

PTSD and Graphic Issues

In the accompanying article written by Rita Archibald she defines PTSD and its symptoms, yet offers no help. There is very little information available to offer answers for those left with PTSD, especially graphic issues.

In my research, I have found that most emergency workers have a meeting to talk about the graphic issues until everyone is feeling better. Just as talking through the issues of suicide helps a survivor, likewise talking helps with graphic issues.

As with any support group situation you MUST be careful that you have someone leading the group that will direct the conversations to a place of healing, and not into more hopelessness and depression. Be very careful that in your desperation you don't talk to just anyone that will allow you to talk. (Which are few and far between) Just because you have a listening ear doesn't mean it will be good for you.

Working through the process of releasing the images that caused the trauma is a long process and it takes a lot of consistency and hard work. Besides having a good support group, you can also work on changing your thinking process.

You cannot just get rid of the bad image without replacing it with something else. I strongly urge you to carry a picture with you everywhere you go, and when *that* image pops up, grab the photo and replace the unwanted image with a favorite picture of him or her. Place photos on the dashboard of your car, keep one in your wallet, another by the bed, and place them around the house where you can always grab a picture when it's needed. It may be difficult for you to see pictures of them, but its much more difficult to retain this other "picture" you have. As I said before, it will take consistency.

For those of you that were there when *it* happened, and you need to replace "the movie" with something pleasant, I suggest you think of a favorite memory you have of your loved one. When "the movie" begins to play, stop whatever you're doing and force yourself to go to that memory. Try to remember as many details of that memory as you can. Think about the colors, smells, things said, the weather, the scenery - anything to give it more substance. Again, you are replacing the bad 'movie' with a good one, so remember every good thing you can about the time you are recalling.

IF YOU DON'T CONTROL YOUR THOUGHTS, THEY WILL CONTROL YOU!

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