



U.S. ARMY

# U.S. ARMY RESET HANDBOOK FOR SOLDIERS, DA CIVILIANS, AND FAMILY MEMBERS



Reconnecting  
Communicating  
Healing  
Grieving  
Staying Healthy



***We recognize—***

***The commitment and increasing sacrifices that our Families are making every day.***

***The strength of our Soldiers comes from the strength of their Families...***

Army Family Covenant, 2007  
George W. Casey, Jr., General U.S. Army Chief Staff  
Mr. Pete Geren, Secretary of the Army  
Kenneth O. Preston, Sergeant Major of the Army

**The Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) cycle** is used to manage the operational commitments of the Army forces to prepare, reset, and train Soldiers, DA deployable Civilians, and Families who are faced with deployment in more rapid succession. The RESET phase, or preparing for the next deployment, sets the readiness conditions for both Soldiers and Civilians, and their Families. This readiness state is ultimately vital in order for Families to thrive, as well as face any challenges that lie ahead. In support of the ARFORGEN cycle, programs and services continually optimize support to the total Army Family — Active Army, National Guard, Army Reserve, DA Civilians, and Family members.

**Overarching goals** relating to the RESET phases — redeployment and post deployment — are to improve the capacity of Soldiers, Civilians, and Families. In support of this part of the ARFORGEN cycle, the Army Comprehensive Soldier Fitness (CSF) initiative steps up the opportunity for Soldiers, Civilians, and Families to improve performance and readiness. This is a comprehensive holistic fitness program that focuses on five dimensions: physical, emotional, social, spiritual, and Family. The underlying idea is that when Soldiers/Civilians have the opportunity to maximize available training time, and are equipped with the skills to become more “self-aware, fit, balanced, confident, and competent,” then this “total fitness” contributes to thriving in an era of high operational tempo.

**Resiliency and independence are strengths** that help Soldiers, Civilians, and their Families thrive during the deployment cycle. Programs that provide training for managing readjustment issues, common health issues, warning signs, and how to get help create conditions that support “total fitness.”

Soldiers and Civilians must learn to adapt their combat mindset. The Battlemind Training System addresses ways to successfully adapt combat skills in order to use them at home in responsible ways. A companion training provides Family members opportunities to work on the same subset of skills. Some key areas covered include bonds and social support, emotional balance, individual responsibility, loyalty and commitment, independence, and navigating the spectrum of services.

4

*In addition to fixing and replacing and upgrading our equipment and training for future missions, we also have to revitalize our Soldiers and Families by providing them the time and opportunity to recover from the cumulative effects of sustained operations.*

—General George W. Casey, October 2007

*Web Site Sources:*

*Comprehensive Soldier Fitness – [www.army.mil/csf](http://www.army.mil/csf)*

*Battlemind Training System – [www.battlemind.army.mil](http://www.battlemind.army.mil)*

# CONTENTS

<b>Reconnecting</b>	
Reconnecting—Renegotiating	6
Sharing Experiences	7
Decompressing	7
First Questions	8
<b>Communicating</b>	
Talking	10
Home Front Experiences	10
Thinking and Taking Action	11
<b>Healing</b>	
Commitment	12
Forgiveness	12
Difficult Issues	13
Wounded Warriors	13
Staying “Tuned In”	14
Warning Signs:	
Depression	14
PTSD	15
Traumatic Brain Injury	16
Substance Abuse	17
Family Violence	18
Suicide Prevention	19
<b>Grieving</b>	22
<b>Staying Healthy</b>	
Staying Fit	24
Sleep	24
<b>Resources</b>	26
<b>Ultimate Tips</b>	
Family Members	30
Soldiers / Civilians	32

# RECONNECTING

## **Reconnecting with your spouse and Family members and restoring routines and roles**

after long separations is hard on relationships. With multiple deployments, and little time home, you barely have a chance to get to know each other again before another separation begins. Understanding the challenges that may lie ahead, maintaining a commitment to each other, and knowing when to get help will allow your Family to grow and thrive. It is important to remember that all Soldiers or DA Civilians and Family members have to adjust to the changes. Everyone may be unsure of when the returning person is ready to take back his or her usual roles. Soldiers/Civilians need time to get used to being home. Sometimes they want to “jump right in” and assume their former roles but Family members are not ready to hand over the controls. Some, at first, are not able to adjust to the newfound independence of Family members.

