

MISSION OPSEC VS. SECRETIVENESS

In Combat:

- You talk about the mission only with those who need to know; you can only talk about combat experiences with unit members.

At home:

- You may avoid sharing any of your deployment experiences with your family, spouse and friends.

TRANSITIONING THE COMBAT SKILL:

- OPSEC: the “need to know” now includes friends and family.

Battlemind Check (self and buddy):

- Haven't shared your deployment experiences with those closest to you?
- Get angry when someone asks about your deployment experiences?

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY VS. GUILT

In Combat:

- Your responsibility is to survive and do your best to keep your buddies alive.

At home:

- You may feel you have failed your buddies if they were killed or seriously injured.
- You may be bothered by memories of those wounded or killed.

TRANSITIONING THE COMBAT SKILL:

- Responsibility in combat involves making life and death decisions in the heat of battle; at home, it is learning from these decisions without second guessing.

Battlemind Check (self and buddy):

- Certain memories of the deployment keep bothering you?
- Still feeling guilt about things that happened in combat?

NON-DEFENSIVE (COMBAT) VS. AGGRESSIVE DRIVING

In Combat:

- Driving unpredictably, fast, using rapid lane changes, straddling the middle line and keeping other vehicles at a distance is designed to avoid IEDs and VBIEDs.

At home:

- Aggressive driving leads to speeding tickets, accidents and fatalities.

TRANSITIONING THE COMBAT SKILL:

- Combat driving is necessary to avoid danger in the combat zone, but is dangerous at home, even though it may “feel right”.

Battlemind Check (self and buddy):

- Chasing adrenaline highs by driving fast?
- Involved in driving accidents?
- Easily angered while driving?

DISCIPLINE & ORDERING VS. CONFLICT

In Combat:

- Survival depends on discipline and obeying orders.

At home:

- Inflexible interactions (ordering and demanding behaviors) with your spouse, children and friends often lead to conflict.

TRANSITIONING THE COMBAT SKILL:

- Giving and following orders involves a clear chain of command which does not exist within families and friends.

Battlemind Check (self and buddy):

- Relationships are not going well?
- Ongoing conflicts over decisions?

THE ALCOHOL TRANSITION

In Combat:

- Alcohol use was limited.

At home:

- Alcohol is now plentiful.

THE TRANSITION:

- Many Soldiers use alcohol as a way to cope with deployment experiences, but this is not healthy. Learn to relax without it.

Battlemind Check (self and buddy):

- Using alcohol to calm down or help you sleep?
- Others telling you that you are drinking too much?

MYTHS & FACTS OF MENTAL HEALTH

Myth 1: Only weak Soldiers have mental health problems.

Fact: Everyone is affected by combat.

Myth 2: If a Soldier has a problem, he/she will get help.

Fact: Most Soldiers do not get help because of stigma.

Myth 3: A fellow Soldier's mental health problems are none of my business.

Fact: Soldiers most often turn to other Soldiers when they need help. Leaders are responsible for helping Soldiers.

Myth 4: The Army doesn't support Soldiers with mental health problems.

Fact: There are multiple ways to get help.

Myth 5: No one can help me if I have a mental health problem.

Fact: Professional treatment helps, the earlier the better.

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

Unit: Buddies, Leadership, Chaplain

Post: Troop Medical Clinic, Behavioral Health Service

Off-Post: Civilian Doctor or Mental Health Professional, VA

Army One Source: 1-800-342-9647

www.armyonesource.com

Battlemind Training was developed by the WRAIR Land Combat Study Team

POC: LTC Carl A. Castro, carl.castro@us.army.mil (301) 319-9174

The opinions and views expressed here are those of the Land Combat Study Team, and do not necessarily reflect those of the U.S. Army or the Department of Defense.

Updated 21 Nov 05.

Battlemind Training II



Continuing the Transition Home



Training Timeframe: 3-6 months post-deployment



**Walter Reed Army Institute of Research (WRAIR)
U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command**

Battlemind is the Soldier's inner strength to face fear and adversity with courage. Key components include:

- **Self confidence:** taking calculated risks and handling challenges.
- **Mental toughness:** overcoming obstacles or setbacks and maintaining positive thoughts during times of adversity and challenge.

