



LIBERTY BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

MILITARY SERVICE MEMBERS:  
A MANUAL FOR REINTEGRATION AFTER DEPLOYMENT

A Thesis Project Submitted to  
Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary  
In partial fulfillment of the requirements  
For the degree

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY  
CALRA MARIE BARRY

Lynchburg, Virginia

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LIBERTY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

THESIS PROJECT APPROVAL SHEET

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## ABSTRACT

### A RESOURCE FOR PASTORS AND COUNSELORS: MINISTERING TO MILITARY PERSONNEL WHO ARE REINTERGRATING AFTER DEPLOYMENT TO COMBAT ZONES

Carla Marie Barry

Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, 2012

Mentor: Dr. Charlie Davidson

Deployment to Afghanistan for Marines and Sailors stationed in Jacksonville, NC is continual. The transition back to home life can be both difficult and stressful. The purpose of this project is to increase awareness of the dynamics of reintegration of military members and their families after deployment. Based on questionnaires sent to local churches, military families, observations, and journaling the thesis project validated a need for support. The thesis project produced a resource guide teaching pastors stressors associated with reintegration. The summary and conclusion will address behavioral and social changes by group participants.

## DEDICATION

To my husband Willis E. Barry, Sr., who has always been there in almost every phase of my life and in my career endeavors; thank you and I love you for all your support during deployments, being an exceptional military spouse, and for your continual love towards me. To my children Willis E. Barry, Jr., Josie, and Ethan; you are beautiful children and are my inspiration, I love all of you. To my mother Wanda Jones; you instilled the importance of education for me at an early age and have always supported me and listened to me, you always tell me to pray, trust God, and you can accomplish anything you set your mind to. I love you mom.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

D. Min	Doctorate of Ministry
FRO	Family Readiness Officer
M. Div	Masters of Divinity
NIV	New International Version
NKJV	New King James Version
PTSD	Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
OIF	Operation Iraqi Freedom
OND	Operation New Dawn
TBI	Traumatic Brain Injury

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## INTRODUCTION

Deployment for Marines and Sailors at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina to Afghanistan and other combat zones is continual. The transition back to home life can be both difficult and stressful. After deployment to combat-zones, returning soldiers and marines find the local churches lacking reintegration programs. A reintegration program through the local church would be an invaluable tool to these service members and their families. The objective of this thesis is to increase awareness of the dynamics of military members and their reintegration back to their family after deployment. The use of pre-test and post-test will be utilized between local congregations and group participants. The implementation of a military reintegration program to be utilized in the church will be based on questionnaires, interviews, small groups, journaling and observations by a military trained chaplain. The summary conclusions will address behavioral and social changes by group participants, area pastors, and the congregations.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

After deployment a military member returns home. The reunion is filled with joy and happiness for the military member and family left at home. After the reunion reality sets in; all involved will experience issues in the months to follow. Change has occurred during the period of separation. The military member has experienced war and all of the trappings; surrounded by death, in continual danger, suffering isolation, and actually depending on paranoia, all while living out of tents, without sufficient psychological and emotional support, avoiding live fire and demolitions. Meanwhile the stay-behind spouse must find a way to continue living. They work, pay bills, and feel guilt for any enjoyment they experience. They strive to appear “normal” while suffering isolation, emotionally deprived of their loved, and suspended between hope for their loved one to be a live while grieving their loss in day-to-day life.

These individuals find ways to cope without one another. Emotional and psychological barriers are built, new routines are created to compensate for the absence of the other, and the need for fierce independence arises. These are natural occurrences which develop to protect themselves from further harm and ensure emotional and psychological survival through this enduring hardship. When these individuals are brought back together, however, these very mechanisms which protect them now work against them as a couple.

The closeness once shared by the couple, prior to deployment, has been replaced with two individuals who do not know how to reconnect. Any couple who has marital issues needs to reconnect, but this issue goes deeper for deployed service members. Couples facing traditional marriage issues have been present for changes in routines, methods, and thought processes. Returning service members have not been present to witness changes. This can cause them to

feel left behind and disoriented while causing the spouse irritation at having to explain every nuance, every thought process, or otherwise justify the decisions they made in the absence of the service member. The adjustment process upon return of the service member often leads to stress, marital dysfunction, family separation, misunderstandings, and divorce.

To complicate matters, the service member and spouse may have undergone spiritual changes while separated. Seeing death, war, and the effects each on fellow service members and local populaces can either drive the individual closer or further from their spirituality. The spouse may have been similarly adjusted during their period of grief, isolation, and need. These two people may not have been pushed in the same direction. Individually and as a couple they need spiritual counseling. Unfortunately there are not many churches with a program to assist service members post-deployment to reintegrate back to their families.

Providing those in ministry with the necessary resources to help families who are having difficulty reintegrating is important. The project will strengthen the congregations of the local church and enable them to reach out and meet the spiritual needs of their military members, especially those in uniform who are a part of the congregation. A church can be more effective in their outreach programs if they are given effective tools and processes for ministering military families.

This thesis will enable churches to assist and guide military members and their families through this process in order to have a smooth transition from the war zone to the home front; from isolation to wholeness. This thesis will validate a need for a manual to assist families with reintegration post-deployment to be utilized by both the members of the military and local churches. Lastly, it will give churches a resource to better facilitate a military reintegration

program within their church and to be able to effectively minister to service members and their families.

### STATEMENT OF LIMITATIONS

There are limitations the research will address as it relates to the thesis project. The first limitation is the data from the questionnaires only from Marines and Marine Corp spouses and did not include any other data from the other service branches. The questionnaire flyers were mainly distributed to multicultural and African-American Churches within the research area. The actual ministry model was not tested on military families the model was only taught to pastors within the research area. There were aspects of research that dealt with children but in the actual ministry model children were not included in the field experience; there was not quantitative data collected on children. Lastly, the effectiveness of the reintegration model and the results of its implementation in the local churches and to the military community will not be included due to time constraints. These results will be included at a later time.

### THEORETICAL BASIS FOR THESIS

The ministry of pastoral care is based theologically on the Christian affirmation the God created humankind for relationship with God and with God's other creatures<sup>1</sup>. Then God

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<sup>1</sup> John Patton, Pastoral Care: An essential guide . Abingdon Press, Nashville, 2005 page 9.



continues in relationship with humankind by remembering and hearing his people. Thus, our human caring is based on God's care and we care for others because God cares for us. John Patton states, "Pastoral care is the action of a community of faith that celebrates God's care by hearing and remembering those who are in some way cut off from the faith community"<sup>2</sup>. This is true for the military service member when they deploy, sometimes for an extended period of time, are cut off from their faith community. This is one of the reasons why faith communities can continue to pray and offer support as actions for service members, during deployment and when they return home.

The image of pastoral care is often associated with that image of a shepherd. This image of a shepherd was the basis of the ministry model. It is the pastor or chaplain who is the leader of the congregation of people, military or civilian, and has the responsibility for those entrusted in their care; especially those separated from others who are described as lost sheep. An example is found in Luke 15, "And he spake this parable unto them saying, What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost (Luke 15:3-6 [NKJV])."<sup>3</sup>

The role of the pastor includes preaching, teaching, and other functions such as caring for those who are separated from their community, the lost sheep. The clergy member is responsible for bringing the separated person back to the community; an environment of mutual caring,

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>3</sup> Luke 15:3-6.

nurturing, and support. According to John Patton, pastoral care is often an interruptive ministry because it is something that interrupts the main responsibilities that engage the pastor<sup>4</sup>. Often times when a service member has returned from the war zone and needs pastoral care the care they receive is not that effective due to disruptions caused by the other responsibilities of the pastor. This can leave the service member with a misunderstanding that this particular faith community does not care for their needs after deployment.

The bible clearly describes that the pastor is to act as a shepherd finding time to care for that one lost even if this means putting a hold on things for the whole group. Thus, an aspect of pastoral care in the context of the church is balancing caring for the separated and caring for the ones who are not considered lost. This is the basis for ministering to service members who come back from a deployment to war zone and come back to their families, and church community.

Anton Boisen, the father of clinical pastoral education, believed that a major source of theological understanding lay in the experience of loneliness, particularly those who fall into the category of forsaken and forgotten by church and society. The positive aspect of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) is it affirms the humanness of the separated ones; those trapped in loneliness, confusion, and powerlessness. CPE also affirms the power of human relationships to reach out and validate their experience. Thus, the pastor has to learn how to hear and respond to those in pain that were separated from the community of faith.

During post-deployment a service members deal with feelings of loneliness, isolation, and grief. During those times ordained clergy are called to reach out and affirm their experience. John Patton states, "Theologically, a pastor is not called to care for persons by solving their problems. He or she is called to recognize and communicate, even in the most difficult

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<sup>4</sup> John Patton, *An essential guide* . Abingdon Press, Nashville, 2005 page 9.

circumstances, what a person really is”<sup>5</sup>. This is the basis for the ministry project because it offers tools to ordained clergy on how to care for persons without solving their problems. One aspect that is it provided not only theological basis for pastoral care but also provided practical application.

An aspect that was used for this ministry model is one of pastoral wisdom. The wisdom in ministry begins in action, in doing ministry, the best one knows how, and by developing the most effective wisdom for pastoral care. This requires a particular type of experience<sup>6</sup>. The wisdom for caring emerges from bringing together three things: actually doing pastoral care; sharing what has happened in that in that ministry in the community of ministers, and reflecting on the meaning of those pastoral events<sup>7</sup>.

A major contributor to modern pastoral care was psychologist Paul Pruyer, who also understood pastoral wisdom. He put together relationship and meaning together calling it “transformational knowledge”. The knowledge that is transformational to this psychologist does not come from theories but from practical engagements that is intended to produce change in a person to where help is being offered. This was the basis of this ministry model of a change<sup>8</sup>.

There are examples of pastoral care in the Old Testament and in the New Testament, but in history pastoral care can be found in the early church. For example, the Fathers, early Councils, and the monks focus of this section in the Middle Ages and the pastoral care impact on the friars. On 17 November 1206 there was an urgent need for renewal within the Catholic Church. This was articulated in a letter by Pope Innocent III, in which he called for reliable men whose lives

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 16.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 20

would mirror Jesus Christ's poverty to the poor<sup>9</sup>. The context of his plea was supposed to be against heresy in the south of France, but it had broader implications. It was two Saints, Dominic and Francis, that responded to the call and proclaimed the gospel. This call took the two Saints into urban communities and they regarded themselves as orders sent to help those in need of salvation. They were not like the secular clergy who ministered within a particular parish or a specific geographical area, friars worked within a broader perspective<sup>10</sup>. A friar was one who had a pastoral mandate which was global and observed the whole earth as their cell and the ocean as their cloister<sup>11</sup>. Members of this international order were sent from one province or country to another for the exercise of a particular ministry. Their pastoral ministries were schools they established.

## STATEMENT OF METHODOLOGY

Research for the project will consist of reading books, magazines, and research and development from journals through the Veteran Affairs (VA): Veterans Health Administration (VHA). All research will relate to the proposed topic.

An aspect of research is the development of questionnaires that will be mailed to Navy Chaplains, service members, dependents, and church leaders from the research area. The questionnaire will focus on post-deployment reintegration and the specific ministry programs

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<sup>9</sup> John B. Cobb Jr., *Theology and Pastoral Care*. Philadelphia Fortress Press, 1977, page 126.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 126.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 126.

offered by churches within the research area. The results from the questionnaires will be included in the thesis.

Another aspect of research will be data analysis. The data collected from research, surveys, and questionnaires will be analyzed to assist in the development of a ministry model of reintegration for the military members and their families. Data comparisons of the outcomes of this model for before and after individuals have participated in a reintegration program. Lastly, this project will review the issues that affect service members and their families and discuss the similarities and differences between the secular and the church-based approaches to reintegration after the service member returns from deployment. The research for support groups and resources from Christian organizations and secular organizations will be addressed.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Several research studies that focus on topics that affect the military service members, their families, and the effects of deployment. The following themes will be discussed as an aspect of this review of literature is the cycle of deployment, psychological effects of deployment on children, stressors during deployment, coping strategies, and reintegration after deployment. The review of Scriptures will also be included in the review of literature.

1. “The Emotional Cycle of Deployment” by Lieutenant Colonel Simon Pinus, Robert House, and Joseph Christenson<sup>12</sup>. This article discusses the emotional cycle of extended

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<sup>12</sup> Pincus, Simon H. LTC, Robert LTC House, and Lawrence E. Alder. "Operation Military." The Emotional Cycle of Deployment: A Military Family Perspective <http://www.hooah4health.com/deployment/familymatters/emotionalcycle.htm> (accessed April 24, 2012) .

deployments. These stages are: pre-deployment, deployment, sustainment, re-deployment, and post-deployment<sup>13</sup>. The emotional challenges for each stage is reviewed and discussed. The researchers conclude that promotion of understanding these stages can help to avert crises and minimizes the need for intervention or mental health counseling. This research does not discuss programs to assist service members and their families with reintegration.

2. “Souls Under Siege,” by Bridget C. Cantrell<sup>14</sup>. This book discusses the effects of multiple deployments on service members and offers methods by which troops can sustain themselves. The author validates that multiple deployments causes wear and tear on service members and their families. This research is beneficial as many service members experience constant re-deployments due to the multiple combat zones current around the world. This acts as a tool for understanding and does not discuss a reintegration program.

3. “Stressors Afflicting Families During Military Deployment,” by Gina M. Di Nola<sup>15</sup>. This article discusses the many stressors that affect families during deployment. Di Nola argues that deployments to combat zones are stressful for military families. The author explores the program the United States (U.S.) Army utilizes to address the needs of family members and addresses specific stressors they and service members experience while separated. The three categories of stressors described in the article are emotional, deployment related, and general life events. This acts as a tool for understanding and does not discuss a reintegration program.

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 1.

<sup>14</sup> Bridget C. Cantrell. *Souls Under Siege: The Effects of Multiple Troop Deployments and How to Weather the Storm*. Bellingham Washington, Hearts Toward Home International, 2009.

<sup>15</sup> Gina M Di Nola. Stressors Afflicting Families During Military Deployment. *Military Medicine*; May 2008; 173, 5; Retrieved on June 29 2012 from ProQuest Health and Medical Complete pg. V.

4. “Families OverComing Under Stress”, or FOCUS, by Patricia Lester<sup>16</sup>. This article describes how in recent years military families have seen an increase in childhood anxiety, parental distress, and marital discord. The author argues the success of the FOCUS program and the preventive interventions used to meet the needs of military families is one way these issues can be addressed. The FOCUS program concentrates on combat operational stress associated with combat zone deployment. This article does not address potential spiritual crisis within those involved. This acts as a tool for understanding and does not discuss a spiritual-based reintegration program.

