

Identifying Common War Zone Stress Reactions



Following deployment, *most* people experience at least some of the items listed. These things do **NOT** automatically mean someone has PTSD.

- Nightmares and Sleep difficulties
- Frequent Memories or Flashbacks
- Reckless Driving
- Anger and Irritability

- Preoccupied with Safety, Over Protective, Overly Watchful
- Worry and Hyper-vigilance, Guarded
- Increased Drinking, Smoking

- Depression/Numbing
- Withdrawn and sullen most of the time
- Avoidance of people or places

- Returnee may show changes in mood/ behavior, Spouse may also
- More problems at home and work
- More tired or irritable
- Spouse, friends, and co-workers may report problems
- Unable to resolve conflicts with others

www.vtguard.com/famRead/mfcn.htm

Returning to the Home Front: Possible Changes

- Increase in family stress
- Roles have shifted, new friendships have formed
- May feel like “strangers”, distancing is normal at first, it is *not* personal
- Children may be angry or there may be trouble reconnecting with them
- Need for personal space
- May return with increased confidence, worldliness, & greater appreciation for life

Things that help with Reentry

- Become Educated about Reactions that can Occur
- Be patient, take time to become reacquainted
- Take time for the transition/ Go slowly in making adjustments
- Make individual time for spouse and each child
- Family support, re-involve returnee into daily activities
- Become aware of the resources and services available

Reactions May Require Professional Help IF:

- Still experiencing these symptoms more days than not after 6-8 weeks
- Symptoms are interfering with home life or work, unable to perform their duties
- Substance Abuse (alcohol, nicotine, drugs)
- Large changes in mood, behavior
- Suicidal thoughts, gestures, comments
- Threats of harm to self or others
- Arrest/Incarceration
- Assaults/Domestic Violence

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