

RAP



Reintegration Action Plan

Alabama Returning Veterans Committee
developed the

Reintegration Action Plan (RAP) Workbook

www.AlabamaReturningVeterans.org

to assist returning troops and their families in the transition from active duty to civilian life. The RAP is available free at the website in English.

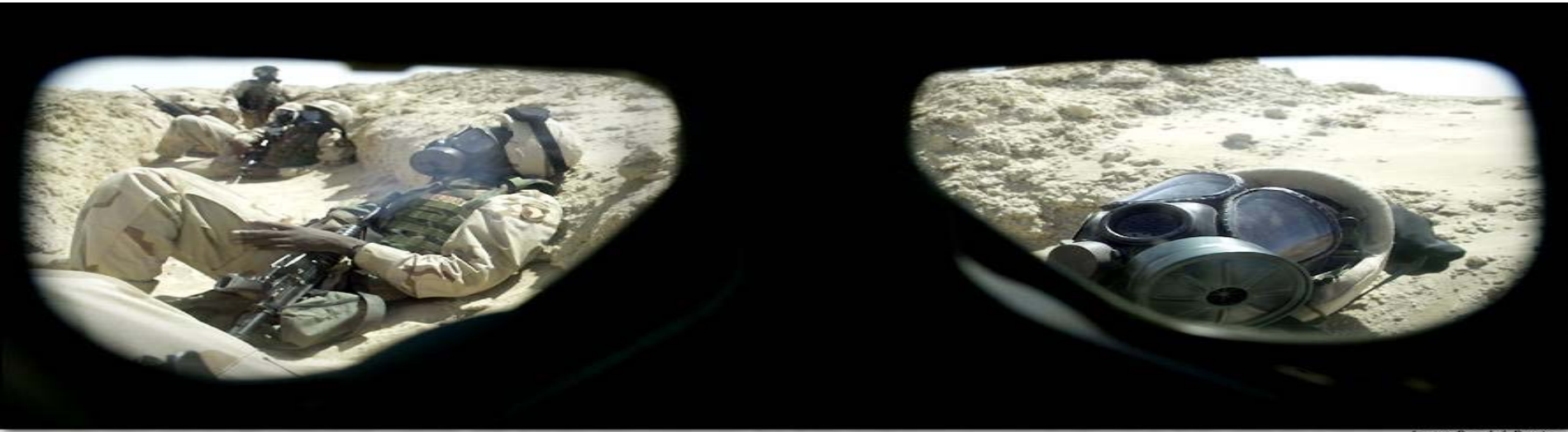


LAURA AYERS
ARV Committee, Co-Chair
Department of Army

Cell: 256-658-0585

Laura.Ayers@tmo.blackberry.net

Normal Reactions to an Abnormal Event



Jason Reed / Reuters

It's not because inherently

... you're crazy

... you have an "addictive personality"

... you're just a "nervous" or "angry" person

... you're a "control freak"

... you're a "loner"

You weren't *born* this way; it's about the *trauma*.

The Devil is in the *Lack* of Details



- People with PTSD need detailed information about PTSD symptoms and their causes to gain perspective on the ubiquitous, related influences of unresolved trauma in their daily lives subsequent to the traumatic event (s).
- They also need to understand that other stress-related reactions arise from a traumatic history (especially childhood trauma), including proneness to:
 - depression
 - low self-esteem
 - cognitive distortions
 - compulsivity/addiction
 - dysfunctional relationship patterns

Examples in the RAP of trauma-related phenomena that affected persons may find helpful

1. Some suicidal thoughts are actually flashback reactions that may involve re-experiencing a traumatic situation (possibly from childhood abuse) from which there seemed to be no escape other than suicide. Victims of severe, frequent child abuse normally are powerless as children and thus may fantasize about suicide as their “ace in the hole” if all else fails and the abuse becomes intolerable.
2. Grief may have been suppressed and delayed for years if traumatic stress motivated a person to suppress many feelings in order to remain alert and functional to survive in the moment. A recent trauma can uncork old, unresolved grief and many other old, contained emotions.