5. “The Psychosocial Effects of Deployment on Military Children,” by Eric Flake, Beth Davis, Patti Johnson, and Laura Middleton<sup>17</sup>. This article establishes a psychosocial report of school children during parental deployment. The researchers focused on the stay-behind spouses of deployed Army service members with children aged five to twelve years. The research identified one-third of military children at “high risk” for psychosocial problems. One predictor was that the children were having issues during wartime deployment parenting stress. Lastly, the study found that military, family, and community support helps to mitigate family stress during periods of deployment. This supports the need for a reintegration program and does not discuss spiritual-based support.

6. “Children on the Home Front,” by Anita Chandra, Sandraluz Lara-Cinisomo, Lisa H. Jaycox, Terri Tanielian, Rachael M. Burns, Teague Ruder, and Bing Han<sup>18</sup>. This article

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<sup>16</sup> Froma Walsh. *Strengthening Family Resilience*. Guilford Press, New York, 2006.

<sup>17</sup> Eric M. Flake, Beth Ellen Davis, Patti L. Johnson, and Laura Middleton. *The Psychosocial Effects of Deployment on Military Children*. *J Dev Behav Pediatr* 30:271-278, 2009. Retrieved on April 1, 2012 from: [www.jbdp.org](http://www.jbdp.org).

<sup>18</sup> Anita Chandra, Sandraluz Lara-Cinisomo, Lisa H. Jaycox, Terri Tanielian, Rachael M. Burns, Teague Ruder, and Bing Han. *Children on the Homefront: The Experience of Children From Military Families*. *Pediatrics*

examines how children of deployed service members across social, emotional, and academic realms. The research includes the effect of varied lengths of deployment and branch of military. The study found that families that experienced more total months of parental deployment benefit from targeted support to deal with stressors. This supports the need for a reintegration program and does not discuss spiritual-based support.

7. “Military Youth and Deployment Cycle,” by Christianne Esposito-Smythers<sup>19</sup>. This article discusses the stressors associated with the deployment cycle for stay-behind spouses and children. These stressors include depression, anxiety, and behavior problems in children. The researcher describes that the emotional health of family members affect the service member and reintegration periods. This supports the need for a reintegration program and does not discuss spiritual-based support.

8. “Once a Warrior Always a Warrior” by Charles Hoge<sup>20</sup>. This book provides knowledge on what it means for the service member to transition from combat zone to home. The book addresses combat stress and focuses on the transition and readjustment time frame. The author explains the time period that spans from getting off the plane, to completing the reintegration process with focus on the first three months after deployment. This supports the need for a reintegration program and does not discuss spiritual-based support.

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Official Journal of The American Academy of Pediatrics 2010;125;16. Retrieved on March 29, 2012 from <http://pediatrics.aapublications.org/content/125/1/16.full.html>.

<sup>19</sup> Christianne Esposito-Smythers. Military Youth and the Deployment Cycle: Emotional Health Consequences and Recommendations for Intervention. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 2011 Vol. 25, No. 4, 497-507.

<sup>20</sup> Hoge, Charles W. *Once A Warrior Always A Warrior: Navigating the Transition from Combat to Home Including Combat Stress, PTSD, and mTBI*. Guilford: Globe Pequot Press, 2010.



9. “After the War Zone: A Practical Guide for Returning Troops and Their Families,” by Matthew Friedman and Laurie Slone<sup>21</sup>. This book discusses what troops experience during deployment at back at the home front. The authors discuss the after-effects of war and offer strategies for reintegration to daily life. The book offers resources and recommendations in regards to reconnecting with spouses and families. This acts as a resource and does not discuss spiritual-based support.

10. “Courage After Fire,” by Keith Armstrong, Suzanne Best, and Paula Domenici<sup>22</sup>. This book offers a comprehensive guide to better understand the effects of deployment and combat duty. It discusses how to deal with issues that include post traumatic stress symptoms, anxiety, and depression. This acts as a resource and does not discuss spiritual-based support.

11. “Counseling Military Families,” by Lynn Hall<sup>23</sup>. This book provides research data on how many people have deployed and gives a break down between active duty and reservist service members. The book provides treatment models and recommendations for interventions tailored to military families. This acts as a resource and does not discuss spiritual-based support.

12. “Strengthening Family Resilience,” by Froma Walsh<sup>24</sup>. This book provides information for family resilience and describes the processes in resilience for the reader to facilitate. This acts as a resource and does not discuss spiritual-based support.

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<sup>21</sup> Laurie B. Slone, Matthew J. Friedman. *After the War Zone: Practical Guide for Returning Troops and Their Families*. Philadelphia De Capo Press, 2008.

<sup>22</sup> Keith Armstrong, Suzanne Best, and Paula Domenici. *Courage After Fire*. Ulysses Press, Berkeley, CA, 2006.

<sup>23</sup> Lynn Hall. *Counseling Military Families: What Health Professionals Need to Know*. New York: Routledge, 2008.

<sup>24</sup> Froma Walsh. *Strengthening Family Resilience*. Guilford Press, New York, 2006.

13. “Restoring Balance Through Reintegration,” by Lieutenant Colonel Michael Morrissey<sup>25</sup>. This article provides recommendations and guidance for restoring balance after deployment. This author argues that for a successful reintegration conditions have to be set at the beginning upon the service member learning of their deployment. This acts as a resource and does not discuss spiritual-based support.

14. “Welcoming Them Home,” by Ursula Bowling and Michelle Sherman<sup>26</sup>. This article outlines the tasks of reintegration. Those tasks are redefining roles, expectations, managing strong emotions, and constriction and creating intimacy in relationships. This acts as a resource and does not discuss spiritual-based reintegration.

15. “The Family Reunited: Helping Kids With Special Needs Cope With Reintegration,” by Ian Shaffer<sup>27</sup>. The article discusses deployment and the effects it has on children. It gives steps that parents can take to lessen the effects of the deployment on children. The article covers possible behaviors and suggests responses during pre-deployment and when the service member returns. This acts as a resource and does not discuss spiritual-based support.

16. “And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning Made Them Male and Female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man separate”

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<sup>25</sup> Morrissey, Michael T. "Restoring Balance Through Reintegration." January-February 2010. <http://www.army.mil/firesbulletin/> (accessed March 27, 2012).

<sup>26</sup> Ursula B. Bowling and Michelle D. Sherman. Welcoming Them Home: Supporting Service Members and Their Families in Navigating the Tasks of Reintegration. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice* 2008, Vol. 39, No. 4, 451-458.

<sup>27</sup> Ian Shaffer. The Family Reunited: Helping Kids with Special Needs Cope with Reintegration. *EP Magazine* October 2008 retrieved on April 1, 2012 from [EP Magazine/www.epartent.com](http://www.epartent.com).

(Matthew 19:4-6 [NKJV])<sup>28</sup>. The word of God defines joining (marriage) as a male and a female who are joined together. The two are joined together and are made into one flesh and no man shall separate what God has joined. Service members deploy by the orders of a man but because of the deployment this should not separate what God has joined and the two have to remember that they are one flesh in the eyes of God. This passage is the foundation of marriage and is utilized as such to define marriage within the thesis.

17. “A man’s heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps” (Proverbs 16:9[NKJV])<sup>29</sup>. This passage is an encouragement passage and is a passage that can be utilized for pastoral care when a service member questions their call to serve. Service members deploy they have to remember that even though a human has directed them to the warzone it is God who has established where they go.

18. “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:6-7 [NKJV])<sup>30</sup>. This bible passages establishes that mankind is not to be worry, no matter what the situation is, to be thankful heart, and to pray; this is how peace is achieved. Deployed service members feel a lack of peace for varied reasons ranging from the act of separation to orders they must fulfill in the line of duty. This scripture establishes the significance of prayer in regaining peace within this spiritual-based reintegration model.

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

19. “The man who hates and divorces his wife,” says the Lord, the God of Israel, “does violence to the one he should protect,” says the Lord Almighty” (Malachi 2:16[NIV])<sup>31</sup>. Military families who undergo multiple or extended deployments are at risk of divorce. The purpose of this scripture is to support marital success, or staying together, instead of utilizing divorce as a way of escape.

20. “He heals the broken hearted and binds up their wounds” (Psalm 147:3[NIV])<sup>32</sup>. This passage is an encouraging promise the God heals all wounds. During and after deployment service members and their families may suffer a variety of spiritual, emotional, mental, and/or physical pains ranging from grief and PTSD to multiple amputations and paralysis. This passage is a source of hope and reminder that continuous faith has its rewards. This scripture will be utilized as a coping mechanism in the ministry project.

21. “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, Because the Lord has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified” (Isaiah 61:1-3 [NKJV])<sup>33</sup>. Ordained clergy have a similar call to Isaiah in these passages. These passages discuss comforting those who mourn and preaching good news to the poor which are aspects of

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

pastoral care. These passages also support the need of the clergy to guide those in need back to God.

22. “So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. All who rage against you will surely be ashamed and disgraced; those who oppose you will be as nothing and perish. Though you search for your enemies, you will not find them. Those who wage war against you will be as nothing at all. For I am the Lord your God who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you” (Isaiah 41:10-13 [NIV])<sup>34</sup>. In these passages it says not to fear because God is going to be with them giving them strength and taking care of their enemies. Many service members experience spiritual crisis over the very act of going to a combat zone. This is due to the belief that God will reject them based on following their presence there and what the individual may have to do to survive and return home. These passages remind service members that God is with them they do not need to fear. This passage is a scriptural resource for the ministry model.

22. “Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need” (Hebrews 4:16 [NIV])<sup>35</sup>. This passage gives assurance that we can approach God with our concerns and cares. This passage is reminds service members that they are never removed from God’s care; they are never too small, too insignificant, or too damaged to receive His attention.

23. “Now the one who has fashioned us for this very purpose is God, who has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come. Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. For we live by

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

faith, not by sight. We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord” (2 Corinthians 5:7-8 [NIV])<sup>36</sup>. This passage gives the assurance that those who have died are with the Lord. What we see, the physical body, is just a shell and the invisible, the soul, has gone on.

24. “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future” (Jeremiah 29:11 [NIV])<sup>37</sup>. This passage offers hope directly and indirectly. Directly it literally states to have hope and that hope is planned. Indirectly it offers hope in the form of a plan and a future. This can support service members and their families through the reintegration process.

25. “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word” (Ephesians 5:25-26[NKJV])<sup>38</sup>. The scriptures clearly state that the husband is to love his wife just as Christ loved the church. The love that Christ gives his people is agape love which is self-giving love. He demonstrated this love through his death on the cross. This is the magnitude of his love for us. This same type of love is to be displayed by husbands to their wives. This is a positive way a couple moves toward reintegration.

26. “So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church” (Ephesians 5:28-29[NKJV])<sup>39</sup>. This Scripture passage describes specifically how the husband is to their own wife just like they love their own body. The passage

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

tells the reader exactly how and that is by nourishing and cherishing the body. So the husband is to nourish and cherish his wife. The scripture points back to the example of how the Lord loves the church. This passage supports that way a wife is to be treated in a marriage and this example of how she is to be treated assists the couple in reintegration.

27. “Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered” (1 Peter 3:7 [NKJV])<sup>40</sup>. The Bible clearly states that husbands who are married are to give honor to their wife because they are weaker. It also says that both the man and wife are heirs together of grace of life. Lastly, if a husband does not honor their wife then this can hinder his prayers. This is significant because an aspect of the ministry model is prayer and if a husband is praying about a situation and not getting direction his prayers could be hindered and it could be a result of how he is treating his wife.

28. “Do not let your adornment be merely outward arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God” (1 Peter 3:3-4 [NKJV])<sup>41</sup>. This scripture passage clearly states that a woman is not to solely focus on her outward beauty. But what is precious in God’s sight is her inward beauty which should be that of a gentle and quiet spirit. In pastoral counseling and an aspect of the ministry model there are occasions when clergy may come experience this in the context of a counseling session this scripture is an example of identifying scripture to the counselee for a changed perspective.

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

29. “She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come. She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue. She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness” (Proverbs 31:25-27 [NIV])<sup>42</sup>. The bible clearly gives instruction on how a woman is to conduct her days and not become idle. This can happen to a military spouse if they are not careful during a deployment. This scripture gives guidance on how a military spouse can conduct her days during the deployment, and during the day to day activities of reintegration.

30. “A wife of noble character is her husband’s crown, but a disgraceful wife is like decay in his bones” (Proverbs 12:4 [NIV])<sup>43</sup>. The bible clearly states that a wife’s character is important. But a wife who is disgraceful is like a person who brings his life down. Having such a character is not Godly, and makes it difficult for a husband to reintegrate back to society after deployment and puts a strain on the marriage.

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.



## CHAPTER 1

This chapter defines the stages of the emotional cycle of deployment. The chapter divides these stages into two sections which are stressors, normalization and aspects of these stressors are discussed at length. Additionally, the chapter provides a discussion of why post-deployment normalization does not work. This analysis provides a clear understanding of the emotional cycle of deployment and demonstrates the need for this model provided in this thesis.

### EMOTIONAL CYCLE OF DEPLOYMENT

There are three stages that characterize the emotional cycle of deployment: pre-deployment, deployment, and post-deployment. Each of these stages is divided into two sections: a stressor portion and a normalization portion. The stressor portion of each stage is defined by undergoing changes, such as news of deployment. The normalization portion of each stage is defined by enduring the stressor, developing coping mechanisms, and the development of new routines. Since October 2001, one month after the 9/11 attacks, approximately 1.7 million American service members have been deployed to support Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF)

and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) respectfully<sup>1</sup>. 1.7 million Service Members and their families have gone through the stages of this emotional cycle without comprehension of them and many without the necessary coping skills or the community support. With knowledge or support many of these marriages will end in divorce. In addition, the service member who has gone through this cycle is at higher risk of developing depression, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), anxiety, and moral injury. Of the 1.7 million service members who went through the emotional cycle 14% experienced depression, 25% developed PTSD, and 35% developed other mental health risks or concerns<sup>2</sup>.

## PRE-DEPLOYMENT

The first stage of the emotional cycle of deployment is the pre-deployment stage. This is defined as the pre-deployment stage. The pre-deployment stage begins with the news of potential deployment, through the news of actual deployment and lasts until the actual physical separation of the service member from their community area.

The initiating stress point for the stressor portion of this phase begins when the unit is placed on alert. The status of alert indicates that a unit can be deployed within a certain amount of hours which varies by the type of unit. During this alert period service members are told to “act as if,” meaning that they are required to remain in a state of readiness until the news of

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<sup>1</sup> Hosek, James R. How is Deployment to Iraq and Afghanistan Affecting US Serve Members and Their Families? Retrieved from [www.rand.org](http://www.rand.org) on May 6, 20, 2012 page 13.

