

## Counseling Service Members and Military Families

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## Discussion

What are some things that come to mind when you think of the military?

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### Discussion

From a counseling perspective, what are some things that come to mind when you think about counseling a service member or their family?

- Deployment
- Permanent Change of Station (PCS)
- Reunion
- Physical Fitness Test
- Military Functions
- Medical Appointments
- Supervisor
- Family Issues
- Promotion
- Equipment Accountability
- Finances
- Retirement
- Housing
- The Unknown
- Spouse's Career
- Social Stress

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### Demographics

- Ethno-Racial Diversity – racial minorities constitute 1/3 active duty and ¼ reserve component
- Age – 47% active duty, 32% reserve (17-24), 14% civilian workforce
- Marital status – male service members more likely to be married than females, and less likely to get divorced
- Rank – enlisted ranks 84%, warrant officers 2%, commissioned officers 14% (air force does not have warrant officers)
- Gender – female (14.3%), male (85.7%) active duty forces; female (17.7%), male (82.3%) reserve forces; female (15.1%), male (84.9%) National Guard

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### Military Culture

- Rank structure-set of spoken and unspoken rules that guide appropriate behavior-dictates respect
- Most traditional men (Boy’s Club) and most non-traditional women
- Based on history of traditions-does not like change

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### Effects on Family Life

- Marriage incentives-more privileges does not equal healthy relationships
- Divorce rate for active duty females twice as high as active duty males
- Deployment deferment-AF 4 months, Army 6 months, Navy 12 months
- Separation anxiety for both mother and children
- Commands are more supportive of married mothers than those that are not married
- These factors ultimately may affect a woman’s decision to stay in the military or her ability for promotion

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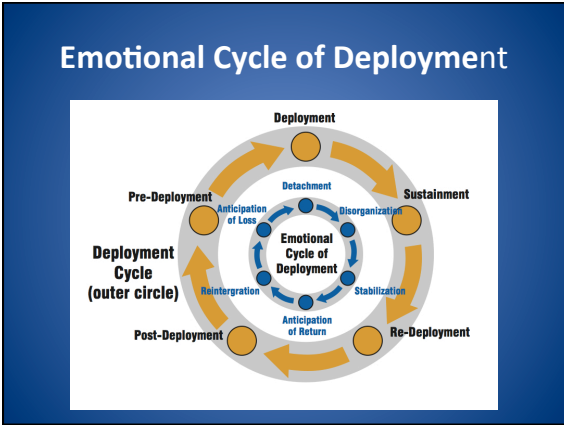
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### Pre-Deployment

Service Member	Family
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Anticipation of War (unexpected separation, rapid training, rapid deployment, unknown)</li><li>- Anticipation of Combat</li><li>- Separation from family</li><li>- Security of family</li><li>- Focus of time</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Anticipation of war (unexpected separation, rapid deployment, family disruption, unknown future)</li><li>- Uncertainty about date of deployment</li><li>- Uncertainty about length of deployment (end date; deployment extensions)</li><li>- Anticipation of absence of family member</li></ul>

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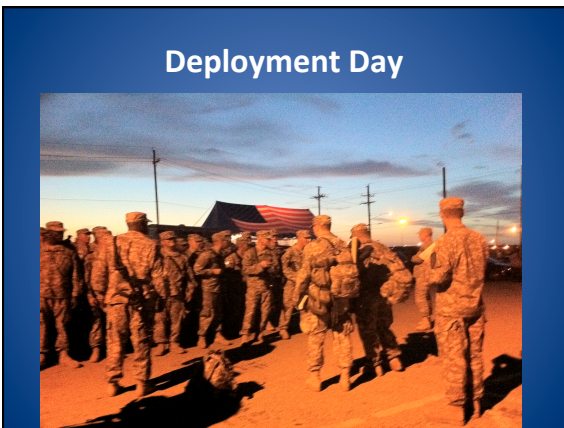
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Deployment	
Service Member	Family
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Deployment environmental conditions</li><li>- Exposure to and/or participation in combat; threat of being killed or injured</li><li>- New equipment</li><li>- Adjusting to high operation tempo (e.g., long hours, lack of sleep)</li><li>- Adjusting to the lack of freedom, autonomy, and privacy</li><li>- Uncertainty about the exact length of deployment, end date</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Length of Deployment</li><li>- Uncertainty about soldier's location and activities</li><li>- Confusion on mission's purpose</li><li>- Potential for soldier's injury or death; increasing concern about soldier's safety with subsequent deployments to war zone</li><li>- Communicating with soldier</li><li>- Concerns about children; children's reactions</li><li>- Children's concern about non-deployed parent's reaction</li><li>- Media coverage</li></ul>

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## Deployment

Service Member	Family
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Family problems or crisis back home (e.g. dissolution of marriage, unexpected death in family)</li><li>- Communication from home (dear John letter, or no communication)</li><li>- Concern about being different after deployment</li><li>- Concern that family will be different after deployment</li><li>- Disruption in occupational goals; loss or fear loss of job (especially Guard and reserve)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Emotional toll, especially with multiple deployments</li><li>- Changes in family roles and responsibilities</li><li>- Relocation</li><li>- Worry over financial situation</li><li>- Anticipation of reunion and soldier's reintegration into family</li><li>- Concern about what the soldier will be like when returning from a war zone (soldier's well being)</li><li>- Concerns about how family relationships will change</li><li>- Uncertainty about the future</li></ul>

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## Re-Deployment



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## Re-Deployment and Post Deployment

Service Member	Family
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Reunion and reintegration into family</li><li>- Adapting to the changes that have occurred in your family</li><li>- Adjusting to life in America (different rules, more freedom and autonomy)</li><li>- Survivors Guilt</li><li>- PTSD/TBI</li><li>- Possible redeployment</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Reunion and reintegration of family member</li><li>- Adjusting roles in the family</li><li>- PTSD/TBI</li><li>- Possible Redeployment</li></ul>

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## Military Families and Counseling

- Culture
- Research
- Continuing education
- Ask questions

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## Resources/Services

- FRG – Family Readiness Group (specific to Army)
- MFLC – Military Family Life Consultant
- Care Team
- Military OneSource, Army Onesource
- Army Mental Health
- Tricare
- Chaplin
- VA
- American Red Cross (Reconnection Workshops, Coping with Deployment, Emergency Messaging)
- Give an Hour <http://www.giveanhour.org>

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- Stress in the Military Family: The Family Readiness Series by Sue Vogan
- The U.S. Army Leader's Handbook: Trauma in the Unit by Army Community Service

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