

Speaker Notes

Reunion: It's a Process, Not an Event

Page 1 – Title Slide

None

Page 2 – Redeployment Readiness

- Key word is change—family changes, soldier changes. Expectations that things remained the same on both sides can create a misunderstanding. Remember to remain open and to give things time to create a new, even closer relationship.

Page 3 – There May Be a Honeymoon Period for Awhile

- There needs to be time to celebrate the reunion and get reacquainted. Be sure to allow the service member to set the pace. He/she may be looking forward to fewer demands on them. Emotions are strong; joy at reunion is powerful and exciting.
- There can be disappointments if expectations are not met. Enjoy the moment with your loved one.

Page 4 – Expectations of Change

- Expect change. You've changed and the service member has changed. Accepting change is a major factor in re-establishing relationships after separation.
- People's tastes and interests may have changed. Roles may have changed.
- Adjustment depends upon the length of separation, the ability to communicate, and the willingness to accept change. There is no definite period for things to begin to feel normal again. On average, it takes several weeks or months.

Page 5 – We All Had Stressors

- Change can create stress. Even positive change causes stress as new routines are established. There is an adjustment time that creates uncertainty about what the new 'normal' will be.
- Look at page 15 of the booklet on stress.

Page 6 – Five Phases of Reunion

- Pre-entry includes the days immediately preceding reunion. It is usually hectic as the service member completes equipment accountability and maintenance. Family members make preparation for their loved one's return.
- Reunion is a time of adjustment. It can feel like a honeymoon at first. This is the time to celebrate positive growth in yourself and your service member.
- Disruption occurs as problems surface and/or expectations of normalcy go unmet. There may be feelings of jealousy, new desires for independence, concerns.

Page 7 – Communication

- Communication is key. Communicate with your service member about the expectations they have about the reunion. Let them be the guide on how they want the celebration to go when they return. Some may want a party and others may want to go home and be with their family.
- Be honest about your feelings with your service member.
- Use your support system and the resources available.

Page 8 – Tips for a Happy Reunion

- Separation usually doesn't solve problems. Unresolved issues will resurface eventually.
- Communication is key to a healthy reunion. Talk and listen. Make sure you understand what each other is saying before responding.
- Doubts, worries, and anxiety are normal parts of reunion, as roles and relationships are redefined.

Page 9 – A Smooth Reunion is Possible

None

Page 10 – Reintegration

None

Page 11 – Reunion: It's a Process, Not an Event

None

Page 12 – Questions

None

Page 13 – Resources

None

Page 14 – Thank You

None

COUNSELOR USE ONLY