

RETURN & REUNION WORKSHOP

MCB Camp Pendleton



Communication



**Deployment
Stress**



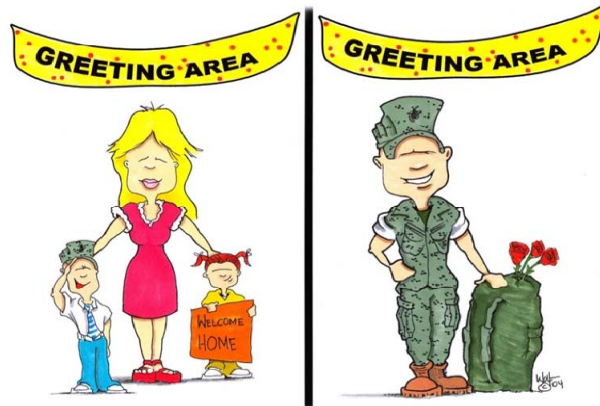
COSC



Resources



Fantasy



While we pay a great deal of attention to pre-deployment preparations, returning home from deployment can be just as stressful — sometimes more so.

Now that your Marine or Sailors return is approaching, there is no doubt that you've been anticipating their arrival! But along with anticipation may come many other feelings. This is normal! In this guide you will find a recurring theme about reintegrating your Marine or Sailor back into your home, work and social environments: Go slow. Just like deployment, reunion is a process not an event. Again, just as deployment was a process that required time and effort, the process of reunion requires similar time and effort.

Reality



DEPLOYMENT/HOMECOMING STRESS

How stress affects you and your family

Prolonged exposure to situations that produce stress can cause your body to experience negative consequences. Stress releases hormones that prepare us for action (to fight or take flight). If we don't take action to resolve the stressor, the stress response can lead to both physical and psychological health problems. Normal day-to-day stress can be challenging enough, but with the added stress of deployment or multiple deployments, it can sometimes seem as if one stress just piles on top of another. Just as you finally get into a routine, it is time for the joys and stresses of Return and Reunion!

The stress you are experiencing is normal! Remember that you are not going through this alone. As daunting as the stress may seem at times, there are many things that you can do to assist you and your family through the process. Firstly, be reasonable with your expectations of homecoming and the reintegration process; it takes time and work, so be patient with yourself and your spouse. Prepare for "blockers"

and communicate with your spouse to decide on some possible solutions. Educate yourself on COSC and what resources are available to you, your family and your Marine or Sailor. Last but certainly not least, remember the accomplishments you have made throughout this deployment and be PROUD of yourself!



Common Challenges:

- Getting to know and trust each other again
- You and your spouse have both changed
- Fitting your spouse back into family routines
- Where did all the money go?
- How much can I ask?
- How much can I listen?

COMBAT OPERATIONAL STRESS CONTINUUM

The Marine Corps views combat operational stress for Marines along a continuum or spectrum. Each zone represents how a Marine functions with stress. It ranges from green (ready) to yellow (reacting) to orange (injured) and red (ill). Marines in the orange and red zones need medical evaluation and treatment to improve the quality of life for themselves and their families as quickly as possible.

Three Basic Mechanisms Involved in Stress Injuries

1. **Biological changes** affect the way the brain handles information and emotions, and changes “set points” for mood and reactions. As a result, they may seem moody, irritable, over-reactive, and impulsive—not the same Marine who went to war
2. **Psychological changes** include difficulty making sense of what is happening to them, grief, guilt, lost sense of safety, and questioning of personal values and beliefs
3. **Social changes** include feeling isolated and that nobody else understands, questioning of society’s sense of right and wrong, loss of moral compass, and loss of social support systems

READY	REACTING	INJURED	ILL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good to go • Well trained • Prepared • Fit and tough • Cohesive units, ready families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distress or impairment • Mild, transient • Anxious or irritable • Behavior change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More severe or persistent distress or impairment • Leaves lasting evidence (personality change) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stress injuries that don't heal without intervention • Diagnosable <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PTSD • Depression • Anxiety • Addictive Disorder
Leader Responsibility		Individual Responsibility	Chaplain & Medical Responsibility

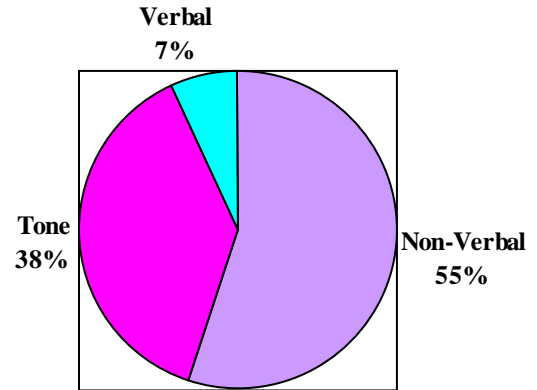
Common Stress Symptoms for Marines

READY	REACTING	INJURED	ILL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calm and steady • Confident and competent • Getting the job done • In control • Sense of humor • Sleeping enough • Eating the right amount • Working out, staying fit • Playing well and often • Active socially, spiritually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling anxious, irritable • Worrying • Cutting corners on the job • Short tempered or mean • Grouchy • Trouble sleeping • Eating too much/little • Apathy, loss of interest • Keeping to oneself • Negative, pessimistic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of control of body, emotions, or thinking • Can't fall or stay asleep • Recurrent vivid nightmares • Intense guilt or shame • Attacks of panic or rage • Inability to enjoy activities • Disruption of moral values • Serious suicidal or homicidal thoughts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stress injury symptoms that last for <u>more than 80 days</u> • Symptoms that get <u>worse</u> over time instead of better • Symptoms that get better for awhile but then come back worse

BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

HELPFUL TIPS FOR COMMUNICATION

- Be an active listener
- Make a communication list
- Organize your thoughts
- Remember your body language



NOTES:



THINGS TO REMEMBER:

- ✓ Discuss homecoming plans with your spouse
- ✓ Be patient
- ✓ Be flexible
- ✓ Set reasonable and realistic expectations
- ✓ Organize your thoughts
- ✓ Practice active listening skills
- ✓ Remember your accomplishments
- ✓ Prepare for “blockers”
- ✓ Remember reintegration takes time
- ✓ Renegotiate your roles and responsibilities
- ✓ Clearly express your expectations and needs
- ✓ Be proud of yourself
- ✓ Prepare for the unexpected
- ✓ Know the resources available to you & your family

Resources

CREDO	760-725-4954
Counseling Service	760-725-9051
Military OneSource	800-342-9647
Marine Corps Family Team Building	760-725-9052
M&FS Personal Financial Management	760-725-6098
-Additional Number	760-725-9790
Navy Marine Corps Relief Society	760-725-5337
-San Onofre	760-725-7497
CHAPLAINS:	
MCB Camp Pendleton	760-725-4700
I MEF	760-725-9032
I MHG	760-725-6960
MAG-39	760-725-8180
I MLG	760-725-6377
I MAR DIV	760-725-6692