

REDEPLOYMENT BRIEFING BY CHAPLAIN

Unique Chapel Support

1. Worship Opportunities

- a. Benefits of prayer/spiritual exercises (reduces stress, increases endurance, reinforces personal value/worth)
 - i. The weight of evidence suggests that people in the US turn to religion or their spirituality first in coping with life events (i.e., the September 11th terrorist attacks). A number of recent works represent investigations that have demonstrated the benefits of spirituality in living with a variety of health conditions.
 - ii. Similarly, studies of mental health and substance abuse have shown that religious activity buffers against the negative effects of physical illness or stressful life events.
 - iii. The aspects of spirituality or religion that separate people from the community and family (e.g., hypocrisy, self-righteousness), or that encourage unquestioning devotion and obedience to a single charismatic leader, or promote religion or spiritual traditions as a healing practice to the total exclusion of any medical care, are likely to adversely affect health over time. (Rev. Jim Jones and the Guyana mass suicide, David Koresh cult in Waco, Texas, terrorist attack on Sept 11).
 - iv. Many Western and Eastern religious traditions emphasize an intimate relation with God, place high value on personal relations, stress respect and value for the self, yet place emphasis on humility. The resulting emphasis on relations – relation to God, to others, and to self – may have important mental health consequences, especially in regard to coping with the difficult life circumstances that often accompany redeployments.
- b. Other Religious aspects
 - i. Assess your current spiritual condition
 1. Does your set of beliefs provide comfort and support or do they cause stress?
 2. Do you have any beliefs that might interfere or conflict with your military mission?
 3. Are you a member of a religious or spiritual community and is it supportive?
 4. Do you have any spiritual needs that someone should address?
 - ii. Forgiveness
 1. Forgiveness changes you. Forgiveness is about the future – your future. Forgiveness is a decision to let go of the debt, a decision to not use what happened against anyone, a decision to use your energy for something other than resentment.

2. Write a Letter: not to be given to anyone. In the letter, list the things from which you're hurting and those who caused the hurt. Then include a forgiveness statement. Follow this with other apology statements. Finally, make a list of gratitude statements and other statements of emotion (positive or negative) which you feel but have not already included in the letter.
 3. Read your letter out loud and face-to-face to a trusted person, as if he/she was listed in the letter. Your friend should not interrupt as you read, but after reading the letter discuss its contents as necessary.
 - iii. Release Expectations: let go of your expectations of others and let go of their expectations of you. This may require writing another letter.
 - c. Public Worship: Scheduled services at Pope Chapel (or one's local religious community) can provide a setting for group support.
 - i. Public religious behaviors that improve coping during times of personal difficulty include, but are not limited to, participating in worship services, praying with others (and having others pray for one's self), and visits from religious leaders such as a chaplain, pastor, priest, imam, or rabbi at home or the work place.
 - ii. The most extensive methodical review of this research published in the 20th century, identified 724 quantitative studies, of which 478 (66%) found a statistically significant relationship between religious involvement and many variables, including, but not limited to better mental health, improved well being, greater social support, and/or less substance abuse. In addition, several excellent prospective studies have found more religious people have a lower incidence of cardiac events, a reduction in hypertension, better medical outcomes, and longer survival.
 - d. Private Worship: Small group or personal religious moments
 - i. Positive spirituality involves a developing and internalized personal relation with God that is not bound by race, ethnicity, economics, or class and promotes the wellness and welfare of self and others.
 - ii. There is general agreement that certain religious beliefs and activities can adversely affect both mental and physical health. Spirituality may be restraining rather than freeing and life enhancing. Religious beliefs have been used to justify hypocrisy, self-righteousness, hatred, and prejudice.
 - iii. Religion should never be used as a mechanism for undermining those to whom religiousness or spirituality is important or to whom it is not important.
2. Participation in Chapel Programs – Provides support in small group settings.
- a. Daily Catholic Mass

- b. Adult small groups
 - i. Liturgical ministries (ushers, lectors, choir, etc.)
 - ii. Bible Study
 - iii. Classes for Theological Reflection (Catholic, Protestant)
 - iv. Men's Groups
 - v. Women's Groups
 - vi. Teachers for children's RE program
 - c. Youth small groups
 - i. Religious Education classes (CCD, Sunday School)
 - ii. CYOC, PYOC organizations
 - iii. Liturgical ministries: junior ushers, altar servers, choir, etc.
3. Participation in Chapel Base-wide Networking – Provides support in large group settings
- a. Ecumenical Activities
 - i. Memorial Services: 911, Memorial Day
 - ii. Christmas program (bell choir)
 - b. Base-wide Events
 - i. Christmas Tree Lighting
 - ii. Back-to-School Rally
 - iii. National Prayer Breakfast
4. Privilege of Confidentiality
- a. It is a privilege that belongs to the counselee
 - i. It's not up to the chaplain to determine what is or is not confidential ... it is up to the counselee. It is their privilege. The chaplain is more like a catalyst/caretaker for the privilege.
 - ii. The chaplain's office is the only place where it can "assumed" that the privilege of Confidentiality is in force.
 - iii. Outside the chaplain's office, the counselee must indicate that they desire the conversation to be held in confidence.
 - b. The privilege is protected by the UCMJ, Federal Law, and 22 states' statutes.
5. Any questions?