6

**What To Do.** Everyone needs to have realistic expectations about the changes that have occurred and set aside time to decide how to handle the inevitable tension. \*Make a list of what needs to be worked out. It is important to allow time to negotiate what can change, and take action on what each Family member can do. \*Realize that everyone has important roles.

**Sharing Experiences.** Talking about the new skills everyone learned during deployment and appreciating the contributions and sacrifices everyone made helps “reboot” relationships. It is important to learn why things were done the way they were, even if mistakes occurred. Sharing these life experiences helps each Family member realize that they had support during these difficult times. It also helps defuse the doubts that can occur when Family members don’t understand how decisions were made.

**Decompressing.** There will be times when everyone, including children, will feel emotionally, mentally, and physically exhausted. You may be too tired, irritable, or preoccupied with work or Family life — or have too many emotional battle scars to be close to each other right away. If Family members realize that rebuilding a close relationship will take time, then more energy will be available to take care of yourself and to work on Family relationships. Family members need to talk about how much they can handle, especially during stressful days.

*It’s really hard sometimes coming back to routine in both work and at home. Sometimes it seemed easier to be in Iraq. It’s all the Family stuff, questions, knowing about all you missed, and have to catch up on.*

## RECONNECTING

**First Questions.** Soldiers, DA Civilians, and Family members have common questions and concerns. Addressing these concerns before the return home eases the transition. Children's questions will need to be answered with care and reassurance, according to their individual level of maturity.

**For the Family** — How are things going now that my Soldier is home? What things are starting to feel "normal"? What, if any, are some of the stressors or concerns we are experiencing? Will he/she want to spend more time with battle buddies? Do I worry that our concerns will seem insignificant to our Soldier? Do I even want to hear about what my Soldier experienced or had to do while in combat? Am I concerned about future deployments? When will things feel normal again?

**For the Soldier / Civilian** — Has my role at home changed after being gone for so long? How is my Family different from when I left? What will my relationship be like with my Spouse/partner now? Will my Family still love me? Will my Family still need me? Will my Family understand what I have been through during deployment and (possibly) combat? Should I talk about my experiences to Family members and/or friends? How and where do I fit in?



**For Children** — Will there be new or different rules? When will Dad/Mom have to leave again? Will Dad/Mom be different? Will Dad/Mom like the things I have done or accomplished since they have been gone? Will Dad/Mom be mad at me for something I did while they were away?



## ULTIMATE TIPS

**Family Member Tip** — Acknowledge that it may be extremely difficult for the deployed Family member to get used to the day-to-day events and emotions of Family life. Careful management of your personal physical and emotional health will help you tolerate frustration, which in turn will ease Family tension during this transition.

**Soldier / Civilian Tip** — Recognize that Family members have learned new skills, become involved in new activities or new hobbies, possibly made new friends, and taken on different roles. Be prepared to spend time getting to know everyone again. Monitor your instinctive desires to change Family roles, routines, and priorities.

***Prepare in advance to address key areas such as finances, children, return home preferences, and community changes!***

# COMMUNICATING

**It's Still About Talking To Each Other.** To improve communications know that, “how” things are said is as important as “what” is said. This is best done in person, where you can see each other face-to-face and listen attentively — texting and emails, can be misunderstood! Not all spouses and Family members realize that their Soldiers’/Civilians’ experiences were life-changing. This will be especially challenging during the first few months at home, and still “running on adrenaline” — or if Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is present. Stress and unresolved issues do affect communication, and arguments can reach levels that may confuse Family members and frighten children. It is a good plan to work hard to keep everyone’s level of frustration as low as possible — avoid sarcasm and minimize name calling or reacting in ways that allow arguments to escalate into physical confrontations. ***Seeking help signals courage, strength, and responsibility!***

10

**Important Home Front Experiences.** Recent Army surveys found that Soldiers and Family members, after long and multiple deployments, described problems with communication: “It can be very, very frustrating at times.” *The most difficult adjustments came from changes in Soldiers’ moods, restoring parenting roles, and re-learning how to communicate again.*

—Survey of Army Families V, 2006

**Think First — Talk Next — Act Later.** To Remind each other that you really do want to hear about each other's lives / Set aside time to talk without distractions / Get your message across using "I feel statements" / Listen with compassion / Acknowledge the other person's feelings / Follow-up regularly to prevent problems "down the road"

*When you're not sure what to say or when things seem to get "off track," be gentle with each other (and with yourself), laugh often — and end your conversations on a positive note!*



## ULTIMATE TIPS

11

**Family Member Tip** — Talk to each other openly, honestly, and at a comfortable pace. Sharing fears, concerns, and experiences can be difficult and cannot be rushed. Follow-up often with your Soldier/Civilian about ways to help him/her "fit back in." Understand and accept your Soldier's feelings about discussing his/her combat experiences. Everyone's timeline is different.

