Worry dolls, video tapes and safes

Goal:

- Creating a container for threatening materials
- Establishing an intermediate storage place

The basic idea:

A place should be found in the client's imagination (sometimes also in reality) where they can safely store unpleasant memories, thoughts, or images until they consciously decide to look at them again (for example, during a session).

Method:

Ask and think through with your client what place, what kind of storage would seem to be suitable and what is needed to be able to store the material safely there. Places can have a very different meaning for different people. For example, a safe can sometimes come across as threatening, while a bird's nest might seem to be a safe place. Pay attention to exactly what the place is like and to how it is protected from intruders and other influences, and be sure to work out the way to and from the place exactly. This exercise is also about dealing respectfully with one's own experiences and allowing them to have a good place as part of the client's life — a place where all these impressions are safe, but also where they no longer disturb.

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Key questions:

- Where could the place be? (preferably away from everyday activities in order to break the associations)
- In what form/what packaging can the client store the threatening material and put it out of the way?
- Photos, a USB stick, written pages, wrapped in cloths ...
- What exactly is the place like, how can it be improved so that really is safe (at all times)?
- How is the material stored, what is it stored in, how is it locked?
- Only the client should have access to it — is that certain?
- What mode of transport does the client use to get to the place and back again to the here and now? The way there should be easy to follow, the way back and the distance should be described and made tangible.
- When everything is packed away, the client has come back and is sitting with you in the here and now, ask them to bring everything that now may occur to them to the safe place (sometimes they may forget to pack away some things) until everything is stored away for the desired amount of time.

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