<sup>2</sup> Tanielin, T and L. Jaycox. Invisible wounds of war: Psychological and cognitive injuries and their consequences, and services to assist recovery.” 2008, 8.

deployment is given. When the actual deployment notice arrives it can be anywhere between literal hours to a couple months until they leave United States soil.

During the stressor portion many changes occur including mental/emotional, physical, and social changes. Mental and emotional changes include thoughts of death, beginning stages of grief, anticipation, and anxiety. Physical changes include additional duty hours in preparation for deployment (drill, inventory, et cetera), the physical act of signing legal documents (last will and testament, power of attorney, organ donation cards, and medical right to live. Social changes include isolation from non-essential people as the family unit strives to spend time together, from individuals who cannot understand the stress and issues involved in the situation, and from those who may add additional drama to the situation. While the physical and social situations are impactful, they are quick to resolve, relatively speaking.

The first type of stress in this stage is preparation stress. Preparation stress is used by the unit to get the service member ready for deployment and also involves stressors. One example of preparation stress is noted by a service member interview with Anne Cagle, “in the weeks leading up to deployment, workdays were often extended to accommodate additional training exercises and maintenance jobs that needed to be accomplished before the unit could leave”<sup>3</sup>. For example, a pilot may have required flight hours to qualify for service, these hours are completed during this pre-deployment phase; tanks, artillery, and aircraft are given maintenance during this pre-deployment phase.

Although this advance work was necessary, the hectic work pace created increases stress levels and removes service members from their families for extended periods of time. Increased work pace also interferes with personal preparations for service members; not only does it impact

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<sup>3</sup> Cagle, Anne. How to survive a spouse military deployment retrieved May 6, 2012 from [www.ehow.com](http://www.ehow.com), page 1

time with the family unit, the service member must still find time to set his/her personal affairs in order. A sailor quotes: “In the Navy, you’re so busy in the job the last two to three months before you go on deployment you work 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. every day. I was an admin officer and was really involved with everyone. I had to make sure they had their finances in order so they could go to sea without problems”<sup>4</sup>. Finances are just one aspect of preparation; the service member is also required to complete a power of attorney to enable the stay-behind spouse to attend to matters in their absence. These and other preparations make the pre-deployment phase a stressful one for service members and their families.

Slone and Friedman further support the stressors associated in the pre-deployment stage of the emotional cycle of deployment<sup>5</sup>:

1. Day to day aspects of managing household maintenance
2. All routine tasks performed throughout the week
3. Children’s daily routines
4. Discipline for children
5. How do reservist to handle stress from the absence from your civilian job
6. Pet care
7. Contingency plans for solving household problems that might arise or taking care of family members when things that is unexpected occur.
8. Planning out how seasonal tasks will be done (Who will shovel the snow or take out the car to the garage for a tune-up?)

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 1

<sup>5</sup> Friedman, Matthew, MD, PhD and Laurie B. Slone, PhD. *After the War Zone: A Practical Guide for Returning Troops and Their Families*. Philadelphia: Da Capo Press, 2008 page 4.

9. Planning out bills and finances
10. Contingency plans for medical emergencies (Do you need to change your emergency contact on your medical forms?)
11. Educational needs (Do you need to pay tuitions or fill out financial forms?)
12. Legal issues (Have you updated your wills? Have you designated powers of attorney or considered signing a health care proxy in case one of you is injured?)

In the pre-deployment stage and as described in the above list families have stressors associated with preparation stress. The families have questions such as what life is life going to be like while the service member is deployed. This can cause arguments within the household because of the various emotions involved. The authors, Pincus, House, Christenson, and Alder further support these emotions in the pre-deployment stage and state the following<sup>6</sup>:

*A common occurrence, just prior to deployment, is for soldiers and their spouses to have a significant argument. For couples with a long history, this argument is readily attributed to the ebb-and-flow of marital life and therefore not taken too seriously. For younger couples, especially those experiencing an extended separation for the first time, such an argument can take on “catastrophic” proportions. Fears that the relationship is over can lead to tremendous anxiety for both soldier and spouse. In retrospect, these arguments are most likely caused by stress of the pending separation. From a psychological perspective it is easier to be angry than confront the pain and loss of saying goodbye for six months or more.*

Thus, in the pre-deployment stage arguments occur and the military couple can take these arguments seriously which leads to anxiety and, if not dealt with, could lead to spousal separation or divorce.

In this stage a military couple questions God. They question God with the “Why” question. Why are you sending me (service member) to the war zone and separating me from my family? For the military spouse the question of why does my spouse have to go? The couple gets so

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 8.

caught up in focusing on all the problems, and stressors around that they do not make prayer a priority or they do not turn to Scriptures for support. The Bible says to pray without ceasing<sup>7</sup>. The military couple who is not in God's presence praying and, because of the magnitude of problems they face all at once, not turning to scripture leads the couple to disagreements and can further be attributed to the couple becoming spiritually weak. Becoming spiritually weak is difficult for the military couple to have faith in God. This is the time spiritually that the couples experience arguments, questioning God, prayer, and issues with their faith. All these experiences are a part of the pre-deployment stage of the emotional cycle of deployment.

Normalization of the pre-deployment phase includes establishing routines that take into account the extended work day of the service member; diminished communication is accepted as common place and increased levels of stress as the new "normal". The end of the phase is indicated in one of two ways: 1) the unit is placed on stand down allowing the service member and family to return to previous routines; or 2) the receiving of orders to depart. The latter of these renews the stages of grief and intensifies stress until deployment.

## DEPLOYMENT

The next stage of the emotional cycle of deployment is the deployment stage. The deployment stage last the length of the deployment which begins at two points: 1) for the service member it begins when leaving U.S. soil; 2) for the family it begins when the service member leaves the home for the last time. This period lasts until the return to the point of departure. As with the previous stage, during the stressor portion many changes occur including

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<sup>7</sup> 1Thessalonians 5:17 KJV

mental/emotional, physical, and social changes. Mental and emotional changes include thoughts of death, continuation in stages of grief, anxiety, and coping with many changes. Physical changes include physical changes and changes in routine. Social changes include isolation continued isolation from non-essential people, creation of new bonds, and sensitivity regarding deployment.

When the deployment begins emotions are felt on both sides one side is the family the other is the service member; emotions include anxiety, worries, and, mostly, anger. Military families experience anger for many different reasons and oftentimes the family members have difficulty establishing why they are angered. Slone and Friedman support this view and describe anger as being a mask for other emotions due to it being readily available<sup>8</sup>. Gary Chapman describes anger as an emotion that arises whenever an individual encounters a perceived wrong; the emotional, physiological, and cognitive dimensions of anger easily accessible in an individual's experience when a new or repeated injustice is encountered<sup>9</sup>. Chapman also explains that anger is a part of how we are made in God's image. Many Christians are taught not to have anger towards anyone as it is, in and of itself, a sin. Chapman opines that anger is not bad but what is done with anger can lead to sin.

Anger is a natural human emotion and is the result of a perceived negative experience or encounter with another person, situation, or idea. Understanding and identifying this emotion allows individuals to make an active choice between holding onto to anger or taking actions of love. Actions of love result in making the life of the service member and the family member

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<sup>8</sup> Friedman, Matthew, MD, PhD and Laurie B. Slone, PhD. *After the War Zone: A Practical Guide for Returning Troops and Their Families*. Philadelphia: Da Capo Press, 2008 page 4

<sup>9</sup> Chapman, Gary. *Anger: Handling a Powerful Emotion in A Healthy Way*. Chicago: Northfield Publishing, 2007, 16.

easier due to fewer backlashes and more positive due to the release of negative thoughts.

Adequate skills to process this anger is essential for military families. An example of possessing adequate skills is pausing before being reactionary to a situation and asking these two questions: 1) is my response I am about to give positive; and 2) is my response loving<sup>10</sup>? Applying what the apostle Paul stated in Ephesians 4:26, “In your anger do not sin: Don’t let the sun go down while you are still angry”<sup>11</sup>. Anger may be a valid emotion but as men and women of God it is what we do with our anger to ensure we do not sin. The reality is that the service member or stay-behind spouse in this stage who does not process their anger properly can easily sin.

Anger may occur with the government or the military for the deployment separation and putting the service member in danger. Friedman and Slone state the family of combat zone service member’s family may hold this type of anger for placing their loved one in danger. They further opine that this type of anger may be misplaced and focused on their everyday life. This is similar to the process of grieving where the living are angered with the dead for abandonment in small and large ways. For example, the stay-behind spouse may feel that the service member is skipping out on all the household responsibilities which results in anger<sup>12</sup>.

The normalization phase begins as routines are developed. This is the phase when both the service member and the stay-behind spouse say, “I can make it through this.” This phase is marked by both becoming more comfortable with separation by adjusting to day-to-day activities in their location. Some individuals have a difficult time sustaining their selves because many of them do not reach out for support or do not know where to find support. The emotions that

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 18.

<sup>11</sup> Ephesians 4:26 [NIV].

<sup>12</sup> Friedman, Matthew, MD, PhD and Laurie B. Slone, PhD. *After the War Zone: A Practical Guide for Returning Troops and Their Families*. Philadelphia: Da Capo Press, 2008 8-9.



characterize this portion of the cycle of deployment are persistent concern, worry, and loneliness. During this time in the emotional cycle of deployment positive sustainment only happens if the spouse or the service member reaches out to a local church or specialized support group. These emotions, if not handled properly, can leave the military service member and their family dealing with emotions of persistent concern, worry, and loneliness by themselves.

An additional complication in the situation is the involvement of children. Children are a blessing from God<sup>13</sup>. While each individual is unique the general behavior of a stressed child causes either an increase in dependency issues or acting out in an undesired manner. In addition to the stress already being experienced by the stay-behind spouse, the addition of these undesired behaviors can elevate stress beyond their ability to cope. Pincus, House, Christenson, and Alder demonstrate the undesired behavior in a chart detailing possible negative changes or a predictable response in children resulting from deployment; examples include<sup>14</sup>:

1. Infants may refuse to eat or fuss when put to nap
2. Toddlers cry and have tantrums
3. Pre-school age have potty accidents,
4. School age are clingy, whines, have body aches, and self-isolation, and
5. Teenagers use drugs

The stay-behind spouse will be in need of extra support during this period as they develop additional coping mechanisms and parenting skills. The child will also need additional support and nurturing during this period.

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<sup>13</sup> Psalm 127:3 [NLT]

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 9.

Physical trauma is another consideration of this stage which can lead to an additional stressor phase. Physical trauma can be experienced by either the service member or the stay-behind spouse. The service member may experience physical trauma via combat zone activities; explosions, gunshot, fire, and/or stabbing. This can be further complicated through the emotional trauma associated with survivor's guilt when a brother or sister-at-arms predeceases the service member. The stay-behind spouse can experience similar trauma through the car accidents, burglaries, house fire, and the death of relatives.

During this period when either party faces trauma they possess limited skills with which to problem solve and cope with emotions. As the couple is separated during this period, the experience is not shared, they do not develop a deeper bond by leaning on each other, and they learn to lean on others, which often widens a breach in the relationship. The service member and stay-behind spouse no longer have a shared perspective of common definition of the traumatic event.

Werdel states that service members can react to trauma on either a global or situational level<sup>15</sup>. The global response means a shift in paradigm that is an overall belief about the world and self in regard to justice, fairness, control, and predictability. An example of a commonly accepted global paradigm is "the good die young." This is especially common place idea in combat zones where "bad" are those who hang back and let other be in the line of fire while the "good" are often in the line of fire. A part of being "good" is often interpreted by Christians as actively being Christian.

The situational response is a meaning that is assigned to specific life events. Sometimes, when individuals face trauma, their situational meaning may contradict their global meaning.

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<sup>15</sup> Mary Beth Werdel. Rising on Wreckage: Connections between suffering, spirituality, and growth. Human Development Volume 32 no. 2 Summer 2011 retrieved on September 20, 2012 from [www.regis.edu/hd](http://www.regis.edu/hd), 10.

One example is if an individual who is new to the combat zone believes that Christians are not suppose to die in war suddenly has a brother-at-arms, who is a Christian or “good”, dies in combat causing confusion between the two beliefs. As the mind struggles to understanding the event the individual can experience a shaking of faith, or spiritual trauma. They may question God. In order to cope with the situation, most service members need ministry leaders to assist them by helping them process their situational beliefs and assimilate the information into their global belief<sup>16</sup>. In addition, most service members do not know where to look in the bible to obtain scriptures to help themselves process their own situational belief which effects their spiritual growth in making trauma meaningful.

When an individual experiences trauma and does not process it effectively it can affect their spirituality. It can affect it in two ways: it can either enhance it or it can diminish it. When the experience is a positive, individuals achieve what Drescher and Foy describe as post traumatic growth<sup>17</sup>. Post traumatic growth leads to benefits such as increased resilience in the face of future life challenges, increased meaning and purpose in life, and strengthened capacity to utilize positive coping resources in the midst of crisis. The negative beliefs that may occur are safety, meaningfulness of the world, a negative view of one’s relationship with God, and questioning one’s spiritual identity. When a service member experiences trauma this can lead to the questioning of their spiritual life and also lead to the loss of faith. The experience of being in a combat zone can reduce an individual’s spiritual resources, reduce coping skills, and developing negative perceptions about God.

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>17</sup>Drescher, Kent D. and David W. Foy. When they come home: Posttraumatic Stress, Moral Injury, and Spiritual Consequences for Veterans, *Reflective Practice: Formation and Supervision in Ministry*, page 93. Retrieved on July 8, 2012 from: [http://journals.sfu.ca/rpfs/index.php/rpfs/article/viewFile/36/37\\_](http://journals.sfu.ca/rpfs/index.php/rpfs/article/viewFile/36/37_)

It is important to remember that a chaplain is also a service member and can be affected by their experiences in the same way as other individuals. In combat zones chaplains conduct worship services, dignified transfers, visit hospitals, counsel, and provide the ministry of presence. The chaplain deals with crisis on a daily basis which includes grief, loss, and the threat of eminent death. An article written by Newsweek discusses the stress experienced by chaplains. One Army Chaplain in particular described his experience<sup>18</sup>:

*“Army Chaplain Roger Benimoff heard the IED blast and saw the smoke rising. From his vantage point at a forward-aid station on the morning of June 7, 2005, he peered through a fog of dust as .50-caliber machine-gun fire erupted in the distance. Then the guns went silent. Benimoff helped medics get stretchers ready for the wounded. But when the soldiers of Fox Troop returned to station near Tall Afar, all they had was the bloodied corpse of one of their men. Benimoff began a familiar death ritual. The heat was closing in on 100 degrees; a smell of diesel fumes filled the air. Benimoff gathered the medics around the corpse of their comrade in the shade of an armored personnel carrier. Ignoring the din of rumbling engines and radio chatter, he began to pray in a strong and reassuring voice, quoting Psalm 121: I lift up my eyes to the hills—where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth. He prayed for the soldier's family. He prayed for the medics who had wanted so much to help. He prayed that God would look down upon their small circle and surround them with his love.”*

Chaplain Benimoff experienced trauma in a combat zone but, like other service members, that trauma followed him home and he began to experience loss of faith and spiritual tension. Chaplains from combat zones need assistance in order to continue their work. These chaplains benefit from understanding that pastoral care, combined with Christian religion, is an effective coping mechanism for those who face trauma. Crystal Park states, “Religion may be the most unflinching way to form meaning after instances of trauma”<sup>19</sup>. The aspects of religion that are beneficial to coping are: prayer, religious acceptance from peers, and attending worship services.