**Soldier / Civilian Tip** — Make time for conversation, listen with an open mind, and let the other person know you understand what they are saying. Sit down and talk often with Family members because they want to be part of your life. If you decide to talk with them about your combat experiences, be careful not to overload them.

# HEALING

**Commitment To Any Relationship Needs To Be Mutual. It's All in the Teamwork.** Many marriages survive reintegration just fine. Some couples struggle trying to restore their relationships, especially if there have been multiple deployments, the Family is newly established, or if there have been serious issues during the separation. Some spouses may feel like strangers for a long time, while others may eagerly try to “make up for lost time.” There may be anxiety in displaying affection, romance, sexual interest, or just being close.

12

**Forgiveness Is Important. It Nourishes Relationships.** Anger and mistrust will tear any relationship apart. Family members may ultimately “tune one another out” if they feel that they’ve been told lies. If suspicion or anger continues, it can lead to increased tension. Families need to develop positive ways of dealing with problems, especially when they are faced with tough issues. \*Talk to each other about how you feel and forgive each other’s mistakes. \*Understand that if routine things were not always handled well on the home front, it was not a reflection on his/her love for you.

***Seek professional help to deal with sensitive — or volatile issues.***

**Take a Chance To Talk About Difficult Issues.** Using your skills and strengths to learn how to manage the destructive effects of the hurt, anger, betrayal, shame, or guilt in difficult relationships can help rekindle some emotional connectedness. Working out issues of mistrust or jealousy, or even infidelity is challenging, but it can be done. Infidelity can not be condoned but understanding, forgiving, and making a recommitment to the marriage with trust and hope in the future can heal past wounds. With infidelity, consider seeking professional help, as the involved partner needs to make a sincere apology and a real commitment to change — and the uninvolved partner needs to stop seeking revenge and learn to forgive. A Chaplain or other professional can help you work through these challenges and create a sincere reconciliation.

**Wounded Warriors and Family Members Share a Sense of Purpose.** DoD and Army Wounded Warrior resources emphasize staying connected to professionals throughout the recovery process. To promote optimal healing, all parties must recognize and discuss their physical and emotional changes. Family members must focus on their commitment to take care of their personal health, fitness, and relationships. Resources such as the Soldier and Family Assistance Center (SFAC) and the Wounded Warrior Resource Center provide comforting support and guidance on available assistance. *[See resources on p. 24 and [www.woundedwarriorresourcecenter.com](http://www.woundedwarriorresourcecenter.com) (Select Family Support Handbook)].*

## HEALING

**Stay “tuned in” to the warning signs** of prolonged stress or mental health problems. Seeking help before problems become overwhelming is a sign of strength, not weakness. The Families of returning Soldiers or deployed Civilians are likely to notice signs of stress during reintegration. Their Soldier/Civilian may have trouble sleeping, be irritable or “jumpy,” or display unusual behaviors for a while. Family members may find it hard to adjust to changes in their Soldier’s/Civilian’s personality and moods. Family members may also develop mental health problems.

14

**Pay Attention To Signs of Depression.** This takes courage, sensitivity, and energy. Undiagnosed depression can lead to serious behavioral health issues such as risk-taking behaviors (reckless driving, substance abuse, fighting), anxiety or other mood disorders. Any talk of suicide must be taken very seriously.

**Warning Signs of Depression:** Feeling down most days / Repeated crying episodes / Feelings of hopelessness / Sleeping too little or too much / Significant appetite changes / Fatigue / Difficulty concentrating or making decisions / Thoughts of death or suicide.

***Ask for help to get the right care!***

**PTSD Is Treatable.** Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is an anxiety disorder that can result from living through or witnessing a traumatic event such as combat, handling dead bodies, surviving a natural disaster, or a life-threatening accident, or sexual assault (men or women). Without help, PTSD can last a lifetime. It is important to recognize the symptoms of PTSD in order to understand the Soldier's important need for quality sleep, and their need for "space" to unwind. Families who live with someone with PTSD may need to adjust some of their own routines, at least until healing begins.

