

BEYOND THE BRIEF WORKSHOP # 1



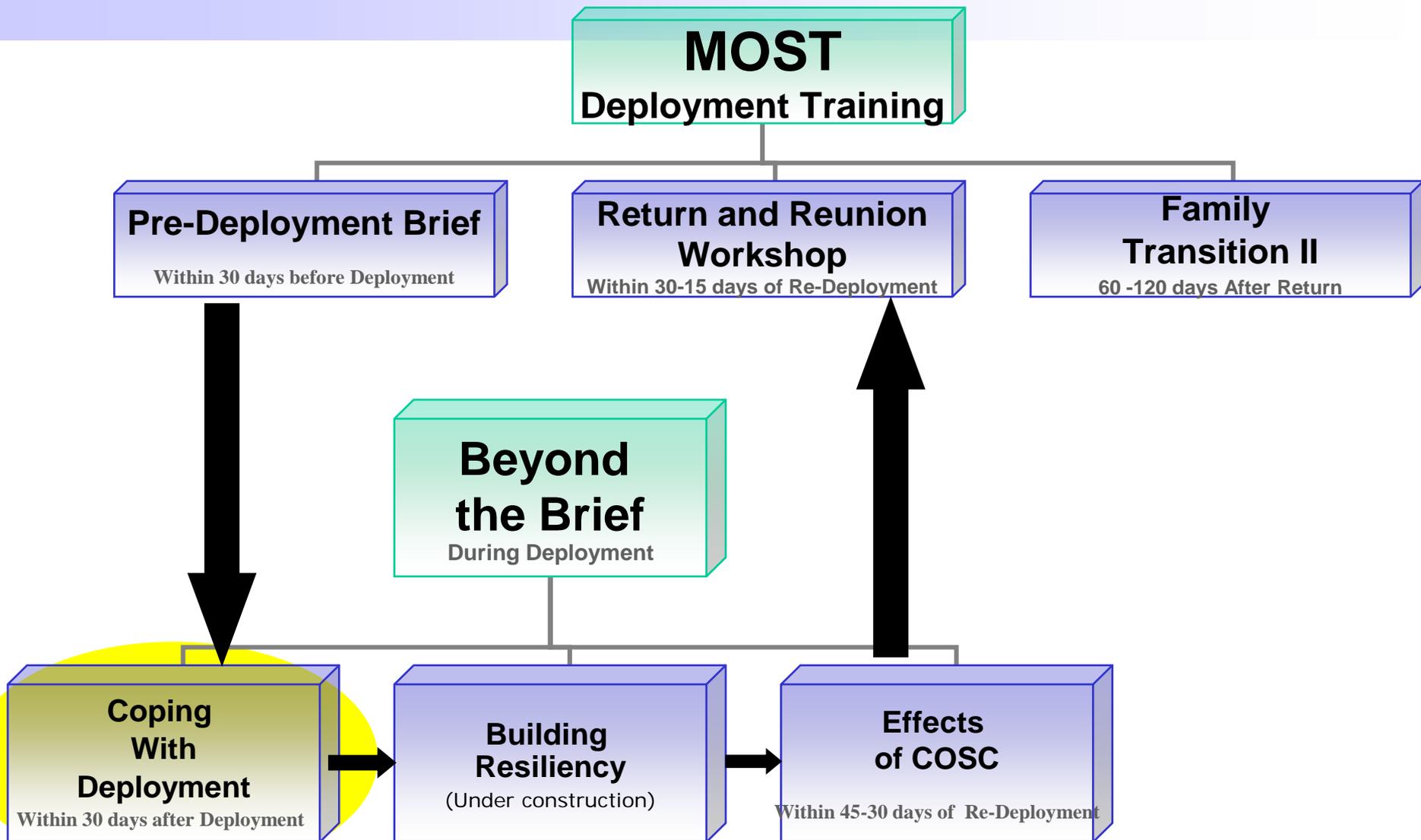
COPING WITH DEPLOYMENT



FAMILY COSC TRAINING PROGRAMS

RDSTs - MCFTB

STRESS CONTINUUM			
READY	REACTING	INJURED	ILL





Deployment Stress and Coping



- Introductions
- Goals of Workshop
 - ✓ Understanding Stress and Coping
 - ✓ Understanding the Deployment Cycle
 - ✓ Common Stress Sources and Problems
 - ✓ Stress Continuum
 - ✓ Managing Stress
 - ✓ Available Resources



What Are "Stress" and "Coping"?