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<sup>18</sup> Conant Eve. How Chaplains, Soldiers Keep Faith During War. Newsweek May 7, 2007, 1 retrieved July 22, 2012 from <http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2007/05/06/faith-under-fire.html>.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 10.

Research supports that religion is valid and plays a vital role at helping individuals grow from life stressors and trauma <sup>20</sup>.

Another stressor is moral injury. In combat zones active duty military are confronted with ethical and moral challenges. This is due to the rules of engagement, leadership, and finding meaning in the war. When orders or actions are in conflict with a person's ethical or moral belief they experience a moral injury. According to Litz and Maguen, moral injury is perpetrating, failing to prevent, bearing witness to, or learning about acts that transgress deeply held moral beliefs and expectations<sup>21</sup>. Moral injury manifests symptoms that look like PTSD. The treatments for PTSD are not effective to treat those with a moral injury<sup>22</sup>. Medical professionals are not trained or equipped to treat moral injury and often times not even addressed. The signs that someone has a moral injury are social problems, trust issues, spiritual issues, and psychological symptoms. The difference between PTSD and moral injury is PTSD symptoms are based on fear and moral injuries are based on guilt and shame.

Towards the end of this deployment stage the service member and stay-behind spouse will get a small relief in the news of release from the combat zone deployment. While this is excellent news and can cause elation, the couple is still in the normalization phase as they must continue to maintain the current routines of the deployment stage. There will a minor increase in stressors as each member of the couple prepares for the next stage. For service members this can be preparatory actions such as saying goodbye to brothers and sisters-at-arms, dealing with survivor's guilt for leaving other behind in the combat zone, or a feeling that they lack

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<sup>20</sup> Brett Litz, and Shira Maguen. Moral Injury in Veterans of War. PTSD Research Quarterly Volume 23/NO. 1. ISSN: 1050-1835, page 1.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 1

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 1.

accomplishment for not having “finished” the war, action, or other purpose of combat. For the stay-behind spouse this news of return can add the stressors of family who want to “invade” in order to see the service member, planning a welcoming event, helping children deal with the news, and attempting to make everything look as though nothing went wrong during their loved one’s absence. All of this is to be handled while experiencing their personal mental, emotional, spiritual, and physical adjustments to the news. Part of this stage overlaps the post-deployment stressor phase.

## POST-DEPLOYMENT

The final stage of the emotional cycle of deployment is the post-deployment stage. For the service member, this stage begins when they reach United States soil, back at their military installation. For the stay-behind spouse, this stage begins when they have access to their loved one. The stressor phase of this stage has an interruption due to the onset of elation at the reunion, referred to as the “honeymoon phase.” The stressor phase is then started, stopped, and restarted making it comparatively prolonged. The initial emotional stressor of this stage proceeds the reunion; anticipation.

The service members and the stay-behind spouse anticipate the reunion and the return with the thought process begins prior to leaving the combat zone. The couple both has expectations and anticipations of the reunion and ideas of what life will be like afterwards. As mentioned previous, the stay-behind spouse is stressed with internal and external expectation. The individual, as well as family and friends, may want to throw a celebration for the service

member's return home. The service member may not want a celebration the day they return and may anticipate going home to relax. The couple may also experience anxiety related to seeing each other. They may have concerns about the other recognizing them, if the other has moved beyond them, or if the other will be regretful of the reunion.

When the reunion finally happens and the homecoming is experienced this occasion can be joyous because everyone is happy to see each other. The joyous occasion that leads to this happiness can be defined as the honeymoon period. This period usually ends when reality sets in and the first argument occurs. This sometimes can make the transition more difficult because of lack of understanding of the emotional needs and expectations involved. Slone and Friedman offer the following example of what happens during the honeymoon period troops and family members<sup>23</sup>:

*Stay-behind wife: Before he was deployed, he used to do little things like leave love notes, or send me flowers at work. Now he seems like a completely different person.*

*Deployed husband: I don't understand what the big deal is. Sure, I still love my wife. But flowers don't help keep her and the kids safe! Why is it that no one back here in America seems to get it? They're all just wrapped up in their trivial lives.*

In the honeymoon period it is not uncommon to have apprehensions after the first argument. One argument usually leads to another argument and because the military couples do not have the proper tools to cope, process, all their apprehensions after the first argument. Previous to deployment the couple had techniques and skills for dealing with arguments and issues within the relationship. Separation, however, causes a couple to revert back to a period of courtship when individuals would rather not speak about the reality of a situation thereby allowing it to get worse.

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<sup>23</sup> Friedman, Matthew, MD, PhD and Laurie B. Slone, PhD. *After the War Zone: A Practical Guide for Returning Troops and Their Families*. Philadelphia: Da Capo Press, 2008, 15.

During the time of separation the communication processes that were in place were lost or forgotten. The individual evolution and growth experienced by each did not involve a continuous connection as it did prior to deployment. The service member and spouse are, in many ways, cohabitating strangers with expectations. A lack of situational understanding, communication, and mutual perception can lead to a marital separation or divorce.

As the couple returns to the stressor stage they must redefine their very relationship. The stay-behind spouse has new ways of doing things that do not take in consideration the service member who has not been oriented to the new ideas. The service member may actually miss the way things were done prior to their departure and try to return things to that manner. This friction can lead to fighting that is not escapable without assistance. Both members of the couple may experience a loss of independence as they renegotiate these routines. For months the military couple has been apart because of a deployment and now they are back together in the home and have to rely on each other for support. Either party may not want to give up the sense of independence that was developed during the separation.

As the couple struggles to find a new way to live together, the service member may feel left out and not know where they fit into home life. Both members will have to learn how to renegotiate their new roles with work, family, church, and day-to-day life. As the couple reestablishes familiarity and teamwork, they must also build friendship and intimacy, all of which takes time. The couple experiences worry or concern about how things are going to get back to the way they use to be or if that result is even desirable. Once the couple have come to terms with how things will work, at least for the interim, the pressure of extended family and friends presses in almost immediately, slowing the process. These friends and family members are additional stressors.



During reintegration with friends and family outside the home, the couple will have additional interior stressors. While the service member is “catching up” with these individuals, activities, and ideas, the stay-behind spouse develops a sense of guilt if they deny their partner the ability to explore. This reintegration adds additional friction as the spouse may feel undervalued by everyone involved. Friction is caused as the service member wants to be involved at home but continues to have reason to not be at home. Additional stressors are worries that there may be another deployment and unresolved issues from the period of separation.

Ideally, the normalization stage is the development of positive routines and processes that allow the couple to move forward and grow.

#### WHY POST-DEPLOYMENT NORMALIZATION DOES NOT WORK

Routines developed before behaviors and communication issues are resolved become the new, dysfunctional, idea of normal. The service member may develop a routine of avoiding the house to avoid friction. The spouse may develop a routine of ignoring the service member in order to continue running the house. When these routines combine the couple is, essentially, living separate lives. With the addition of a spiritual crisis these couples face an increased risk of divorce.

The first aspect that is not known through family research on military is the question of what is exactly is a military family. A military family is a family with one or more members in active duty status. This service member is generally the spouse and/or parent, but is not limited

to this role. Also included are single-parent families, and unmarried or un-partnered service members are understudied and the meaning of what family means to them is unclear<sup>24</sup>. Lastly, with the repeal of Don't Ask Don't Tell Don't Pursue the family structure as once known in the military has changed. If the family is tight-knit group the service member may also be an adult child who is having issues returning home to his family.

The second aspect of research that is not known is what makes a resilient family resilient. Even though research shows these families are able to cope and are resilient. It is unclear as to what it takes these families exactly to make them resilient. One question is do these families have some innate skills that make them better able to cope then with their civilian counter parts<sup>25</sup>. How effective are the programs that focus on resiliency is a question. Lastly, answering the question exactly what military families do; what resources do they possess which make them able to handle the many challenges of deployments; and the risk of injury or death; are issues that are still not addressed by the current programs.

The third aspect to consider is identifying the keys to successful reintegration after deployment. Sarah Meadows states, "We actually know very little about what factors pave the way to a smooth reintegration process after a family member returns from a deployment"<sup>26</sup>. This factor is one reason why the researcher made this topic her ministry model focus. There has been focus on the rapid cycle of deployment and then reintegration. With the drawdown of troops the focus has to be on long term reintegration with their families and society since there may be no new deployments in sight. Research supports that 20% of troops returning from Iraq and

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 2.

Afghanistan meet the diagnosis of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, or depression, and 20% have experienced a traumatic brain injury during their deployment<sup>27</sup>. Some of these wounds are known as invisible because by just looking at the service member you would not know of these diagnoses and the management of these wounds can be difficult. With the above mentioned disorders the question arises how the family copes with these issues when the service member returns.

The question of what happens to military children in their transition to adulthood and beyond is under studied. One example, is the child who is now in their twenties when their parent deployment in 2001 right after 9/11. How is this child doing in their adulthood? Do they have a job or are they in college? Did they join the military? What are the dynamics of the relationship between them and the parent that deployed in their adulthood? It is believed that the answers to these questions may have an impact on the future of the military.

The last aspect of research not known is how integration programs can assist the service member's family to provide effective support. Presently, civilian research is not commonly used to establish programs or used in making Department of Defense policy to support military families. Thus there is a gap in knowledge for policy makers and service providers which results in a reduction of their effectiveness. The church has been performing a vital role in the support of military families as part of the general community. Churches can fill a greater role using a model of reintegration designed specifically to assist these families.

Researching this area can help to shape how a local congregation provides ministry to the military community. Some of the issues discussed within this section assisted especially in the area of reintegration and in developing the ministry model to assist churches in providing support and assistance for military families who have experienced deployment. It was already discussed

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 3.

that the current programs are not effective for several reasons but the main reason was because they are not faith-based.

This research also has implications for those who minister to the military service member as it relates to them experiencing stressors and spirituality. The first implication is that spirituality and religion are an aspect of a person's life. This aspect of a person's life offers meaning after a stressful event. This is because one understands the person's lived experience and then relates that to God. Werdel states, "Ministry leaders, pastorals counselors, lay ministers, can help that individual through the healing process and growth that other professional are not trained to do"<sup>28</sup>.

The second implication on religion and spirituality is a place where people turn in times of stress and trauma is. The military member coming back from the war many of them are facing stress and trauma. Stress and trauma is also a factor for their families as well. One vital place for them to get support to heal is through religion and by being ministered to through the local church. Within the local church the pastor has the ability to create a space that allows those that are suffering explores ways that the suffering can be related to God and their lives. Also the pastor or chaplain enters this exploration with this person and walks with them through every aspect of their suffering. This in turn makes the pastor or chaplain display empathy.

The third implication is that those in ministry should be aware that the research on post traumatic growth shows negative findings on the spiritual meaning and an individual's joy. Werdel states, "The negative relationship between spiritual struggle and joy suggests a need for ministers, spiritual directors, and pastoral counselors to increase their skills to identify, explore,

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<sup>28</sup> Mary Beth Werdel. Rising on Wreckage: Connections between suffering, spirituality, and growth. Human Development Volume 32 no. 2 Summer 2011 retrieved on September 20, 2012 from [www.regis.edu/hd](http://www.regis.edu/hd), 10.

and resolve a person's spiritual struggle"<sup>29</sup>. This ministry model educates ministry leaders and addresses ways on how these leaders can explore this negative struggle with the military family in hopes of resolving this spiritual struggle.

The final implication is that there must be a belief in faith. When one's story is told and it is of a crisis nature the ministry leader has to accept suffering as a reality. What is hoped is that a space is provided for the possibility that a positive change will result from the struggle and to make meaning out of the trauma. Thus, "afflicted but not crushed: perplexed, but not despairing; persecuted but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed"<sup>30</sup>. This is how growth is produced. Having the understanding that a relationship with God we have to have faith in him of a positive outcome. Having the understanding that God is concerned for his people even when they suffer and that he is their even in the times of suffering and trauma provides meaningful growth. It is through a reintegration ministry program that gives the opportunity to provide this space for that military service member to make meaning out of their stressors and trauma being one of them. This further validates the need for a model of ministry which addresses this stressor.

## SPIRITUALITY IN POST-DEPLOYMENT

Spirituality in the post-deployment process can act as an additional stressor. The largest portion of this stems from giving and receiving forgiveness. There are consequences of participating in combat and this consequence has recently been studied and the role spirituality plays as a healing resource for those recovering from the experience of combat-zone trauma.

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>30</sup> 2 Corinthians 4:8-9.

Service members have questioned why, if God was so loving and all powerful, do innocent people get killed. There is no easy answer to this question.

Forgiveness in this sense can be defined as the decision to reduce negative thoughts, affect behavior, such as blame and anger toward the offender or hurtful situation, and begin to gain better understanding about the offense and the offender<sup>31</sup>. Thus, forgiveness means to abandon resentment and negative judgment, while having compassion, generosity, and love toward the offender.

The offender, or enemy, could have killed the service member's friend; the service member may have then have trouble forgiving God who they feel allowed this and other events to occur. Forgiving their self for errors perceived and made while in the combat-zone. This resentment can be carried home where it can impact relationships with families and friends. Most service members have a difficult time processing and coping with this emotion. The proper way to cope is to learn how to make forgiveness a lifestyle; service members need ministry leadership to assist them.

Forgiveness is on part of spirituality is important since aspects of their lives have changed in the post-deployment stage and service members need assistance processing these changes. The changes that occur are challenges with their faith, new purpose, religious practice changing, and spiritual burnout<sup>32</sup>. These described changes are supported by research data collected by Dresher and from a post-deployment retreat for care givers<sup>33</sup>. The respondents had issues with self-esteem, expressing and receiving love, difficulty with self-expression and understanding others.

