



STAGES OF DEPLOYMENT

Presented by Military & Family Life Counselors

OBJECTIVES

Participants will learn:

- The phases of deployment
- Tips for managing reunion/re-entry



AGENDA: EMOTIONAL CYCLE OF DEPLOYMENT

Pre-Deployment Phase

- Stage 1: Anticipation of loss
- Stage 2: Detachment and withdrawal

Deployment Phase

- Stage 3: Emotional disorganization

Moving into Reunion Phase

- Stage 4: Recovery and stabilization

Reunion Phase

- Stage 5: Anticipation of homecoming
- Stage 6: Renegotiation of marriage contract
- Stage 7: Reintegration and stabilization

Reunion/Re-Entry



THREE PHASES OF DEPLOYMENT

- Pre-deployment
- Deployment
- Reunion



PRE-DEPLOYMENT PHASE STAGE 1

Anticipation of Loss

- Occurs four to six weeks before deployment
- Characteristics
 - Restlessness
 - Sadness
 - Irritability
 - Anger and resentment (spouse)
 - Guilt (military member)



PRE-DEPLOYMENT PHASE STAGE 2

Detachment and Withdrawal

- Occurs during final days before departure
- Characteristics
 - Despair / hopelessness
 - Decision making may become increasingly difficult
 - Ambivalence about sexual relations
 - Emotional distancing



DEPLOYMENT PHASE STAGE 3

Emotional Disorganization

- Occurs during first 6 weeks of deployment
- Characteristics
 - Initial relief followed by guilt
 - Feel numb, aimless, without purpose
 - Depression and withdrawal from friends
 - Overwhelmed with responsibility
 - Difficulty sleeping
 - Restless, angry, confused, disorganized, indecisive, irritable



DEPLOYMENT PHASE STAGE 4

Recovery and Stabilization

- Variable duration between stages 3 and 5
- Characteristics
 - Established new family patterns and settled into a routine
 - More comfortable with reorganization of roles and responsibilities
 - Cultivated new sources of support
 - Increased freedom and independence
 - Pride in ability to cope alone



REUNION PHASE STAGE 5

Anticipation of Homecoming

- Occurs during last six weeks of deployment
- Characteristics
 - Feelings of joy, excitement, apprehension
 - Reevaluation of marriage and effects of spouse's return on the life of self and kids
 - Restlessness, frantic activity to finish projects



REUNION PHASE STAGE 5

Anticipation of Homecoming: characteristics continued

- Confusion
- Changes in appetite
- Decisions may become harder to make
- Irritability



REUNION PHASE STAGE 6

Renegotiation of the Marriage Contract

- Occurs during six weeks after homecoming
- Characteristics
 - Physical togetherness, emotional distance
 - Loss of freedom and independence
 - Establish new routines
 - Renegotiation of assumptions and expectations of marriage
 - Adjustments in roles and responsibilities



REUNION PHASE STAGE 6

Communication is of utmost importance

Here are a few communication tips:

- Be tentative rather than absolute (be open to what the other person has to say)
- Inform instead of order
- Don't assume that people can read your mind or know how you feel
- Listen with your full attention or set up another time to talk
- Practice communication of your thoughts and feelings. It will come easier with practice.



REUNION PHASE STAGE 7

Reintegration and Stabilization

- Occurs six to twelve weeks after end of deployment
- Characteristics
 - New routines have been established
 - Relaxed, comfortable feelings
 - Sense of being a couple and a family again
 - Back on track emotionally and able to enjoy warmth and closeness of being married



REUNION/RE-ENTRY

- Communicate
- Approach each other as equals
- Find out what new skills everyone has learned
- Be patient
- Arrange quiet time
- Stay positive
- Don't expect old problems to have gone away
- Get help if you need it



SUMMARY

- Pre-deployment phase is characterized by anticipation of loss
- Deployment phase: relief that the waiting is over. Emotions can become intensified
- During reunion, after initial readjustments to roles are made, the couple can begin to feel a sense of closeness again
- Communication during reunion is essential





QUESTIONS?



RESOURCES

- Military Community Services
- Chaplain and Local Clergy
- Military OneSource (800) 342-9647
- TRICARE www.Tricare.mil
- Behavioral Health Services





THANK YOU

