

Tips for Managing Deployment and Combat Reminders

Identifying helpful coping strategies for dealing with deployment reminders and stress reactions can help strengthen you and your family.

Consider the following tips:

Increase your awareness

Knowing when a family member is having a reaction to a reminder will help reduce misunderstandings or unhelpful interpretations that can lead to anger and blame

Allow for “time outs”

When experiencing an intense reminder, take a minute to identify tools that have helped you in the past. It's OK to avoid the most intense reminders, initially—at least until other tools to manage strong reactions can be identified.

Access support of others

Talk to and spend time with people who are supportive.

Use positive self-talk

This can help to increase sense of control and ability to cope (e.g. “This is just a reminder”, “This is just my past talking, this isn't really what I think it is”, “I am okay”)

Practice relaxation techniques

Such as deep breathing, meditation, or other techniques you find helpful.

Maintain good self care

Give your body what it needs, including sleep, exercise, and a healthy diet.

Plan a strategic distraction

A weekend getaway with friends or family, read a book, watch a movie, etc. Once the distress has subsided, take some time to examine what the trigger was and identify other ways to help manage that distress.