"STRESS":

Any challenge to your body or mind

- ✓ Challenges are necessary for life and duty
- ✓ But stress can be harmful if it's too intense or lasts too long

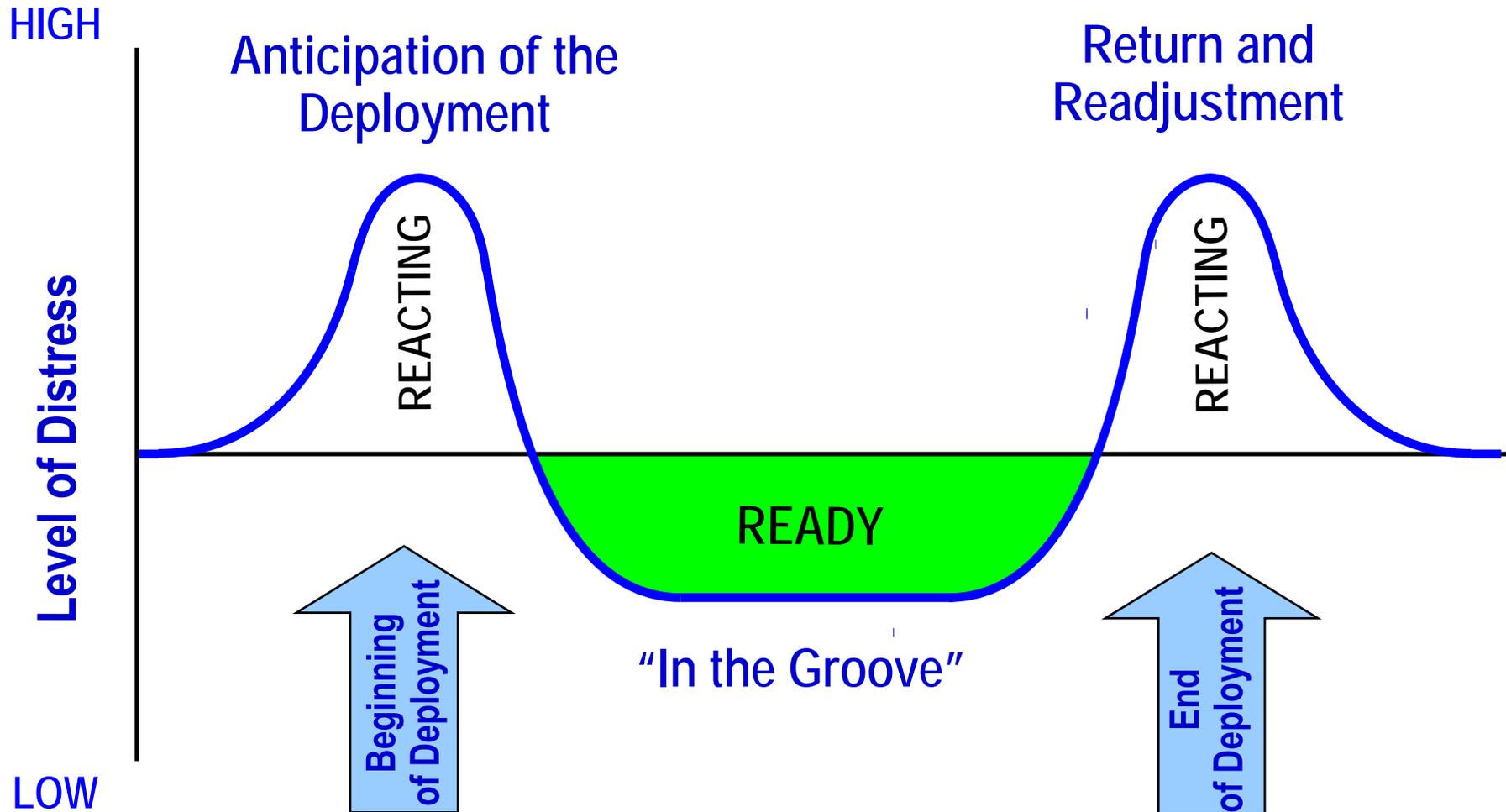
"COPING":