**Common Symptoms of PTSD:** *Reliving the event* through flashbacks, dreams or thoughts / Avoiding things that remind them of the trauma / **Emotional numbness:** Losing interest in activities previously enjoyed, avoiding relationships, or not being able to be close to Family members or friends / **Anxiety or increased arousal** including difficulty sleeping or having an over-active startle response or alert state. They may over-react to a child's cries, and sometimes "come up swinging" in reaction to an unexpected movement near them.

**Expert professional help is warranted if the symptoms last over a month.**

## HEALING

**Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)** is usually caused by a violent head injury. Mild TBI results in a short-term loss of consciousness, or the person exhibiting a confused mental state. Multiple concussions or more serious TBI can cause significant behavioral or personality changes.

The Soldier or Civilian with TBI can be misdiagnosed as having PTSD or other mental health problems. If you suspect that TBI may be responsible for your Soldier's/ Civilian's behavioral changes or health issues, seek appropriate care from qualified medical professionals. There has been an increase in the number of head injuries sustained by Soldiers, due in part to the combat methods used (IEDs, for example).

16

***Seek professional medical support!***



**Watch Out for Alcohol and Substance Abuse.** Some returning Soldiers/Civilians want to make up for lost party time. Although the “return home” parties and drinking usually calm down after the Soldier/Civilian settles into the routines of life at home, sometimes more serious problems develop. Remember that the negative effects of drinking are increased by over-the-counter drugs, prescription medications, caffeine, diet pills, energy drinks, lack of sleep, or poor nutrition.

**Warning Signs of Alcohol or Substance Abuse:**

Drinking or using drugs to deal with painful feelings or to block memories of combat experience / Drinking to get to sleep / Becoming violent when drunk / Binge drinking / Drinking and driving / Missing school or work because of substance use.

***Help yourself make responsible choices, and get proper care!***

## HEALING

### **Family Violence. Protection and Safety Are Critical.**

Seek immediate help if anyone in your Family has been hurt by a Family member, if you are afraid of personally hurting a Family member, or if you are afraid to live in (or leave) your home. Child or domestic abuse is never acceptable. The Army Family Advocacy Program (FAP) provides a range of tools that focus on supporting healthy Family life. Services include: Victim Advocacy, Transitional Compensation, referrals to counseling and therapy, parenting or couple classes and workshops (Strong Bonds retreats or Guard and Reserve Marriage Enrichment Seminars), and the New Parent Support Program — offering home visitation for expectant parents and parents of children from birth to 3 who need extra support or are at risk for abuse or neglect.

18

### **Value That Everyone Has a Right To Feel Safe**

Acts of violence that can destroy Families:

**Behaviors:** pushing, slapping, kicking, hitting

**Remarks:** threatening, belittling, menacing

**Risk issues:** unresolved infidelity, separation-divorce, stalking, Family trauma, isolation, mental health problems.

***If you or someone you know is in danger, please contact law enforcement immediately or the Family Advocacy Program! Help is available 24/7.***

## **Suicide. Watching Out for Signs of Distress Is Vital To Preventing Suicide.**

Although anyone is at risk for suicide under certain circumstances, Soldiers/Civilians who have experienced combat, particularly if they are suffering from depression, PTSD, or alcohol or drug abuse, may be at higher risk of committing suicide. For most Soldiers such thoughts are fleeting, but others will take action to end their lives.

**A Call to Action — Alert to Signs of Suicide:** Remarks such as “Nothing matters any more,” “It’s just not worth it,” or “I can’t go on, I’m thinking of ending it all” / Becoming depressed or withdrawn / Behaving recklessly / Getting affairs in order and giving away valued possessions / Relationship issues (infidelity, divorce) / Abusing alcohol or drugs / Suffering a major loss or life challenge / Anticipating a significant failure or humiliation such as losing a job or facing a court date that could mean jail time.

***Reach out for help and reach out to help others!***

## HEALING

The **ACE Model** is useful for suicide concerns.

**A**sk your Soldier/Civilian or Family member: [Ask directly and calmly] “Are you thinking of killing yourself?”

**C**are for your Soldier/Civilian or Family member: Remove any means that could be used for self-injury. Calmly control the situation and actively listen; do not use force.