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 306

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 298

<sup>33</sup> Charles R. Figley and William P. Nash, *Combat Stress Injury Theory, Research, and Management*. (New York: Routledge, 2007), 295.

Research proves that the combat zone can have a negative effect even on caregivers. This research captures the experiences of military caregivers post-deployment which provides a better understanding and picture of the implications post-deployment.

## CHAPTER 2

### METHODOLOGY, PRESENTATION, AND FINDINGS

This chapter discusses the methodology and the design of the Ministry Model used in the field experience. This chapter provides a discussion of the purposes of the Ministry Model by examining the following factors: hypothesis, research design, measurement, and instrumentation. The analysis of these items should provide clear understanding of the perspectives, procedures, and processes of the thesis.

### HYPOTHESIS

The implementation of a faith-based reintegration model is more effective to meet the needs of the military community. There is a need/desire for a faith-based model by military families; clergy/chaplains will be welcome the model. Evidence gathered will show:

1. Combat-zone deployed service members often show a loss in faith;
2. Both members of the couple have concerns about resuming life together;
3. Few churches/congregations have a reintegration program;
4. All members involved desire a faith-based model of reintegration.



## PURPOSE OF THE THESIS PROJECT

The purpose of this thesis is to provide a faith-based reintegration model to assist service members returning from combat zones and their families. The faith-based reintegration model provides support and education for local churches that are assisting military families with reintegration. The project uses a qualitative research approach to assess the elements affecting, delaying, or road blocking change; this data provides the best device to create a ministry project that is applicable to the issues in the project's context.

As already presented, military families experience the emotional trauma of deployment when service members are deployed to combat zones<sup>1</sup>. The impact of the present fighting in Afghanistan and, in spite of the draw of troops, troops are still being sent to the combat zone. The long separations and its impact on service members and their families is an increasing concern. Support and information from an early onset regarding expectations, especially for families who have not endured a lengthy separation before, can assist with coping positively with the experience of the deployment. There is a need for programs at local churches that will train, educate, and sensitize the congregation to the impact of deployment on the family. The congregation can then contribute to the support of the family through volunteering and spiritual activities.

The thesis project connects with the ministry and compassion of clergy to provide training, guidance, outreach, and pastoral care within the local church. The service members and their families need to know that when they return home that there are faith communities that are willing to show the love of God beyond the military base.

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<sup>1</sup> MJ. Peeble-Klieger and J.H. Klieger, "Re-integration stress for Desert Storm families: wartime deployment and family trauma," *Journal of Traumatic Stress* 7 (2) April 1994, 7 2:173-94.

A large percentage of churches within the research area do not have programs that minister to the needs of these combat-zone deployed service members or their families. The focus of the project is specifically designed and equipped to effectively do outreach ministry to the military culture.

### DESCRIPTION OF THE THESIS PROJECT

The model is a combination of faith-based small group sessions and short term pastoral counseling for service members and their families. The ministry model is composed of four weekly sessions, lasting two hours each, held at a local church in the research area. These sessions addressed potential stressors of post-deployment that may be experienced by the couple or families. The model also addressed what the military member can expect while they are readjusting with work, friends, and family. The first session was held on Tuesday, August 7, 2012 and continued weekly and ending on Tuesday, September 4, 2012. An additional session was added at the request of the participants prior to the ending the sessions.

Separate surveys were administered via internet to four groups: church volunteers, pastors and chaplains, service members, and stay-behind spouses. The participants who were pastors were advised that a survey was developed to: 1) assess spiritual needs; 2) assess the willingness to invest time with service members and their families; and 3) assess the interest in a reintegration ministry. The purpose of collecting this statistical data is to identify the need for a faith-based reintegration model.

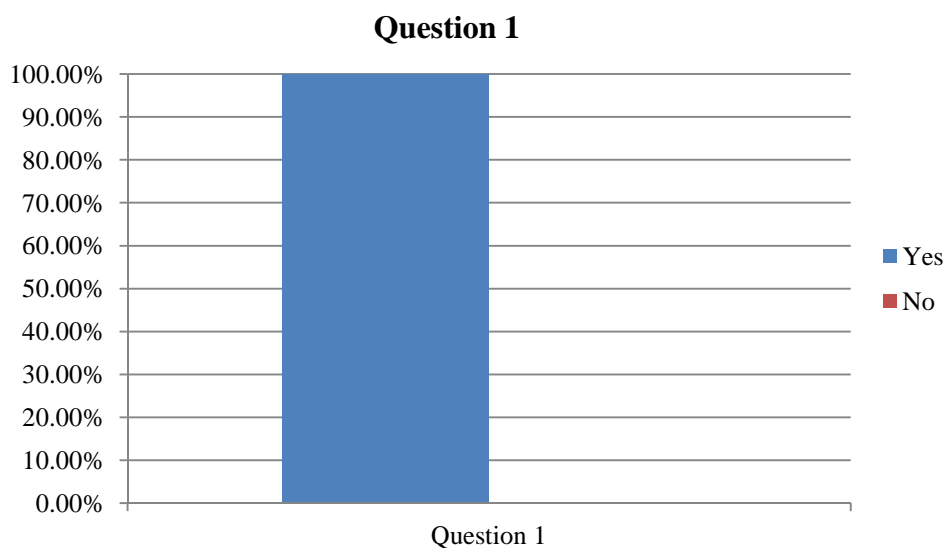
## RESEARCH DESIGN

The research model was designed to answer and provide an understanding of the researcher's ministry context by providing an understanding of the issues service members and their families face as a result of combat-zone deployment. It also provides ways on how to effectively minister to these issues to produce change. Research will be conducted in two parts: quantitative statistical data and interactive education followed by observation of participants.

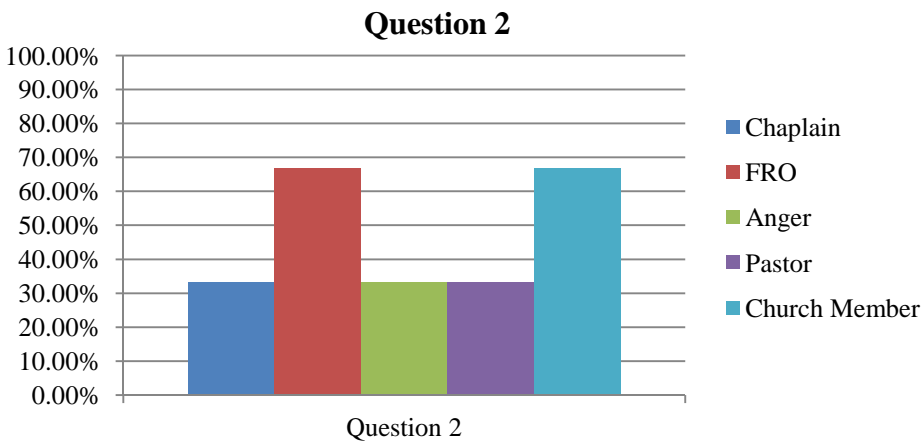
### STAY-BEHIND SPOUSES SURVEY RESPONSES

All participants were required to be the stay-behind spouse of a previously combat-zone deployed service member and be members of a church. The complete questionnaire and results can be found in Appendix 1. Key results are:

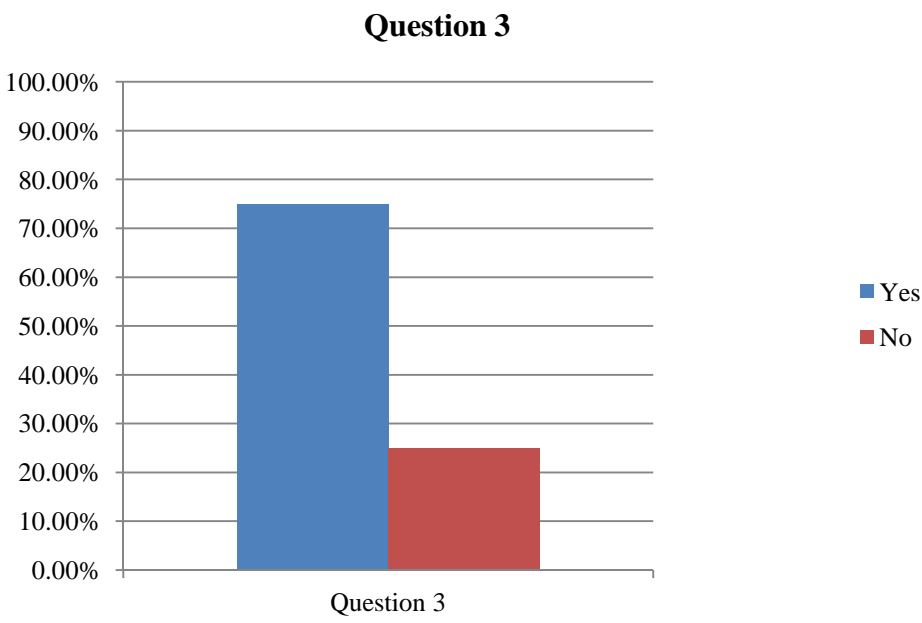
1. Do you have concerns about your spouse since their return?



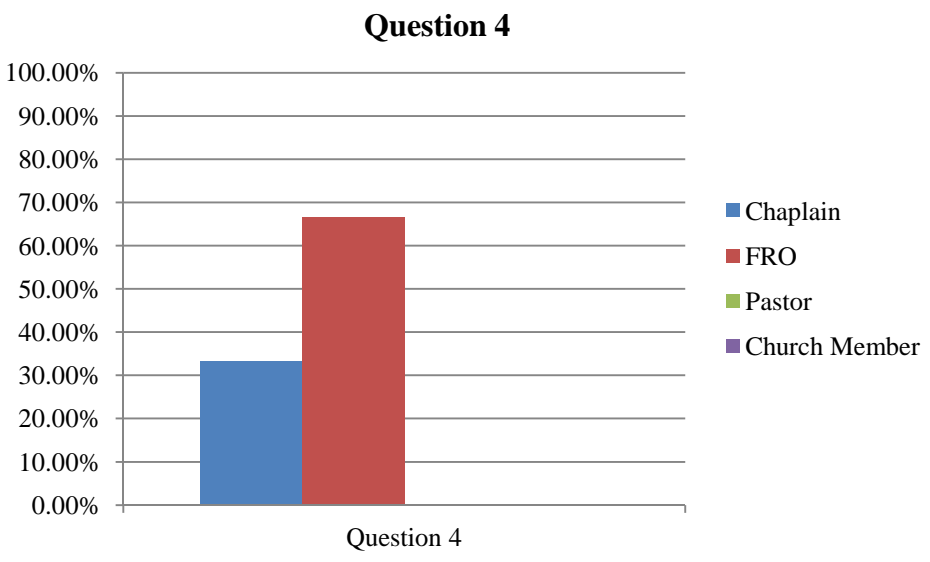
2. Since my spouse returned from combat-zone deployment, I have the following concerns (select all that apply):



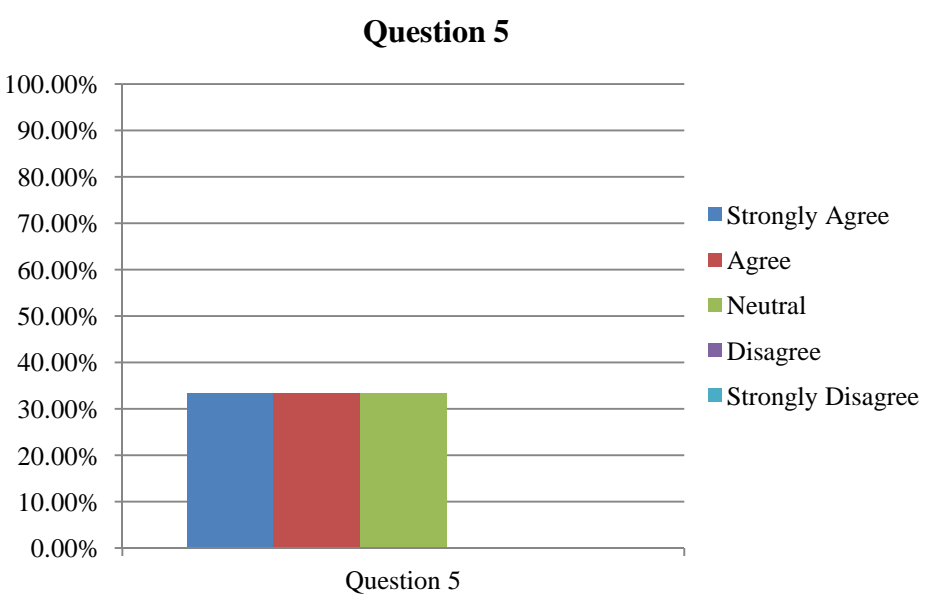
3. Did you attend a return a return and reunion brief offered by your unit:



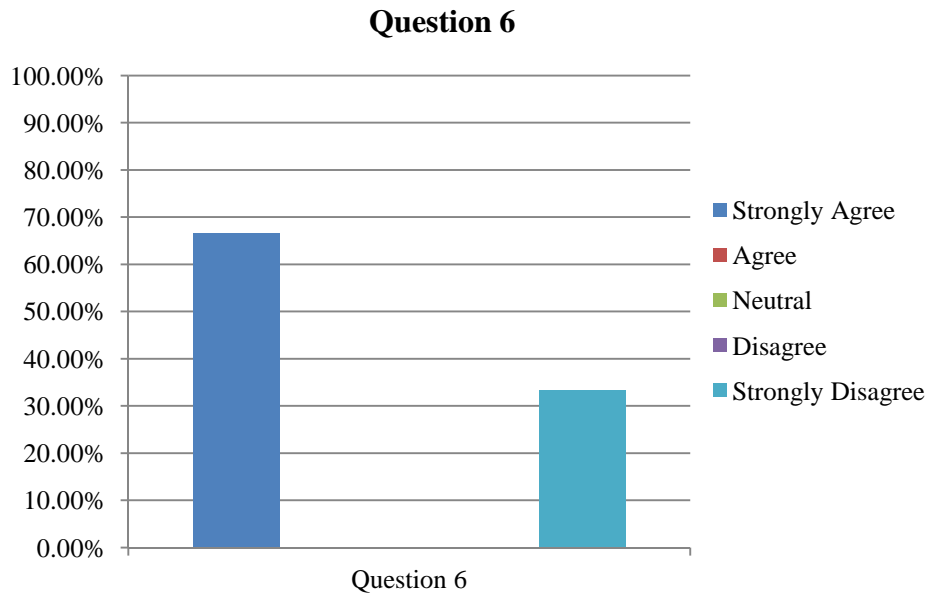
4. Did any of the following people offer you information about what to expect when your spouse returned home from deployment:



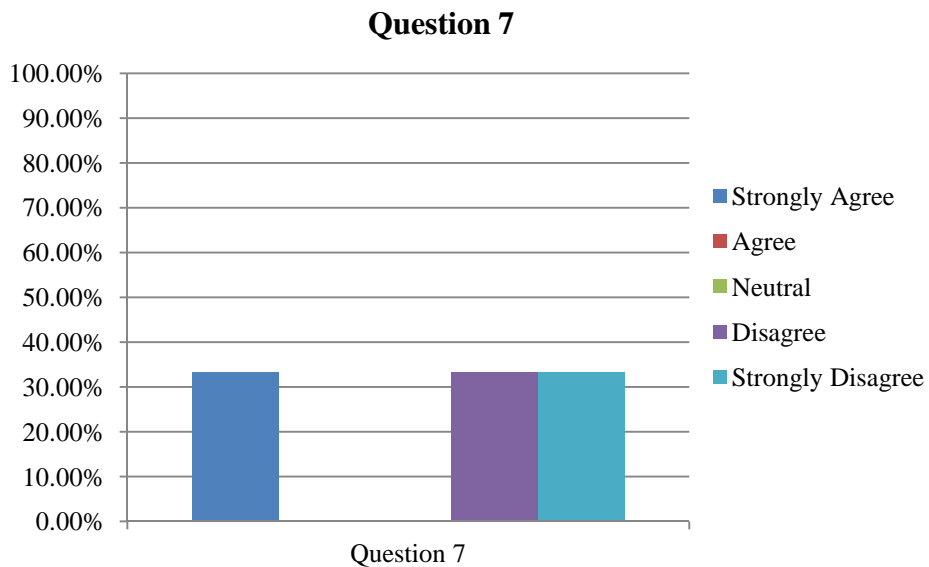
5. The information I received in the return and reunion briefs was adequate:



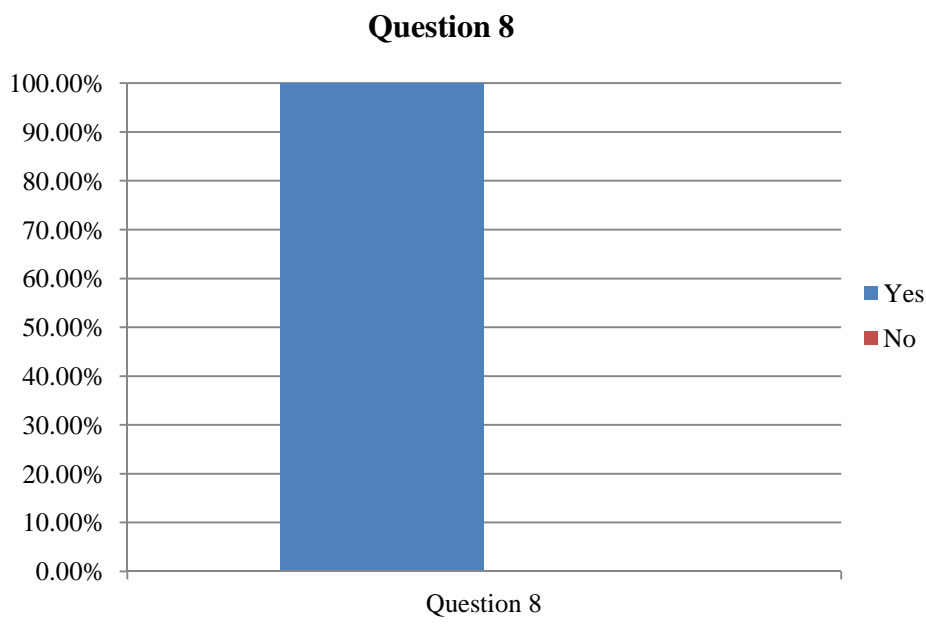
6. I have adequate coping skills for reintegrating with my loved on:



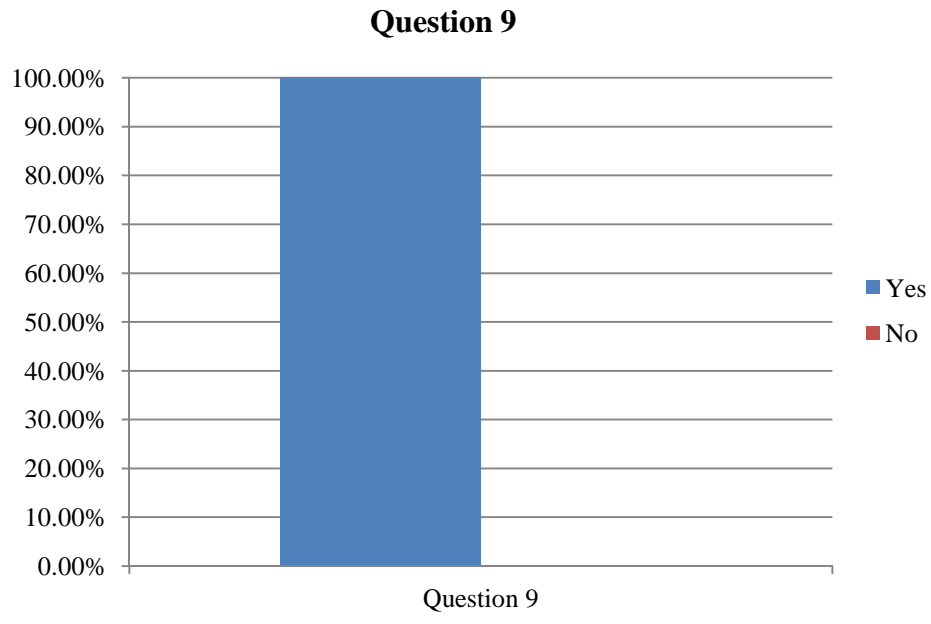
7. My church offers a reintegration ministry:



8. Would you be interested in being a participant in a reintegration program post-deployment if offered by your local church?



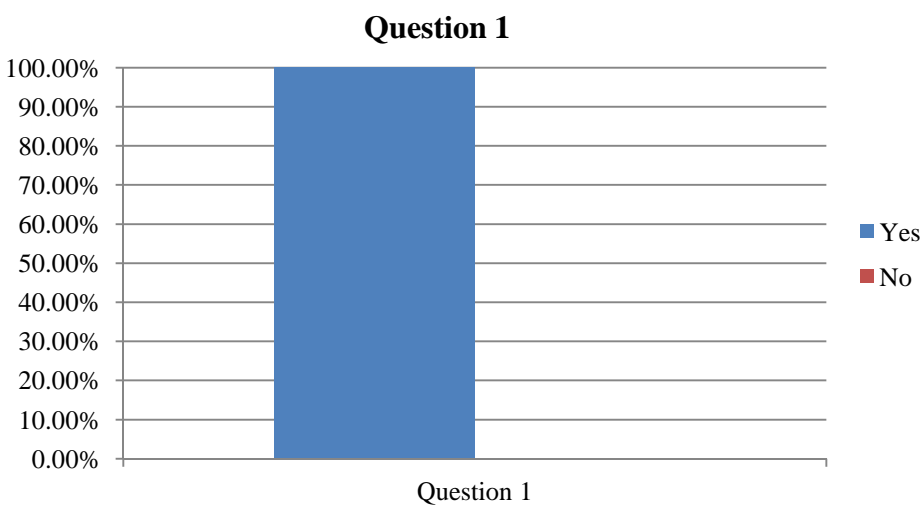
9. Do you agree with the following statement: "I have lost my faith in God during this time of reintegration with my spouse or family"?



### SERVICE MEMBER SURVEY RESPONSES

All participants were required to be previously combat-zone deployed service members, who are married, and belong to a church. The complete questionnaire and results can be found in Appendix 2. Key results are:

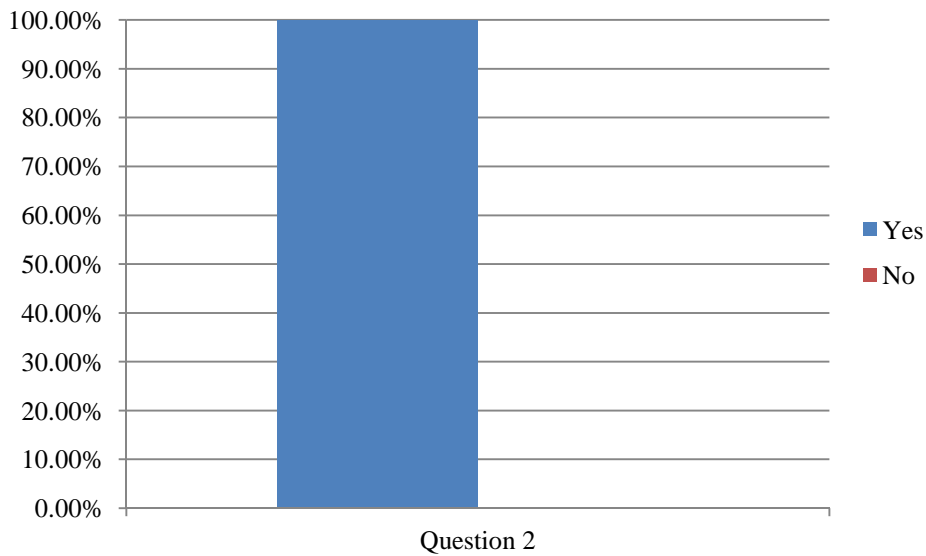
- 1. Did you receive pre-deployment and/or post-deployment briefs from your unit?



- 2. During your post-deployment brief, was reintegration with your spouse or children a topic covered?

