

Speaker Notes

Reigniting the Passion After Deployment

Page 1 – Title Slide

None

Page 2 – Objectives

None

Page 3 – Agenda

None

Page 4 – Introduction

- It takes effort from both partners to recreate the passion.
- Don't be passive; you have the power to bring passion and intimacy back into the relationship.
- In the next slides, you will learn what contributes to "extinguishing" the passion and what you can do to reignite it.

Page 5 – What Extinguishes the Passion?

- To understand how to reignite passion and intimacy, it can be helpful to understand what extinguished it.
- Unrealistic expectations: Couples who have been separated by deployment look forward to being reunited, but sometimes expect that the romance will begin as soon as they see each other. When that doesn't happen, they can become angry or frustrated with each other, or they may withdraw.
- Resentments: Sometimes mixed with feelings of excitement about the reunion are worries and resentments. One worry may be that the spouse has changed. Some resentments may be:
 - The spouse who's been at home might resent having to give up some of the independence they had during the deployment or feel resentment that they had to hold things together at home without the support of the deployed spouse.
 - The deployed spouse might be resentful of the freedom they think the other has had, or the feeling that he/she "had it worse."
 - They may both have resentments at having been separated in the first place, especially when there have been multiple deployments.
- Money problems: Serious money problems worsened by deployment can put a strain on the relationship. Having the weight of financial problems on both partners can make intimacy and passion more difficult. It's almost as though intimacy and passion get "put on the back burner."
- Lengthy/multiple deployments: The strain of being separated for a very long time may weaken intimacy.

Page 6 – What Can You Do?

- Take time to talk: You need to get to know each other again. You've both had experiences that may have changed your ideas about roles in the marriage. Talking now can help you lay the foundation for a newly strengthened relationship.

- Expect that intimacy and sexual relations may be awkward at first: Go slowly. Your time apart has, in some ways, made you strangers to each other. Accept that intimacy and passion may not happen right away.
- Ease back into the relationship: Don't try to force passion and intimacy. It has to happen at its own pace as you get to know and appreciate each other again.
- Be patient with each other: You and your spouse may readjust and seek intimacy at different paces. Be patient with the other and understand that everyone has to go at their own pace.
- The next slides will provide actions for reigniting the passion.

Page 7 – Reigniting the Passion

- Memories: You may want to close your eyes and think about this. What attracted you to your spouse? Think about how they looked. What qualities were you drawn to?
- Looking at old photo albums with your spouse can bring back happy memories of early dating and falling in love.
- Love letters: Words express things that are sometimes hard to verbalize. Some people find it awkward to state what they feel. A letter or note can express what you can't say. It also gives your partner something tangible they can look at again and again as a reminder of your love and affection. You don't have to write a long letter; a simple "I love you" can speak volumes. You can even write your note on a Post-It and stick it on the bathroom mirror or on the rearview mirror.

Page 8 – Reigniting the Passion (Continued)

- Give compliments often:
 - It always feels good to receive a compliment, and it helps to improve our self-esteem.
 - When the compliment comes from a spouse, it can feel especially good.
 - Let your spouse know when you think they look especially nice and when you think they have done a good job with something or made an accomplishment.
 - Compliments can build self-esteem, and positive self-esteem plays an important role in how we function in our relationships.
- Don't give all of your attention to the kids: A common mistake is unknowingly giving all of your time and attention to the kids. Your spouse needs your attention too. Catering to your children's every whim can isolate your spouse and make a sex life almost non-existent. A strong relationship keeps the marriage together and benefits the children as well. It gives them a positive role model for marriage and keeps the family intact.

Page 9 – Reigniting the Passion (Continued)

- Why dating is helpful:
 - One reason to make a date with your spouse is because it's fun! Everyone deserves to have fun and take a break from routines.
 - Doing enjoyable things together gives you energy to tackle your responsibilities.
 - Every time you do something fun with your spouse, you strengthen your relationship.
- Set a weekly date night: This gets you into a routine of taking time for yourselves. When you make a consistent time commitment, you are sending a message to your partner that you are invested in reigniting the intimacy and passion and making the marriage work.
- Plan ahead: It's best to have a plan so that you don't spend your date night figuring out what to do. Think in terms of planning as you did on the first few dates.

- Arrange for childcare: If you have children, find a reliable babysitter or childcare center, or exchange babysitting duties with another couple or several couples. If you don't have childcare, rent a movie for after the kids go to bed, or have a special dinner or dessert with candlelight.
- Pay attention to your appearance: Appearances do count. Being well groomed and wearing something nice that you feel good in shows that you care about your partner.

Page 10 – Summary

None

Page 11 – Questions

None

Page 12 – Resources

None

Page 13 – References

None

Page 14 – Thank You

None

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