem posed for the individual experiencing these is that they lose their feeling of control.**
  - **The images and thoughts occur unbidden and often at inappropriate moments.**
  - **How greatly these images dominate an individual's life will vary with the individual and also for each individual will vary in intensity from time to time.**
  - **The most common feeling is that of not being the same person that they were and that the unwanted thoughts and images seem to a great extent to have a life of their own.**
  - **It needs to be born in mind that most individuals who experience a major traumatic event will have intrusive thoughts and imagery for some weeks following the event. It needs to be emphasised that this is a normal process of adjustment.**
  - **For most individuals imagery and thoughts will fade, usually they will experience most problems when relaxed, particularly when just falling to sleep or when asleep.**
  - **During the day the thoughts are often there as a background and are reduced by activity which acts as a distraction.**
  - **For some individuals the intrusion does not reduce, but becomes severe in the form of a dissociative flashback**
  - **In extreme cases the dissociation can be complete and prolonged, such as in psychogenic amnesia or DID. The person may even move to a different area and take on a new identity.**
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