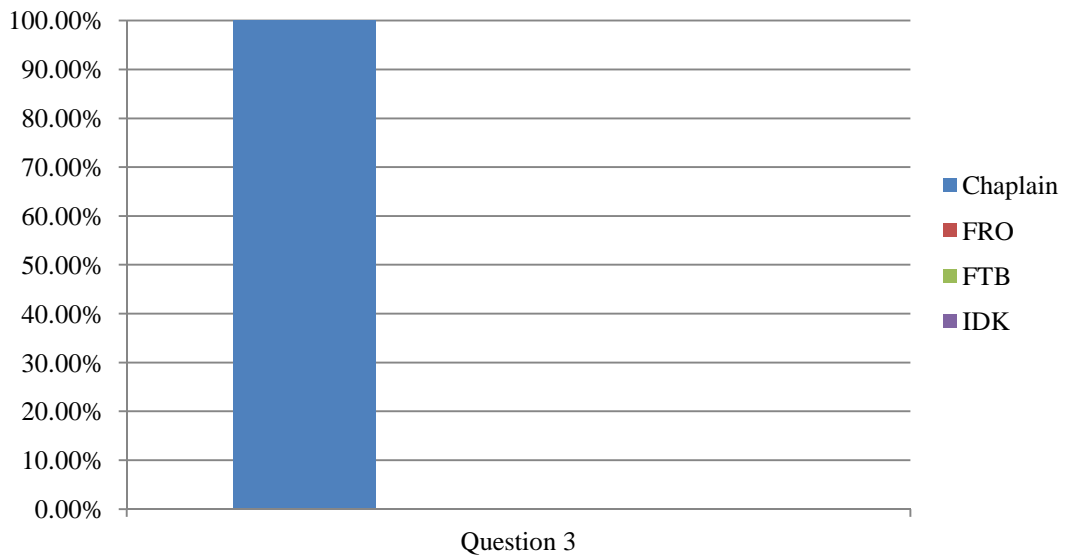


### Question 2

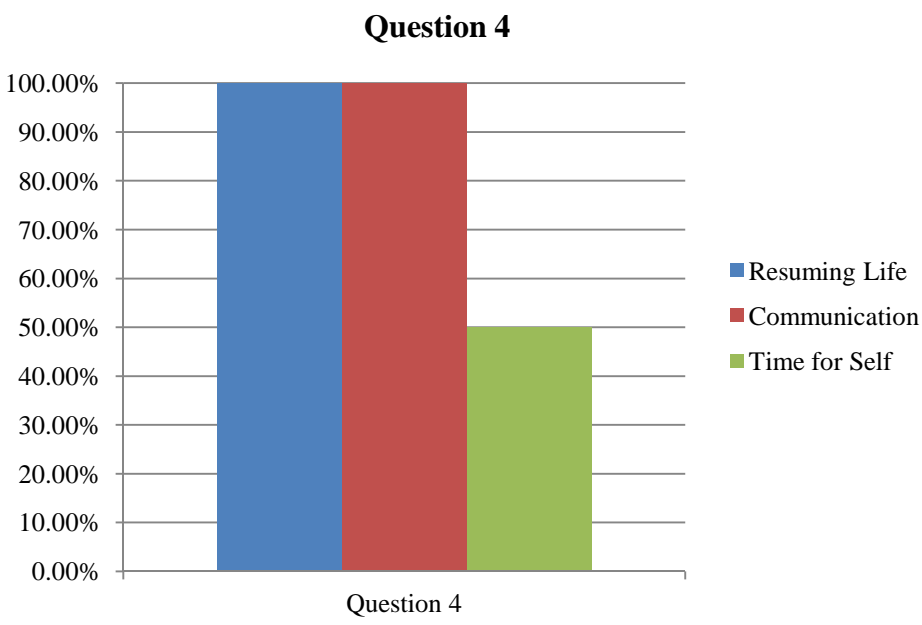


3. Who presented your post-deployment brief?

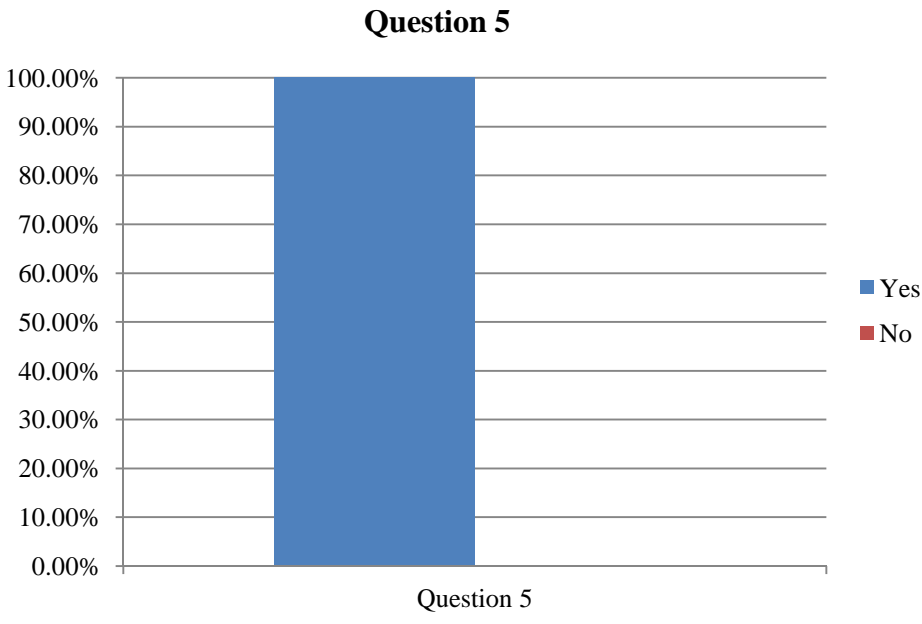
### Question 3



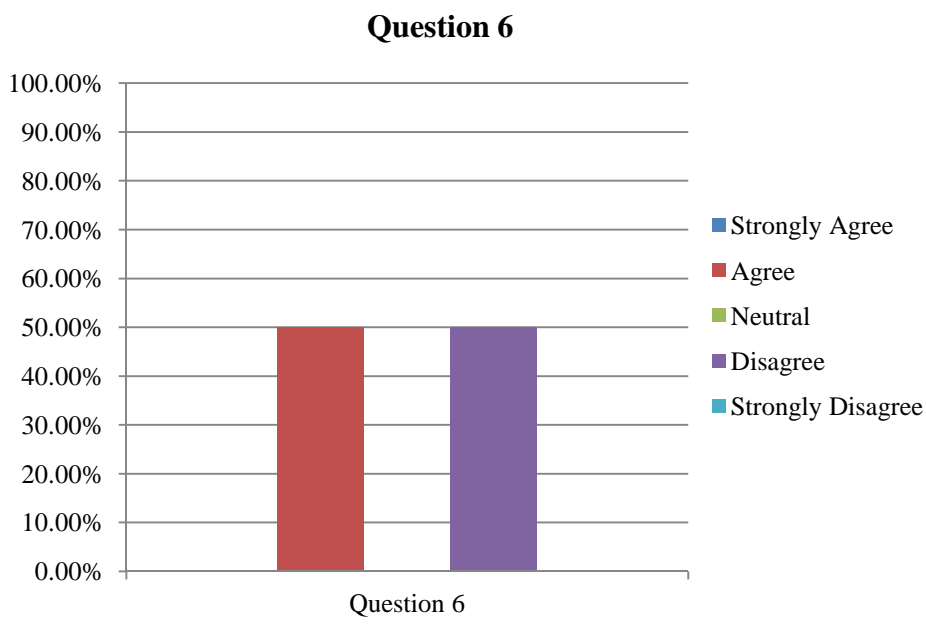
4. What concerns do you have with readjusting with your spouse, family, children, post-deployment (select all that apply):



5. If offered at your church, would be interested in participating in a post-deployment reintegration program:



6. I have adequate coping skills after deployment and reintegrating with my spouse:

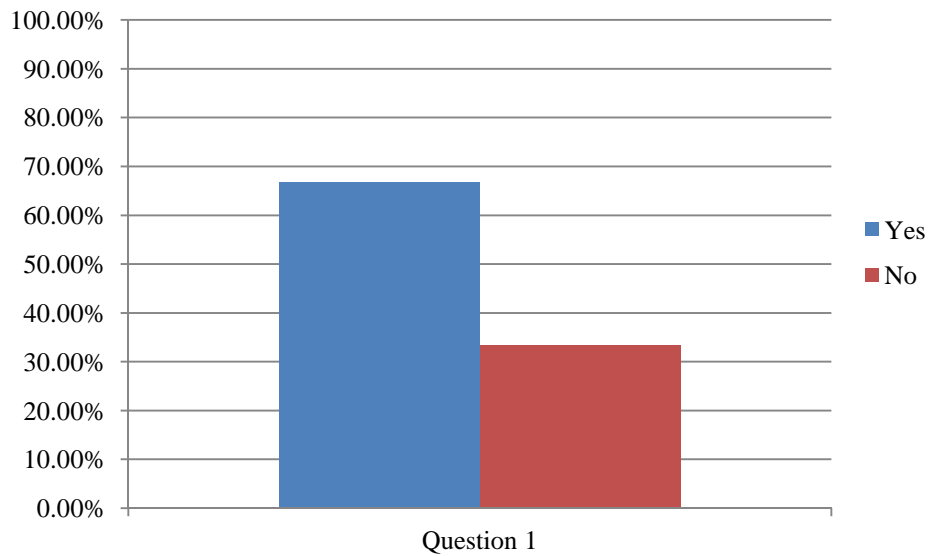


**CLERGY/ CHAPLAIN SURVEY RESPONSES**

All participants were required to have members of their congregation who deployed to combat-zones in the last 24 months. The complete questionnaire and results can be found in Appendix 3. Key results are:

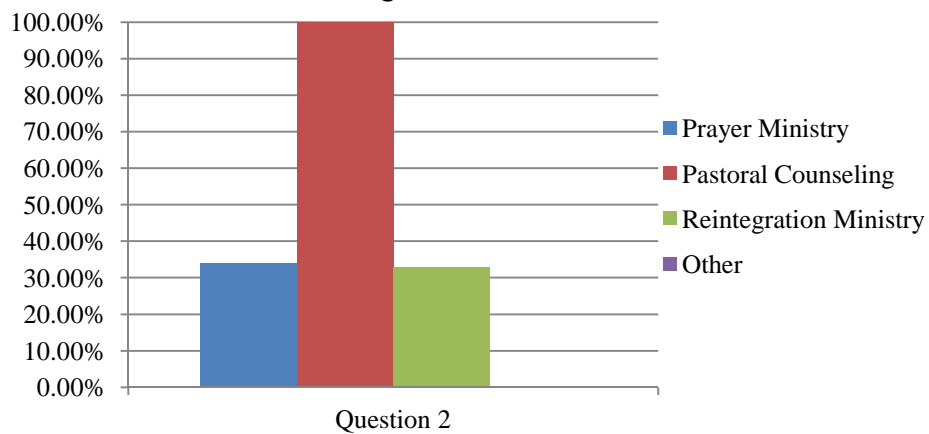
1. I have a military ministry department at my church/chapel:

### Question 1

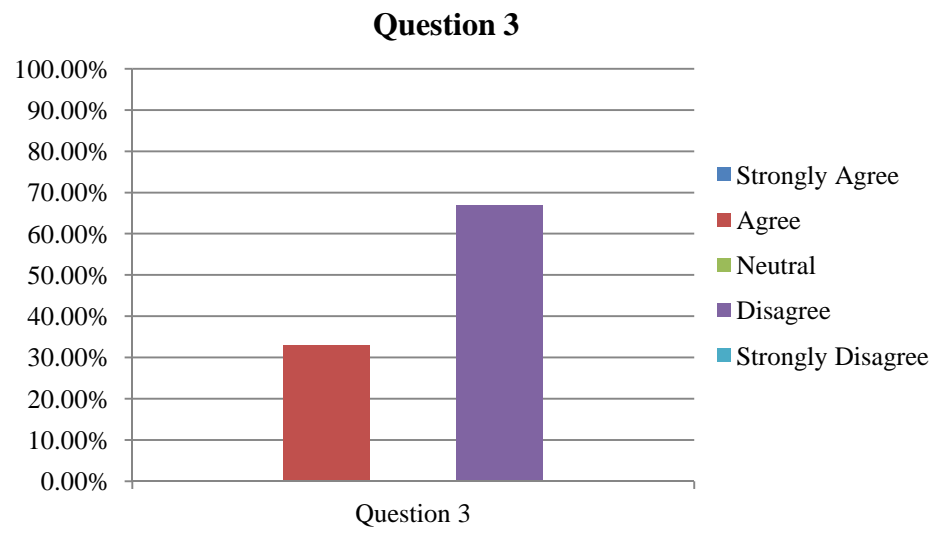


2. What type of ministries do you offer after deployment (select all that apply):

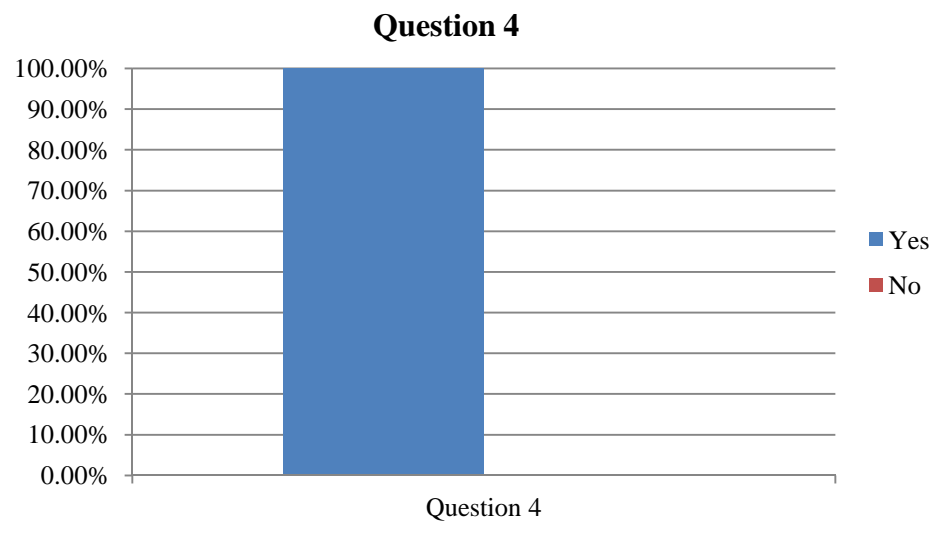
### Question 2



3. My church provides information for service members and their spouses on how to reintegrate after deployment:



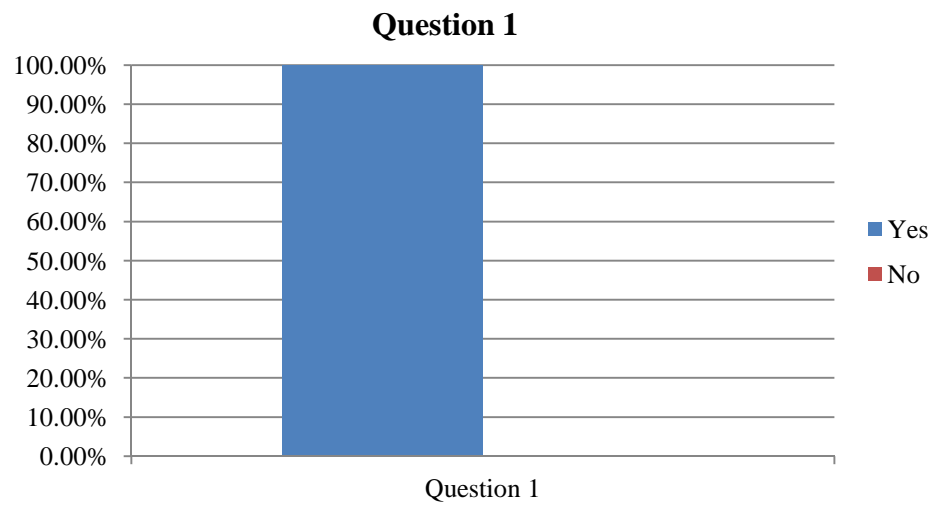
4. Would your church/chapel be interested in a model of ministry for reintegration to assist families and service members who have deployed



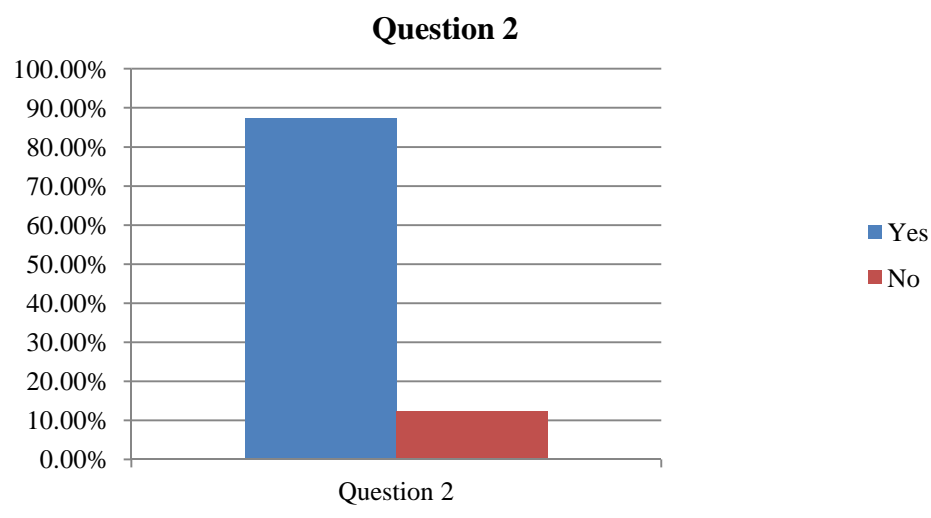
## CHURCH VOLUNTEER SURVEY RESPONSES

All participants were required to be active volunteers in a church/chapel. The complete questionnaire and results can be found in Appendix 4. Key results are:

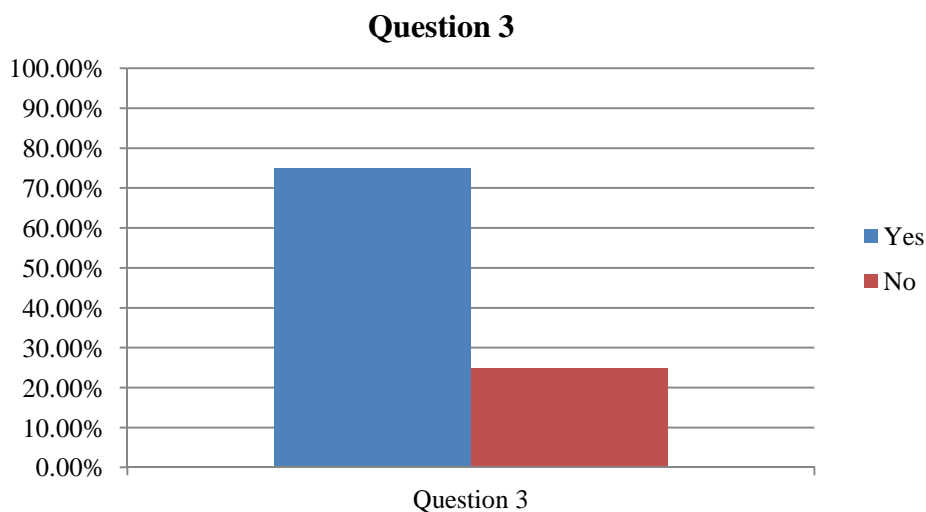
1. I would be interested in learning tools to assist families who are experiencing reintegration after deployment:



2. I would help set up/clean up and share a fellowship with military families:



3. I would be willing to adopt and build a relationship with a military family after deployment:



### FIELD EXPERIENCE

The weekly sessions with clergy/chaplains were conducted within the research area. Each week presented specific educational items. Topics discussed during this phase of research are: 1) coping skills; 2) emotions of grief, and how to conduct a spiritual assessment; 3) crisis response and pastoral counseling techniques; and 4) change and scriptural support for changes. An additional week was requested by the participants to discuss the implementation of programs at their churches/congregations.