Examples in the RAP of trauma-related phenomena that affected persons may find helpful

3. The severity of symptoms will be influenced by one's history of prior unresolved trauma, because a more recent traumatic event can trigger flashbacks to earlier trauma that may predate combat experiences, resulting in several flashbacks occurring simultaneously or in quick succession, leading to an individual's feeling quite overwhelmed and unable to handle combat as effectively as those with no traumatic history prior to military service.
4. Affected persons may sometimes use the term, “nervous breakdown” to describe this domino effect of one stressful event triggering flashbacks related to a prior trauma that in turn trigger flashbacks from other events. The events ostensibly may be unrelated but could share in common a profound sense of loss or feeling unsafe.

Examples in the RAP of trauma-related phenomena that affected persons may find helpful

5. Panic attacks can *seem* to come out of the blue but usually do not. They may arise from:
 - a current reminder of a frightening past event, **or**
 - sudden triggering of suppressed anger in someone who finds feeling/expressing anger threatening (e.g., due to associating anger with an out-of-control perpetrator of abuse, with rejection, with abandonment, with other dire consequences). Panic arises in response to the perceived potential consequences if the anger is not contained, and the anger may not be apparent to the affected person.

Examples in the RAP of trauma-related phenomena that affected persons may find helpful

6. Compulsivity/addiction commonly arises from traumatic stress as an effort to avoid or contain the disturbing emotions, thoughts, sensations as well as to cope/function. For example, excessive efforts to:

- Please others and gain acceptance
- Control the environment after experiencing it spinning dangerously out of control
- Succeed/be perfect
- Unconsciously reenact a traumatic scenario

Reintegration Action Plan (RAP) Workbook Website



Welcome Home

Your time away from home has changed you and brought you back a different person. Let's not kid ourselves-the transition back may not be easy. Things may seem different at home also. You are much like a "dimmer switch" that gradually brightens an otherwise darkened room as you dial up. It is a normal process to stuff back slowly into civilian life as you transition away from military life. Remember that. It is not an instant transition, as when you flip a light switch off or on.



For a while, you may experience bumps along the road home. Expect it-plan for it-and do something about it! While many of the adjustments may be simple, others may be more difficult. This is normal. It may take some time.

This booklet is a powerful tool that will equip you to navigate through hurdles-give you pride in what you have done-and help you to accomplish a full return home. This tool, the Reintegration Action Plan (RAP), is your **plan of action** for returning home and to civilian life. The better you understand the readjustment process and develop an action plan to deal with obstacles, the easier will be your return.

You will experience many things during your time of readjustment. It is important to know that every service member in this conflict and in previous wars has experienced similar issues. You brought back memories of events that are sometimes satisfying and sometimes painful. These memories will shape your thoughts, feelings, and behavior as you try to reestablish



Revised and Expanded by:
The Alabama Returning Veterans Committee

Laura Ayers
Department of Army

Tracey A. Daniell, LCSW
Tuscaloosa VA Medical Center

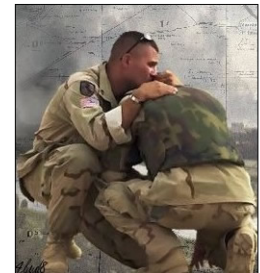
Lorne Dann, Ph.D.
Alabama Psychological Association

Alan L. Hinson
Executive Coordinator, Operation Grateful Heart
Office of Governor Bob Riley

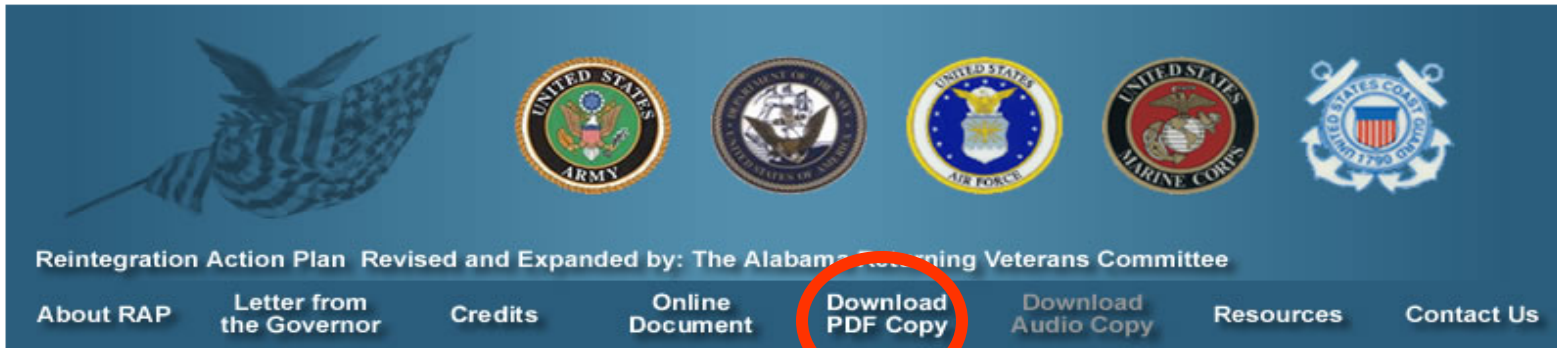
Acquanetta Knight
AL Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation

With thanks to the authors of the original RAP: Michael E. Witzky, LISW, LICDC, Ph.D., and Edgardo Padine-Rivera, Ph.D.

We would also like to say, "Thank you.," to Mark Sullivan of the AL Dept of Veterans Affairs for his valuable comments.



RAP Workbook Download PDF



Reintegration Action Plan

A PDF copy of the Reintegration Action Plan (RAP) is provided free by the The Alabama Returning Veterans Committee. To download a PDF copy of the Reintegration Action Plan please visit the link provided below. To view an HTML version of the Reintegration Action Plan please visit the Online Document section of this site.

To download a copy of the Reintegration Action Plan please right click the link below and select "Save Link As."

[Reintegration Action Plan: PDF Version](#)



RAP



Reintegration Action Plan

Sample Letter's of Support for the RAP

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

BOB RILEY
GOVERNOR



STATE CAPITOL
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36130

(334) 242-7100
FAX: (334) 242-0937

STATE OF ALABAMA

November 7, 2008

TO THE PEOPLE OF ALABAMA

Dear Alabamians:

Alabama has a proud history of military service. When the Nation calls, Alabamians will always stand up and step forward to respond to threats to our freedom and way of life. This Global War on Terror is no different. Since September 11, 2001, well over 13,000 Alabama National Guard service members have deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom. We owe all of our service members a significant debt of gratitude for their commitment and dedication. Alabama pledges its support to them and their families as they readjust to civilian life.

Unfortunately, this war, like all wars, has resulted in considerable mental health stress for some of our returning heroes and for their families. Reports of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and other mental health issues are increasing among our returning troops, which in turn negatively affects their entire families.

To assist our returning troops and their families, the Alabama Returning Veterans Committee developed the attached Reintegration Action Plan (RAP), which is designed to ease the transition of veterans and family members from active duty to civilian life. Strategies are included to facilitate successful transition, along with a resource guide for obtaining professional assistance. To view or request a hard copy of the RAP, along with additional resource information, please contact the Returning Veterans Committee's website at: www.alabamareturningveterans.org.

RAP is a collaborative effort of the Alabama Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation, the Alabama Psychological Association, Operation Grateful Heart, Still Serving Veterans, the Veterans Administration, and other organizations providing services to veterans and their families. We stand ready to support our veterans and family members in the post-deployment transition. Welcome Home!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob Riley".

Bob Riley
Governor



The Space to be in the 21st Century

Tommy Battle
Mayor

January 6, 2009

Dear City of Huntsville Employee:

I would like to extend thanks and sincere appreciation for your past military service and/or continued reservist service to our country. You have helped to maintain the freedoms that we as citizens enjoy and sincerely treasure.

With your past military service and/or continued reservist service, the time away from home can be challenging and stressful for you and your family. Therefore, in order to assist you, your spouse, your child(ren), parents or other family members, the Alabama Returning Veterans Committee has developed the attached Reintegration Action Plan (RAP). This valuable tool will be given to all city employees who have or continue to serve our country. For your convenience, you may visit the following website at www.alabamareturningveterans.org to download an electronic or audio version of the RAP. Also, both versions will be available on the City's Intranet.

The City of Huntsville is proud to have you home. I am hopeful that the RAP will be a useful tool that will greatly assist you and your family. Thank you again for your service to our country and to this great city!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tommy Battle".

Tommy Battle
Mayor
City of Huntsville

cc: Attachment

P. O. Box 308 • Huntsville, AL 35804-0308 • Phone (256) 427-5000 • FAX (256) 427-5257
www.hsvcity.com