DEPLOYING/REDEPLOYING

Weapons of Mass Instruction

1. **Prepare for the stressor.**
   - Ask yourself what you can do to get prepared.
   - Identify the problem.
   - Develop a plan to meet the problem.
   - Focus on what you can do not how you feel.
   - Think reassuringly, avoid negativity. Worrying won’t help. Accept the worry and return to your plan.
   - Use limited worry as energy to work your plan, beyond that, let the worry go.

2. **Confront and handle the stressor**
   - Psych yourself up as needed. You can and will handle the stressor!
   - Complete one step of your plan before going on to the next one.
   - Use emotional arousal as a cue to use your stress management techniques, and then go beyond it.
   - In evaluating how you’re doing, be realistic and reassuring.
   - Relax when you need to and when appropriate.

3. **Cope with feeling strained or overwhelmed**
   - When tension comes, use only the energy you need to deal with it and let the rest go.
   - Focus on the present and the step you’re on.
   - Use humor as appropriate and keep your perspective.
   - Expect that you may feel stressed at times. Remember the goal is to manage stress, not eliminate it.

4. **Evaluate your coping and reward yourself afterwards**
   - Recognize any and all success.
   - Reward yourself, with your favorite activity, or material item.
   - Reward yourself mentally by patting yourself on the back for your efforts.
   - If something could have been done better, remember it next time. Errors = Positive learning experience.
   - Do not beat yourself up over mistakes. It’s not going to help you. It will only make you feel bad.
   - Remember whatever success you had by making this effort will be greater than if you hadn’t tried at all.
REUNION STRESS

Whether you are a single or a married soldier, a single parent airman, a spouse, or a child, you will face certain stressors associated with reunion. Below are some of the “NORMAL” stressors you may face, along with some hints to help you adjust to the changes associated with your post-deployment reunion.

STRESSORS

- Emotional letdown
- Restlessness or sleeplessness
- “No one understands what I have been through”
- Was my spouse faithful?
- Did my spouse miss me?
- My friends seem different
- I didn’t expect things to change
- Other people’s concerns seem petty
- I feel like a stranger at home
- How will the children react?
- Will the role I have previously filled change?
- Were my children treated well by their guardian?
- Can I make up for lost time?
- Did I handle things the right way?
- When will things feel normal again?
- I am concerned about finances
- I am concerned about future deployments
- The children seem confused and uncertain
- I feel out of place at work/home

HELPFUL HINTS

✓ Accept that things may be different than they were when you left
✓ Talk about your experiences
✓ Go slowly—don’t try to make up for lost time
✓ Spend quality time with your children
✓ Reassure your children, change often frightens them
✓ Curb your desire to take control or to spend money
✓ Accept that your partner may be different
✓ Intimate relationships may be awkward at first
✓ Take time to get reacquainted
✓ Forget your fantasies. Reality may be quite different.
✓ Take time to readjust
✓ Communicate with your partner and your family
✓ Avoid excessive alcohol use
✓ Focus on what is within your control

Militaryone Source (800)342-9647—It’s a 24/7 toll-free telephone number for information/referral; money management info; counseling; for airman and their family members