Changes in your body, mind, or environments to adapt to stress by:

- ✓ Developing yourself
- ✓ Develop your environment (including relationships with friends and family)
- ✓ Mentally detaching from the source of stress



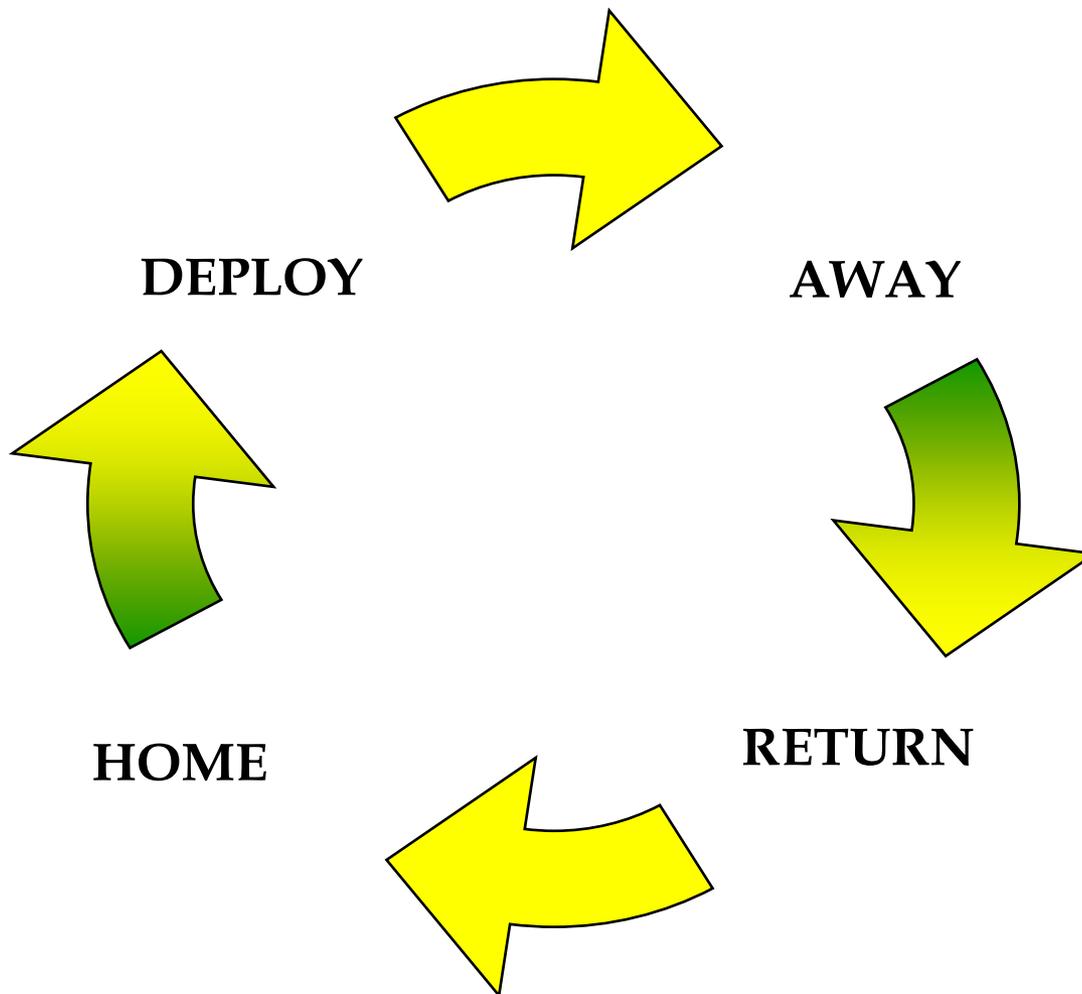
Emotional Cycle of Separation and Deployment: Stress and Coping





Map of Deployment Cycle

STRESS CONTINUUM			
READY	REACTING	INJURED	ILL





What About Multiple Deployments?