**E**scort your Soldier/Civilian or Family member: Never leave them alone. Escort to the chain of command, a Chaplain, a behavioral health professional, or a primary care provider.

20

**Getting help is imperative!** A Soldier/Civilian or Family in the civilian sector can call a hospital or **911**. Local Suicide help lines and Military OneSource (MOS) provide 24/7 help.

Source: Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventative Medicine (CHPPM, *Suicide Awareness for Soldiers* 2008).



## ULTIMATE TIPS

**Family Member Tip** — Avoid harboring unresolved anger or resentment that can generate more distress. Work out even subtle mistrust, jealousy or bitterness. Understand that if things were not always attended to on the home front, that it was not a reflection on his/her love for you. You know yourself and your Soldier/Civilian. If problems are not improving on their own, get help.

**Soldier / Civilian Tip** — Avoid harboring unresolved anger or resentment that can generate more distress. Work out even subtle mistrust, jealousy or bitterness. Understand that if things were not always attended to on the home front, that it was not a reflection on his/her love for you. Don't be afraid to take a mental health profile, ask for help, or simply take a break. It is okay to pace yourself, and take time to "fit in."

# GRIEVING

## **Grief Reactions Are Common During Reintegration.**

Soldiers/Civilians sometimes experience the death of a friend or buddy, and intense grief reactions are to be expected. When Soldiers/Civilians are present during the death-event, they may feel additional horror, even imagining that he/she perhaps could have prevented the death. It is important to remember that everyone's physical, emotional, and spiritual fitness can help maintain Family relationships during the grieving period.

**Experiencing Grief Happens To Everyone.** Everyone will experience grief at some point in their lives. And everyone experiences a variety of emotions and thoughts when grieving, depending upon their culture, Family expectations, age, spiritual resources, or personal circumstances. Some people express their feelings, and others mask their pain and disappointments, cry, or retreat from Family and friends. Others try to self-medicate with alcohol or drugs. It is important for everyone to talk about their losses, and it helps relieve intense emotions. \*Children and youth will react to their caretaker's reactions, and may not understand what is going on. Age appropriate explanations are important. If services are needed for children, they must be developmentally sensitive.

## **Accepting Loss Requires a Positive Attitude — and**

**Time.** Longstanding grief, especially when unresolved guilt is present, can interfere in Family and intimate relationships. It can result in fear of getting close to anyone / Fear of rejection if “the truth” is discovered / Intense feelings of unworthiness leading to possible risk taking (financial, emotional, sexual) / Distancing self from others by avoiding social activity (e.g., returning phone calls, not keeping dates).

Acceptance is the term used when the person no longer feels deep anguish about the loss but is able to accept the reality and move on with his/her life — it will take time!

### **ULTIMATE TIPS**

**Family Member Tip** — Accept the changes in yourself and in each Family member. This is the first step in moving forward and healing after a loss.

**Soldier / Civilian Tip** — Keep a positive, hopeful outlook towards the future, as time and circumstances help in dealing with the loss.

## STAYING HEALTHY

**Staying healthy and fit** physically, emotionally and spiritually, minimizes the stress associated with the day-to-day challenges of reintegration. Family members often lack sufficient energy or time to do things for themselves, or just spend needed time together.

**Ways To Stay Fit.** Everyone's health status has an impact on the Family's sense of well-being. It helps to discover new skills and dare to try new things.

Invest in good nutrition / Laugh at unexpected situations / Relax — deep breathing, yoga, reading inspirational books, listening to quiet music / Have healthy conversations with buddies, Family members and other helpful people / Be open to new solutions. **Exercise regularly** — it can even be a Family activity.

**Get Enough Good Sleep.** Soldiers in the field report difficulty sleeping — it is difficult “to turn off” their active alert state. This can carry over as they transition to home. Optimal sleep for the “average person” is about 7-8 hours per 24 hours. Lack of adequate sleep can result in every day performance problems — reduced alertness, memory deficits, reduced mental flexibility, slower information processing, impaired judgment, limited initiative and increased anger, depression, and anxiety.



**Managing Sleep Problems.** Maintain a regular sleep schedule / Pay attention to noise level, lighting, and temperature / Relax before bedtime / Know a 10-15 minute nap is optimal / Avoid napping after 3 pm / Exercise regularly / Recognize the effects of alcohol, medications, and caffeine found in sodas, teas, chocolate, and energy drinks / Do something relaxing until you feel ready to sleep and avoid “watching the clock” if sleep is interrupted / Be aware of the stimulating effects of electronic gaming and television.

