

# | Containment Information Sheet

**Containment** is the process of consciously postponing dealing with intrusive PTSD symptoms, being able to notice a symptom, communicate about it, set it aside (contain it), and revisit it later.

The idea of using a container is to provide a holding place for intrusive, painful or disruptive thoughts, feelings, and images. The container will let you postpone working with what you can't handle in the present situation until you are in a better moment to handle in. A better time would be in counseling or when you are feeling stronger and ready to tackle it. You can use a visual container or a physical container.

Once the thoughts are in the container, the idea is that you know they are still there, but can come back to them later. If you don't come back to them, then it is stuffing and you will eventually explode, so it is important to remember to go back to the container and process what you have put in it.

## Ideas:

*A Box:* Writing down what is going on or drawing a picture and putting it into a box for later.

*A TV Screen:* You can turn down the volume and then make the image on the screen fuzzy and small. It's not a good idea to turn the TV off because that would be more or less stuffing. Remember the idea is to just put it in the back of your mind.

*A Bank Vault:* Lock the thoughts up where they can't bother you.

Trying coming up with your own ideas that are unique to you; many things work. Tupperware, scuba tanks, bank vaults, hot air balloons, water, genie bottles, safe deposit boxes, crates, bottles, vacuum cleaners, a library, etc. all are ideas that work. Remember to be creative.