- ✓ Stress can accumulate
- ✓ Readjustment period doesn't go as fast as expected
- ✓ Family have a harder time getting into the ready stage and spend more time reacting
- ✓ Harder to reconnect with spouse and parent
- ✓ Family members may become more independent, take on new roles, feel better prepared



Combat Operational Stress Continuum for Families



READY	REACTING	INJURED	ILL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good to go • Prepared for deployment • Functioning OK socially, emotionally, vocationally, academically 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mild or transient distress or impairment • Anxious or irritable • Behavior change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More serious distress or impairment that can change personality • Can't sleep, disruptive nightmares • Panic attacks, rage • Addictive behaviors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severe stress injuries that impact your job or relationships (Depression, Anxiety, Addictive Disorders, PTSD) • Requires professional help to heal • May get worse without early intervention





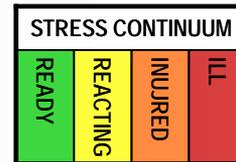
Common Stress Symptoms for Families



READY	REACTING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calm and steady • Confident and competent • Self control • Sense of humor • Sleeping enough • Eating well • Working out, staying fit • Playing well and often • Active socially, spiritually • Able to cope overall • Getting the job done • Functioning well at work, school, home • Relating well with Marine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anxious, irritable, short tempered • Fighting, tantrums, opposition • Unusual sadness, crying • Trouble sleeping • Eating too much or too little • Apathy, loss of interest • Keeping to self, not socializing • Negative, pessimistic • Loss of confidence • Developmental regression • Deteriorating school or work performance • Communication breakdown



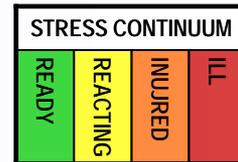
Common Stress Symptoms for Families



INJURED	ILL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persistent sadness or irritability • Can't fall or stay asleep • Persistent loss of appetite • Social avoidance or isolation • Outbursts or panic attacks • Severe misbehavior • Recurrent vivid nightmares • Persistent aches and pains • Severe deterioration of school or work performance • Disruption of moral values • Misuse of alcohol or other addictive behavior • Other significant symptoms of depression, anxiety, or misconduct 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stress injury symptoms that last for <u>more than several weeks</u> even after stress is relieved • Symptoms that get <u>worse</u> over time instead of better • Symptoms that get better for awhile but then come back worse • Serious suicidal or homicidal behavior



Child Reactions by Age

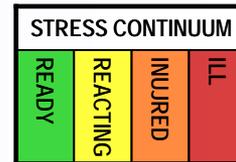


Most children are resilient but some children respond differently to stress:

- **Infants** – Fussy, changes in eating habits
- **Preschoolers** – Confused, saddened
 - Don't understand reason for geographic separation and deployment
- **School-Aged** – Saddened, angry or anxious
- **Adolescents** – Withdrawn, deny feelings about pending separation



Discussion Scenario One



A spouse of a deployed Marine lives on base with her ten year old daughter and six year old boy. She makes sure everything is taken care of at home, and she continues to make preparations for the upcoming deployment. However, she is getting increasingly short with her children and is not sleeping well.

- Which stress zone (green, yellow, orange, or red) is she in?
- What should be done?



Discussion Scenario Two



Soon after your spouse's deployment, your son's elementary school teacher calls you. She expressed concern that your son's behavior has changed. He seems withdrawn and is no longer playing with other children.

- Which stress zone (green, yellow, orange, or red) is the son in?
- What should be done?



Discussion Scenario Three



Monique is a new military wife. She and her spouse are new joins to the unit. Her husband has never been on a deployment. She appears overwhelmed and panicked. She can be overheard ranting about pay, childcare, Tricare and a power of attorney.

- Which stress zone (green, yellow, orange, or red) is she in?
- What should be done?