**Spirituality Provides Courage and Hope.** It can help the Soldier/Civilian or Family member regain a sense of purpose in life, especially if a traumatic event has occurred. It is a time-honored source of strength, and Army Chaplains are witnesses to the good that it can do.

25



## ULTIMATE TIPS

**Family Member Tip** — Take some time to focus on your emotional, physical, and spiritual fitness by getting into a good routine of exercise, sleep, healthy nutrition, and pampering. Know that Soldiers/Civilians may have very irregular sleep, especially during the first few weeks upon returning home.

**Soldier / Civilian Tip** — Get into a PT routine that pushes you physically to gratifying exhaustion. This stimulates the mind and body, promotes good sleep and allows mental, physical, and spiritual healing.

## RESOURCES: ARMY SPECTRUM OF HEALING AND SUPPORT

**Life Skills Education** — Information and activities that facilitate self potential to maintain a healthy life; make informed decisions; communicate effectively; and develop coping skills.

**Supportive Counseling** — Interpersonal education that provides emotional guidance throughout a short-term life event to help sustain well-being: Community outreach, individual or Family counseling, or support groups. **SERVICES** that manage short term situational life events: Army OneSource (AOS): Army Community Services | National Guard and Army Reserve Family Programs | Military OneSource (MOS) | New Parent Support Program—Home Visitors | Victim Advocates | Chaplains | Military Family Life Consultants (MFLC) | Soldier Family Assistance Center (SFAC)

**Treatment / Therapy Programs** — Clinical or medical intervention that is typically long-term aimed at remediation of symptoms, to support health and well-being treatment goals. Clinical and therapeutic sessions, or in-patient care. **SERVICES** that manage longer term challenges: Medical Treatment Facility (MTF) | MTF for Family Advocacy | Clinical Army Substance Abuse Program (ASAP) | Marriage and Family Therapists | Behavioral Health Services such as Psychiatry, Social Work Service (SWS), Psychology, Psychiatric Nursing | Department of Veteran Affairs

## **Military OneSource**

**[www.militaryonesource.com](http://www.militaryonesource.com)**

This DoD portal offers a toll-free telephone number (1-800-342-9647 stateside and CONUS) and web site link to email or call a master's level consultant for confidential counseling, at no cost 24/7. Offers articles and coping tips for dealing with different situations.

## **Army OneSource (AOS)**

**[www.myarmyonesource.com](http://www.myarmyonesource.com)**

Official Army "one-stop knowledge portal" that offers all Army members a central point for getting information about Family programs and access to services available at Army Centers, on-line, and through 24/7 telephone support.

27

## **Army Community Service (ACS)**

**[www.myarmyonesource.com](http://www.myarmyonesource.com)** (Select tab Family Programs)

ACS provides a range of quality of life programs in support of Department of Defense activities, that pertain to deployment and Family well-being. Operation READY (Select tab Deployment Readiness) training and other key services are provided: relationship support (Family Advocacy), outreach, and emergency assistance. Military Family Life Consultants (MFLC) offer anonymous, confidential support and counseling via licensed clinicians.

## RESOURCES

### **National Guard Family Program**

**[www.guardfamily.org](http://www.guardfamily.org)**

This web site provides information, services and support to National Guard Soldiers and their Families. Phone numbers (including state FAC and FAC Specialists); links to support.

### **Army Reserve Family Programs**

**[www.arfp.org](http://www.arfp.org)**

The ARFP web site is a one-stop portal to get connected with Army Reserve Family support information and resources. Phone numbers, links to support agencies and interactive support are available 24/7.

28

### **Army Behavioral Health**

**[www.behavioralhealth.army.mil](http://www.behavioralhealth.army.mil)**

Answers frequently asked questions about deployment-related mental health issues, addresses warrior care, and identifies resources for Soldiers and Family members.

### **Soldier and Family Assistance Center**

**[www.myarmyonesource.com](http://www.myarmyonesource.com)** (Select tab Family Programs)

This Center provides multiple Family services and connections for wounded Soldiers, Families, and DA Civilians. The virtual SFAC (vSFAC) is a web-based system that offers information and support; especially helpful for Family members who are not near military facility.

