

Experience has shown that virtually all military members returning from deployment, and their household members, experience at least a little uneasiness as they readjust to their normal environment. Changes, some more subtle than others, have taken place during the deployment for the military member, their family, and their friends and colleagues. To successfully cope with change requires that we make corresponding adjustments in attitude, thought, and behavior.

As you transition back to your predeployment environment, whenever you begin to feel angry or frustrated, ask yourself, "How realistic are my expectations in this situation?" " Am I giving myself, and others, enough time and space to adjust?" Am I trying to force readjustment happen rather than being patient and allowing it to happen at a comfortable pace?

Remember that readjusting to home life and work life is a process, not an event. As the military member reintegrates into her or his family, work, and social environments, it makes sense to allow oneself and others the appropriate time and space. In so doing, you will probably find that in a few weeks everything is back to a comfortable pattern again. In the unlikely event, however, that after 2 to 4 weeks you are consistently feeling sad, having marital difficulties, problems with sleep or appetite, difficulty in concentration, using alcohol excessively, or any other form of significant discomfort, please seek assistance.

There are numerous sources of help for families that are adjusting to reunion after deployment. They include the Airman & Family Readiness Center, chaplains, spouses clubs, and local churches. For those families who need more intensive professional help, counseling services are available through Mental Health Clinic; and Family Advocacy Program or through the Tricare Service Center (child therapy and family therapy not involving domestic abuse).

Any deployment during a relationship can be a BUILDING BLOCK or a STUMBLING BLOCK. It is up to the partners involved!!