Battlemind skills helped you survive in combat, but may cause you problems if not adapted when you get home.

Buddies (Cohesion)

vs. Withdrawal

Accountability

vs. Controlling

Targeted Aggression

vs. Inappropriate Aggression

Tactical Awareness

vs. Hypervigilance

Lethally Armed

vs. "Locked and Loaded" at Home

Emotional Control

vs. Anger/Detachment

Mission Operational Security

vs. Secretiveness

Individual Responsibility

vs. Guilt

Non-defensive (combat) driving

vs. Aggressive Driving

Discipline and Ordering

vs. Conflict

Battlemind Checks allow Soldiers and their buddies to identify if and when help is needed.

BUDDIES (COHESION) VS. WITHDRAWAL

In Combat:

- No one understands your experience except your buddies who were there.

At home:

- You may prefer to be with battle buddies rather than with your spouse, family or friends.
- You may avoid speaking about yourself to friends and family.

TRANSITIONING THE COMBAT SKILL:

- Cohesion in combat results in bonds with fellow Soldiers that will last a lifetime, but back home, re-establishing bonds with friends and family that have changed takes time.

Battlemind Check (self and buddy):

- Felt close to buddies over there but now feel alone?
- Not connecting with loved ones?

ACCOUNTABILITY VS. CONTROLLING

In Combat:

- Maintaining control of your weapon and gear is necessary for survival.

At home:

- You may become angry when someone moves or messes with your stuff, even if it is insignificant.
- You may think that nobody cares about doing things right except for you.

TRANSITIONING THE COMBAT SKILL:

- Accountability at home means the small details are no longer important; family decisions and personal space are best shared.

Battlemind Check (self and buddy):

- Overreacting to minor events?
- Still having trouble letting family and friends share in making decisions?
- Trying to control things that do not really matter?

TARGETED VS. INAPPROPRIATE AGGRESSION

In Combat:

- Split second decisions that are lethal in highly ambiguous environments are necessary to keep you and your buddies alive.
- Anger keeps you pumped up, alert, awake and alive.

At home:

- You may overreact to minor insults.
- You may display inappropriate aggression, or snap at your kids, buddies or NCO.

TRANSITIONING THE COMBAT SKILL:

- Targeted aggressiveness: in combat, the enemy is the target; back home there are no enemies.

Battlemind Check (self and buddy):

- Still snapping at your spouse, kids or buddies?
- Getting into fights or heated arguments?
- Avoiding people?

TACTICAL AWARENESS VS. HYPERVIGILANCE

In Combat:

- Survival depends on being aware of your surroundings at all times and reacting immediately to sudden changes.

At home:

- You may feel keyed up or anxious in large groups or confined situations.
- You may be easily startled, especially when you hear loud noises.
- You may have difficulty sleeping or have nightmares.

TRANSITIONING THE COMBAT SKILL:

- Tactical awareness in combat requires alertness and sustained attention; at home, it takes time to learn to relax.

Battlemind Check (self and buddy):

- Still jumping at loud noises...staying revved up?
- Still have trouble with sleep or nightmares?
- Drinking to calm down or help you sleep?

LETHALLY ARMED VS. "LOCKED & LOADED" AT HOME

In Combat:

- Carrying your weapon at all times was mandatory and necessary.

At home:

- You may feel a need to have weapons on you, in your home and/or car at all times, believing that you and your loved ones are not safe without them.

TRANSITIONING THE COMBAT SKILL:

- In combat, it's dangerous to be unarmed; at home, it's dangerous to be armed.

Battlemind Check (self and buddy):

- Threatened someone with a weapon?
- Carrying a loaded weapon in your car?
- Keep an unsecured loaded weapon at home?

EMOTIONAL CONTROL VS. DETACHMENT

In Combat:

- Controlling your emotions during combat is critical for mission success.

At home:

- Failing to display emotions or only showing anger around family and friends will hurt your relationships. You may be seen as detached and uncaring.

TRANSITIONING THE COMBAT SKILL:

- Emotional control in combat is necessary; at home, limiting your emotions leads to relationship failures.

Battlemind Check (self and buddy):

- Can show only anger or detachment?
- Feeling numb?
- Friends and loved ones tell you that you have changed?
- Having relationship problems?