**My Hooah 4 Health**  
**[www.hooah4health.com](http://www.hooah4health.com)**

U.S. Army health promotion and wellness web site that covers topics of personal-physical, material, mental, and spiritual-state of Soldiers, Civilians, and their Families as well as covers topics concerning the deployment.

**American Red Cross**  
**[www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)**

This web site provides information and interactive support; lists telephone and related links, and offers online support 24/7.

**Strategic Outreach to Families of All Reservists (SOFAR) — [www.sofarusa.org/about\\_sofar.html](http://www.sofarusa.org/about_sofar.html)**

SOFAR is a nonprofit program that connects military Families with clinicians who provide free mental health services with the primary focus on the extended Families of Army Reserve and National Guard Soldiers.

29

**[Veterans Affairs and DoD] after deployment**  
**[www.afterdeployment.org](http://www.afterdeployment.org)**

This web site was designed by the Department of Defense and the Department of Veterans Affairs as an alternative to face-to-face counseling to decrease stigma and provide access to care to those who do not live near a Military Treatment Facility. The focus is on “self checks” and online workshops which help assist with concerns related to post deployment, in areas such as sleep, seeking spiritual fitness, dealing with depression, handling stress, overcoming anger, etc.



## ULTIMATE TIPS: Family Members

**Reconnecting** — Acknowledge that it may be extremely difficult for the deployed member to get used to the day-to-day events and emotions of Family life. Careful management of your personal physical and emotional health will help you tolerate frustration, which in turn will ease Family tension during this transition.

**Communicating** — Commit to talking time to talk with one another openly, as sharing fears, concerns, and experiences can be difficult and cannot be rushed. Follow-up often with your Soldier/Civilian about ways they think will help him/her “fit back in.” Respect your Soldier’s/Civilian’s feelings about discussing his/her combat experiences.

**Healing** — Avoid harboring unresolved anger or resentment that can generate more distress. Work out even subtle mistrust, jealousy or bitterness. Be proactive, know the warning signs. You know yourself and your Soldier/Civilian. If problems are not improving on their own, get help.

**Grieving** — Accept the changes in yourself — and in each Family member. This is the first step in moving forward and healing from any loss.

**Staying Healthy** — Take some time to focus on your emotional, physical, and spiritual fitness by getting into a good routine of exercise, sleep, healthy nutrition, and pampering. Know that Soldiers/Civilians may have very irregular sleep, especially during the first few weeks upon returning home.

**Personalized Army OneSource Support**

- Walk-in: garrison Army Community Service (ACS) or National Guard/Reserve facility
- Telephone garrison ACS, National Guard or Army Reserve specialist, or Military OneSource
- On-line information and resources.

*[See Helpful Resources ([www.myarmyonesource.com](http://www.myarmyonesource.com)) and page 24].*



## ULTIMATE TIPS: Soldiers / Civilians

**Reconnecting** — Recognize that Family members have learned new skills, become involved in new activities or new hobbies, possibly made new friends, and have taken on different roles. Children, especially, mature and change quickly. Be prepared to spend time getting to know everyone again. Monitor your instinctive desires to change Family roles, routines, and priorities.

**Communicating** — Make time for conversation, listen with an open mind, and let the other person know you understand. Follow-up often with Family members/friends because they want to be part of your life. Talk with them about your combat experiences on their own timeline, being careful not to overload.

**Healing** — Avoid harboring unresolved anger or resentment that can generate more distress. Work out even subtle mistrust, jealousy or bitterness. Understand that if things were not always attended to on the home front, that it was not a reflection on his/her love for you. Don't be afraid to take a mental health profile, ask for help, or simply take a break. It is okay to pace yourself, and take time to "fit in."



**Grieving** — Accept any loss and keep a positive, hopeful outlook towards the future. Time and circumstances change everything.

**Staying Healthy** — Get into a PT routine that pushes you physically to points of gratifying exhaustion. This stimulates the mind and body, promotes good sleep and allows you to heal mentally, physically, and spiritually.

### **Personalized Army OneSource Support**

- Walk-in: garrison Army Community Service (ACS) or National Guard/Reserve facility
- Telephone garrison ACS, National Guard or Army Reserve specialist, or Military OneSource
- On-line information and resources.

*[See Helpful Resources ([www.myarmyonesource.com](http://www.myarmyonesource.com)) and page 24].*

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## ***U.S. Army RESET Handbook for Soldiers, DA Civilians, and Family Members***

First Edition, 2010

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*Getting Prepared, Staying Prepared*

