

DEPLOYING/REDEPLOYING

Weapons of Mass Instruction

1. *Prepare for the stressor.*

- Ask yourself what you can do to get prepared.
- Identify the problem.
- Develop a plan to meet the problem.
- Focus on what you can do not how you feel.
- Think reassuringly, avoid negativity. Worrying won't help. Accept the worry and return to your plan.
- Use limited worry as energy to work your plan, beyond that, let the worry go.

2. *Confront and handle the stressor*

- Psych yourself up as needed. You can and will handle the stressor!
- Complete one step of your plan before going on to the next one.
- Use emotional arousal as a cue to use your stress management techniques, and then go beyond it.
- In evaluating how you're doing, be realistic and reassuring.
- Relax when you need to and when appropriate.

3. *Cope with feeling strained or overwhelmed*

- When tension comes, use only the energy you need to deal with it and let the rest go.
- Focus on the present and the step you're on.
- Use humor as appropriate and keep your perspective.
- Expect that you may feel stressed at times. Remember the goal is to manage stress, not eliminate it.

4. *Evaluate your coping and reward yourself afterwards*

- Recognize any and all success.
- Reward yourself, with your favorite activity, or material item.
- Reward yourself mentally by patting yourself on the back for your efforts.
- If something could have been done better, remember it next time. Errors = Positive learning experience.
- Do not beat yourself up over mistakes. It's not going to help you. It will only make you feel bad.
- Remember whatever success you had by making this effort will be greater than if you hadn't tried at all.

REUNION STRESS

Whether you are a single or a married soldier, a single parent airman, a spouse, or a child, you will face certain stressors associated with reunion. Below are some of the “**NORMAL**” stressors you may face, along with some hints to help you adjust to the changes associated with your post-deployment reunion.

STRESSORS

- Emotional letdown
- Restlessness or sleeplessness
- “No one understands what I have been through”
- Was my spouse faithful?
- Did my spouse miss me?
- My friends seem different
- I didn’t expect things to change
- Other people’s concerns seem petty
- I feel like a stranger at home
- How will the children react?
- Will the role I have previously filled change?
- Were my children treated well by their guardian?
- Can I make up for lost time?
- Did I handle things the right way?
- When will things feel normal again?
- I am concerned about finances
- I am concerned about future deployments
- The children seem confused and uncertain
- I feel out of place at work/home

HELPFUL HINTS

- ✓ Accept that things may be different than they were when you left
- ✓ Talk about your experiences
- ✓ Go slowly-don’t try to make up for lost time
- ✓ Spend quality time with your children
- ✓ Reassure your children, change often frightens them
- ✓ Curb your desire to take control or to spend money
- ✓ Accept that your partner may be different
- ✓ Intimate relationships may be awkward at first
- ✓ Take time to get reacquainted
- ✓ Forget your fantasies. Reality may be quite different.
- ✓ Take time to readjust
- ✓ Communicate with your partner and your family
- ✓ Avoid excessive alcohol use
- ✓ Focus on what is within your control

Militaryone Source (800)342-9647– It’s a 24/7 toll-free telephone number for information/referral; money management info; counseling; for airman and their family members