

Hints for Happy Homecoming

Reuniting after a long deployment is fun, exciting and one of the best things about Navy life. Enjoy homecoming and be prepared to renegotiate your relationship as you reconnect.

Cooperation

Each of you has been making daily decisions for yourself. Now you'll have to relearn cooperation. What television show are you going to watch? What do you want for dinner? What time are you going to get up in the morning?



Responsibilities

Homecoming provides a great opportunity to re-evaluate and reassign family chores. Who manages the money, mows the grass, does laundry and walks the dog are the types of daily chores that must be done. Discover which family member enjoys doing a particular chore and fairly divvy up the unpleasant jobs.

Friendships

You both may have made some very good friends during the deployment. You may miss the camaraderie and daily connection.

New Stresses

Physical, social and psychological consequences of combat deployment may present challenges. The birth of a child, a serious illness in the family, a possible surge deployment, PCS move or other significant change can be stressful. If you need assistance in dealing with stress contact your local Fleet and Family Support Center, a chaplain, Military OneSource, a psychologist, or psychiatrist through your local medical department.



Communication

Learning to cooperate can be challenging because your communication skills may be rusty. Service members may have to soften their communication style as they are used to giving and receiving orders without much discussion.



You're not used to reading your partners non-verbal skills. "What did he mean by that sigh?" "Did she roll her eyes when I said that?" Watch for those non-verbal signals and calmly ask if you're not sure what is being "said."

Those at home may have to help their service member "catch up" with missed experiences. Sailors may have to "clean up" their language and social skills. You may have to adjust to different access to privacy than was experienced during deployment.

Tips from Experienced Navy Couples

- Be careful not to get caught in the "Who Had It Worse" game.
- Plan time together as a couple.
- Share your feelings. It's natural to have mixed emotions at this time — excitement and happiness together with nervousness and insecurity.
- Be realistic. The perfect reunion fantasy is just that — a fantasy.
- Expect to be more tired than you think. With all the excitement and preparations, fatigue is a common homecoming reaction for everyone.
- Intimacy involves emotional, as well as physical closeness. Talk about each other's expectations for reconnecting physically.
- Communicating openly and honestly with your partner about your feelings, expectations, needs and worries is a sure way to help make this homecoming the best it can be!
- If homecoming day is also a duty day, plan to make the best of it. Have dinner together!



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