



Family
Redeployment
Reunion
Home Study
Guide

**Part of the California Army National Guard's Personal
Redeployment Readiness Plan**
*Helping Resilient Army Families Remain
Self-sufficient and Self-sustaining*

Welcome to Demobilization Marriage Enrichment Guide

Here is a handy nightly Home Activity Study Guide which is designed to assist you in making your recent Redeployment Reunion as satisfying and trouble free as possible. As you participate in the 10 evenings of activities and conversations you will discover that your family, like thousands of other military families, is strong and resilient. You can face up to the difficult challenges of today's military requirements. You are among a proud number of selfless families who place Country and Patriotism above their own personal wishes.

We are grateful that you have been willing to face the ordeals which are asked of you: frequent separations and many missed special events, such as, birthdays, anniversaries, and holidays. To help ease the burden, this "Family Redeployment Reunion Home Study Guide" will walk you through some very valuable experiences prepared to help reaffirm your family and personal values. These experiences will help your family rebond and rebuild.

These are family experiences. If there are serious marital issues to be addressed in your home, do not use these exercises to do that. Marital issues ought not to be addressed in the presence of the children. This is especially true after a long separation. The children will fear the family is breaking up. However, sometime when husband and wife are alone, these same exercises will help you deal with tension in your marriage. The best choice is to seek the assistance of a marriage counselor.

Military families face many different kinds of hardships. YOU have faced many different kinds of hardships. And you have maintained your faith, your strength, your positive attitude, and your willingness to serve.

We owe you a debt which cannot be paid. We trust that this helpful Guide will do just that - - guide you through the maze of feelings and adjustments which are part of the redeployment adjustment process.

Our thanks for your dedicated service.

**Ten Wonderful Sessions
of
Rebonding & Rebuilding
Experiences**

Session One “Getting Reacquainted”

Session Two “Oh, How We Missed You”

Session Three “Precious Memories”

Session Four “Nobody Knows the Troubles I’ve Seen”

Session Five “Somebody Broke All the Rules”

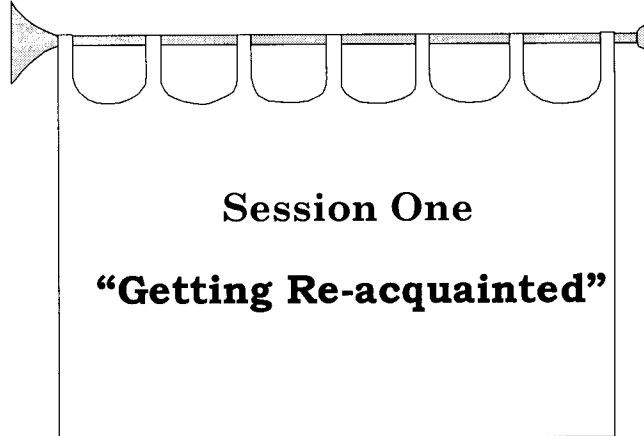
Session Six “Let Me Tell You How Much I Love You”

Session Seven “Let’s Refresh our Loyalty”

Session Eight “Kids are People, Too!”

Session Nine “Creating a New Way to Be Together”

Session Ten “Jump Starting Our Reunited Family”



**READ
THIS FIRST**

Well, you know there are moments after a long separation during which family members almost seem like strangers. Not really **strangers**, but there seems like a period of time when we don't know how to respond and react to one another. That's to be expected. Once everyone settles back down to a new routine, you'll feel much better about it.

This session is designed to help folks get re-acquainted. If the leader or parent will "lighten up" a bit, this can even be fun.

There are work sheets for everyone for part two of tonight's session. Part I only requires that the family sit around the dining room table or in the living room or family room. Try not to have any distractions. Make it simple and you can keep it short. But if you discover that somebody in your family wants to talk about the things this session highlights, try not to discourage them. If you begin with this session to discourage participation the following sessions will be less successful. Your support and leadership in these experiences will pave the way for a less stressful time and much stronger family relationships.

“Getting Re-acquainted” Family Experience

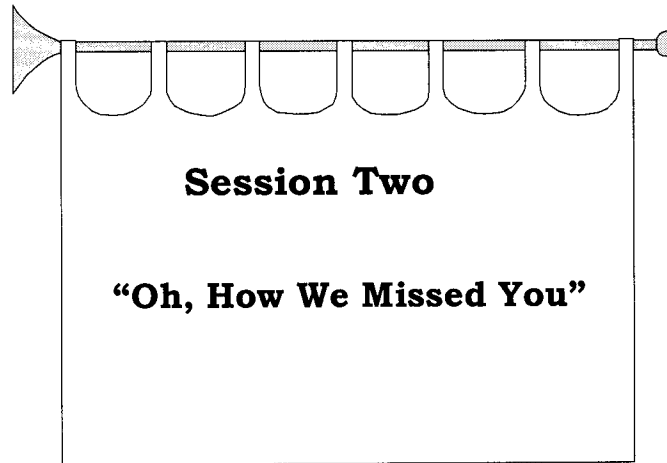
PURPOSE: To encourage conversation about how individual family members feel about the separation of the deployment.

CONCEPT: Conversation among family members is an essential element in reunion. Kids especially are very vulnerable on this issue. If they don't talk about their feelings they bury them. When they bury them they will erupt sometime in ways parents do not desire. Let the conversation continue.

- 1. Get the family together either at a table or sitting close in the family room or living room.**
 - 2. Give everyone enough time to think about their answers.**
 - 3. Each person in turn introduces him/herself to the rest of the family. Each person will tell things about him/herself which have happened during the separation.**
- ⇒ It is a good idea to allow the discussion to go on beyond these short answers.**
- 4. When the returned deployed parent introduces him/herself be sure to provide information about the absence which will make this experience an enjoyable one.**

“Getting Re-acquainted” Worksheet

In the space below write those things which you would say to introduce yourself to others in the family. What are you like? What things do you like? How was this separation and what did you do to make it through it?



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THIS FIRST**

Yes, you wrote lots of letters and cards. Yes, you have said over and over that you missed one another. However, this group exercise concerning how people have been missed in your family helps family members know that you take the absence seriously. It helps children know that they were missed.

Most often we “miss” the person who is away. But the person who is deployed also misses the family members back home. There were many more events that the deployed person missed than what the family members missed by not being deployed. The deployed parent read letters that made the absence be more difficult because he or she was missing important personal events. However, mostly family members didn’t want to be experiencing what their military family member experienced.

A hug and an “I missed you” just does not go far enough in ensuring that the pain of being away is healed. This is a healing exercise. Use it like medicine. And try to laugh a lot. Stories about being apart don’t have to be only the sad ones. There are things to laugh about. Families should laugh together, don’t you think?

“Oh, How We Missed You” Family Experience

PURPOSE: To encourage family members to tell one another how they “missed” each other during this separation.

CONCEPT: Passing information about “being missed” is important information for people to have. Children especially come to believe that they are not missed. It’s a funny thing about being missed, people never get tired of hearing that someone missed them. This is your family’s chance to fill in the empty spaces about being missed.

- 1. Get the family together around a table or in the living room or family room. Be sure everyone has a pen or pencil and paper.**
- 2. Give everyone enough time to think and using the outline on the Worksheet write those things about one another that each of you missed during this separation.**
- 3. The returned from deployment parent will have more work than the others since he/she “missed” everyone. The others really only missed the absent parent!**

“Oh, How We Missed You” Worksheet

In the space below write down the things about the other family members that you missed because of this separation. If you were the one who was away do this for every other member of the family. If you were home, then you only need to do this for the member who was away.