Self Care: Things to Do



- **Self Care**

- ✓ How can you build and maintain resiliency?
 - Get adequate sleep, exercise, nutrition
 - Use relaxation techniques
 - Be calm and patient
 - Keep a positive attitude
 - Think of yourself as competent
 - Maintain your external contacts
 - Use the power of positive peer interaction
 - Know your resources and use them
 - Get help when things are not going well



Self Care: Things To Avoid



- **Self Care**

- ✓ What are some things to *avoid* during the upcoming deployment?
 - Keeping everything to yourself
 - Taking your frustration out on your spouse
 - Isolating
 - Not taking time for yourself to ensure proper rest and recreation
 - Turning to addictive substances or behaviors yourself (reduces your options)
 - Just hoping things will get better if they are getting worse
 - Being afraid to get help for yourself when you need it



Family Care: Things to Do



- **Family Care**

- ✓ How can you build and maintain resiliency for your family?
 - While your Marine is away, keep remembering the good times
 - Engage in positive family activities (children's school, church, recreation, helping others, hobbies)
 - Understand your children may have fears when Mom or Dad is deployed (fear of injury or death, fear of the unknown)
 - Understand that you and your children may experience very different types of stress from being separated from the deployed member
 - Prioritize your goals for the deployment for your family
 - Know your resources and use them
 - Get additional help when things are not going well



Family Care: Things To Avoid



- **Family Care**

- ✓ What are some things to *avoid* as a family during the upcoming deployment?
 - Don't expect things to be the same while your spouse is away
 - Don't blame yourself or your spouse during his/her absence for family challenges
 - Don't leave your extended family (his/her parents and yours and others) out of the loop of what's going on with your Marine *and* your family
 - Don't take on more than you can handle, including children's activities
 - Don't let your family finances get out of hand



Caring for your Children: Things to Do

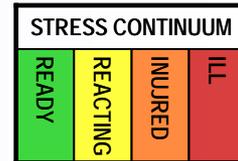


- **Caring for Your Children**

- How can you build and maintain resiliency in your children?
 - Encourage frequent and age-appropriate open communication on all topics
 - Use words and concepts children can understand
 - Give children honest answers and information.
 - Include your children in communication opportunities with your deployed Marine (phone calls, letters)
 - Address distorted beliefs or assumptions about the deployment
 - Be reassuring, but don't make unrealistic promises
 - Let children know how you're feeling. Children learn from watching their parents and teachers.



Caring for your Children: Things to Avoid



- **Caring for Your Children**

- ✓ What are some things to **avoid** with your children regarding the upcoming deployment?
 - Watching too much television with violent or upsetting images
 - Telling your children more than they need to know
 - Discussing marital issues with your children
 - Ignoring your children's feelings about the deployment
 - Not keeping family routines and traditions
 - Being negative
 - Over-scheduling activities at the expense of family time
 - Spoiling your children to compensate for spouse's absence
 - Ignoring signs of maladjustment, hoping they will go away



Tools for Children to Help Cope with Stress



- Do a deployment timeline example for Military Parent who is deployed
- Weekly family meetings with children to discuss their particular challenges
- Projects to present at school about deployed parent
- Offer your child activities that let him/her express his/her feelings in healthy and safe ways
- Other suggestions?



A Quick Review: How You Can Help Control Stress



- **Know what to expect** — surprises always increase stress, so prepare yourself and others
- **Stay connected** — to peers, friends, and family
- **Sleep at least 6 hours per day** — if you can't sleep 6 hours every day, get make-up sleep often
- **Stay fresh** — vary your routines and tasks, and get plenty of rest and recuperation
- **Get or stay organized** – plan ahead
- **Get and stay physically fit** — exercise is good for your physical and mental health



Resources for Stress Related Problems



- Marine and Family Services or Marine Corps Community Services (MCCS) Counselors
- Chaplains and Local Clergy
- Medical Treatment Facility
- Military OneSource (www.militaryonesource.com)
- DoD Deployment Health Support Directorate
- Marine Corps Family Team Building Programs
- Mental Health Services available through TRICARE
- Project FOCUS (www.focusproject.org)

Questions? Comments?



www.manpower.usmc.mil/cosc