Each session began and ended with prayer. After the presentation of materials and general discussion of the topic, the participants were given time to discuss the material in small groups. This peer-to-peer teaching and discussion yielded additional ideas and questions based on the unique local culture.

Week 1: Where I Have Been: The presentation used as a practice model was named “Teaching Military Families How to be Resilient”. The lesson plan included defining resilience,

exploring some of the emotions the military families experience as a result of deployment, and read several Scripture passages related to this experience.

Week 2: The New Normal: The presentation used as a practice model was named “Where I am going: Teaching Military Families How to Reconnect and Effective Communication”. The lesson plan included tips on how the military family can reconnect, offered communication tools to assist military families, and looking at supporting Scriptures in James, and Philippians.

Week 3: Crisis Response and Pastoral Counseling Techniques: The presentation used as a practice model with the same name as the title. The lesson plan included discussion methods for assistance, four goals of crisis intervention, and identified pastoral care techniques to assist military families.

Week 4: Resources for Support: The presentation used as a practice model was named “Programs to Assist Military Families Post-Deployment”. The lesson plan included reference for encouraging spiritual disciples such as prayer/meditation; some of the referenced scriptures were from Corinthians, Luke, and John. The lesson plan discussed the FOCUS program as a means of support, and creating a military friendly society within the church as another means of support.

Week 5: Follow-Up: Implementing a Faith-Based Reintegration Program: The group met to discuss plans on how each church could implement the ministry model. Each participant shared their thoughts on the way ahead and the final workshop was closed with prayer.

Weekly topics will be discussed further in Chapter 3.



## GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY

A faith-based model of reintegration has need and will be used by military families if the model is available. The qualitative information reflects the reintegration concerns of both the service member and the stay-behind spouse. The data also reflects the spiritual separation of the couple with continued spirituality of the stay-behind spouse and an increase in the loss of faith of the combat-zone deployed service member.

The clergy/chaplain survey showed ministries offered were most often pastoral counseling and prayer ministry; very few offered a reintegration. All the clergy/chaplains and church volunteers were interested in a model of ministry for reintegration or otherwise supporting the military families.

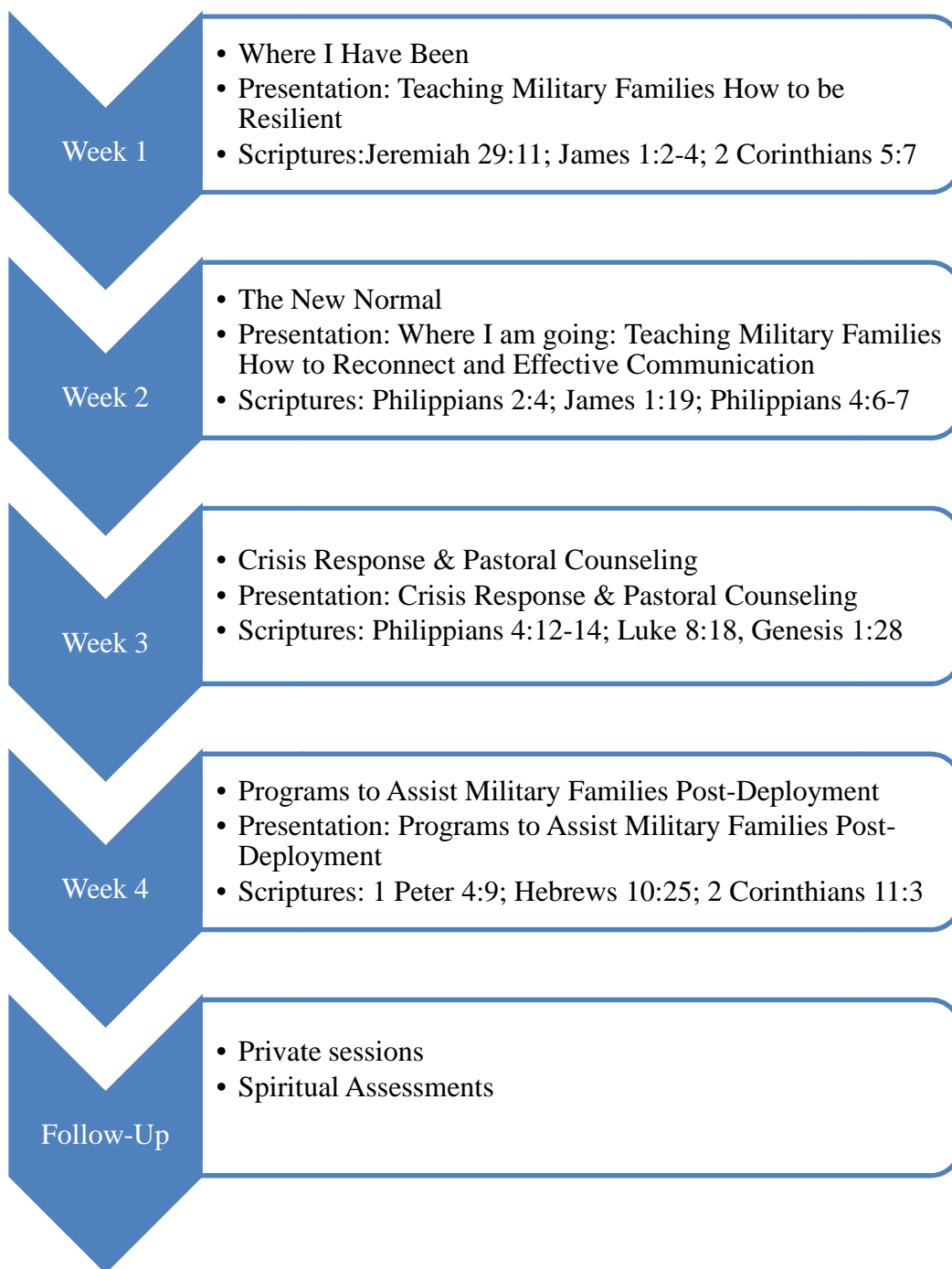
## CHAPTER 3

### A MINISTRY MODEL FOR REINTEGRATION INTO THE LOCAL CHURCH

The reintegration model is for clergy and chaplains to equip them for outreach to military families post deployment. The model creates awareness of the needs of service members and their families after deployment by defining resilience and discussing how military couples can communicate effectively. The model facilitates an understanding of specific pastoral care tools and military resources to administer intervention programs including recommendations for and follow-up with each couple.

The model consists of four weekly group sessions. During each session education is presented and the information is discussed. Each session is designed to work with particular skills the couple will need, as well as citing particular scriptures that can be used as a guide for the couple.

# Ministry Model of Reintegration



## WEEK 1: WHERE I HAVE BEEN

The presentation used as a practice model was named “Teaching Military Families How to be Resilient”. Resilience can be defined as the ability to withstand and rebound from adversity strengthened and more resourceful<sup>1</sup>. When someone is resilient they are able to heal from painful wounds and continue to live life with joy. When resiliency is promoted in the family this indicates interventions that seek to improve all relationships. The combat-zone deployment of a family member changes how the family unit functions<sup>2</sup>. To support family resilience, clergy and chaplains have to understand that when one individual in a family is affected, the whole family unit is affected. MacDermid states, “Family resilience has been defined as characteristics, dimensions, and properties of families which help families be resilient to disruption in the face of change and adaptive in the face of crisis situations”<sup>3</sup>.

The lesson plan includes active listening skills and exploring some of the emotions the military families experience as a result of deployment. The clergy member or chaplain must perform a brief lesson on actively listening skills as both a way for each spouse to understand what is expected and as a way to set ground rules for the expected communication portion of the session.

Relationships for military couples change following deployments that separate the service members from their families. There are four main themes identified: intermittent idealized closeness, transition from independence to interdependence, transitions of social support, and

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<sup>1</sup> Walsh, Froma. *Strengthening Family Resilience*. New York: The Guilford Press, 2006, 4.

<sup>2</sup> MacDermid, Shelley. "MFRI Purdue University." *Military Family Research Institute at Purdue University*. July 2008. <http://www.cfs.purdue.edu/mfri> (accessed 05 01, 2012), 4

<sup>3</sup> Walsh, Froma. *Strengthening Family Resilience*. New York: The Guilford Press, 2006, 14.

ongoing renegotiation of rules. Military families need time before they can rely on the other for support. The roles also need to be renegotiated throughout the year as they respond to life events or job transitions. The way ministry leaders can open communication for families is by having each partner remain silent as the other speaks to the statement “Where I Have Been”. Each spouse needs to speak and let the other know where ideas, decisions, and changes are coming from. These separate experiences need to be understood for the couple to have a clearer understand of where they are now.

In addition to previously mentioned changes, the stay-behind spouse may have experienced several special events such as birthdays, educational accomplishments, and an anniversary. There may have been family illness or death. With each challenge the opportunity to withstand these challenges were presented and the spouse displayed a form of resilience. Then the question is how the ministry leader can promote resilience in the context of the spouse. They can do this in the following ways: 1) exploring with the military spouse to appreciate who they are; 2) encouraging the spouse of being grateful to God for the experience; and 3) facilitating an understanding that God was with them throughout the process.

In addition to previously mentioned changes, the service member has also a combat experience that is unique to that individual. This experience has to be explored. The question of how the ministry leader can support the service member: 1) explore with the service member their experience of being away from their family as the result of combat; 2) help them through their combat experience by being a listening ear; and 3) encourage them trust in God in light of where they have been.

To assist service members in explaining concepts to the stay-behind spouse, the clergy member or chaplain can have a map of the deployment area on hand. This is a way for the spouse

to see a visual representation of the movements and areas their loved one is referring to; this can also be implemented as a tool for understanding location during important events. Each family member is to chart their experience from the date the deployment begins. Then from that date they place on the deployment map major events and the emotion attached to each experienced while they were apart. For example, the stay-behind spouse places a date on the deployment map a major day of when a dog was purchased, then places the event on the map, and then how they felt, such as the dog made them happy. Events should include, but is not limited to, a missed anniversary, missed birthdays, first day of school, and so on. It is also beneficial for kids to do this as well because both the parents and the child can see their emotions during the deployment.

Scripture passages that can be shared by the clergy or chaplain are:

1. “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future” (Jeremiah 29:11 [NIV])<sup>4</sup>. This passage was already described earlier and it offers hope directly and indirectly. Directly it literally states to have hope and that hope is planned. Indirectly it offers hope in the form of a plan and a future.
2. “The heart of man plans his way, but the LORD establishes his steps” (Proverbs 16:9 [ESV])<sup>5</sup>. This scripture establishes that man has only to truly decide, in his/her heart, where they would like to get to and God will give him/her the way to get there.
3. “Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing” (James 1:2-4 [NIV])<sup>6</sup>. James is expressing to readers that to turn difficult trying experiences into spiritual profit<sup>7</sup>. The military family will experience some trials such as opposition, feelings of loneliness, combat stress, or moral injury, but can be encouraged because their faith is being tested.

4. “Faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1 [NIV])<sup>8</sup>. This Scripture gives the reader a working definition of faith. It also shows that sometimes the results are not readily visible.

5. “For we live by faith and not by sight” (2 Corinthians 5:7 [NIV])<sup>9</sup>. The Bible is clear that our life is to be lived by having faith and not live by what we see.

6. “Because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance” (James 1:3 [NIV])<sup>10</sup>. When their faith is tested the reward is that it produces endurance. Endurance is what is needed to be sustained as bonds reform.

7. “Holy Father, keep them through your name which you have given me that they may be one, even as we are... Not for these only do I pray, but for those also who believe in me through their word, that they may all be one; even as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that you sent me. The glory which you have given me, I have given to them; that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and you in me, that they may be perfected into one; that the world may know that you sent me, and

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Asbury Bible Commentary, Retrieved from on August 16, 2012:  
<http://www.biblegateway.com/resources/asbury-bible-commentary/Making-Tests-Work-You>

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

loved them, even as you loved me” (John17:11, 20-23 [NIV])<sup>11</sup>: God wants His people to be one with Him. In the above scripture Jesus wants his people to be in unity and act unified. Military families sticking together in the face of adversity and being unified are supported in scripture and a display of resiliency.

## WEEK 2: THE NEW NORMAL

The presentations used as a practice model was named “Where I am going: Teaching Military Families How to Reconnect” and “Effective Communication”. Hall states, “When people begin to see the present situation for what it is, without comparing it to the past, and can evaluate the past from a positive and negative perspective then a person is ready to move on”<sup>12</sup>.

The lesson plan included tips on how the military family can reconnect, offered communication tools to assist military families, and looking at support. It has already been established that when a military family is separated because of a deployment there is a connection that can be lost due to obstacles in communication. Researcher’s Brown and Hall support this and state, “Couples who possess basic communication skills have less marital conflict; suggesting the importance of certain communication skills or elements”<sup>13</sup>. This lack of communication can jeopardize trust, confidence, and the intimacy. Slone and Friedman state, “It’s common to feel disconnected or detached from others when you return home from the war

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Lynn K. Hall. *Counseling Military Families*. Routledge: New York, 2008, 199.

<sup>13</sup> Jessica Brown and Brenda Hall. *Exploring Intimate Partner Communication in Military Couples: Implications for Counselors*. *Compelling counseling interventions: VISTAS 2009* (pp.55-65) Alexandria VA: American Counseling Association.



zone”<sup>14</sup>. Resistance may arise for multiple reasons such as each wanting to protect the other from guilt due to absence, wanting to forget the experience, or social engineering. When individuals share personal experience and information about themselves this is defined as self-disclosure

In the case of the service member this social engineering comes from heckling or teasing by other service members. It is when one or both individuals in a marriage withdraw from communicating their feelings and thoughts that this can negatively affect the relationship. It is usually the service member who has the most difficulty with communication. Brown and Hall state, “Soldiers often remain silent about their experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan”<sup>15</sup>. Service members often think in terms of black and white. This thinking may have an effect on the communication in the marriage. Armstrong states, “After returning from war, people often perceive the world in a more polarized way”<sup>16</sup>. This is what black and white thinking is described as and is common during deployment. This mentality or mind set may be useful during the war but is not useful thinking when communicating with a spouse. With this type of thinking the service member may make simple things bigger than what they are and may have difficulty vocalizing their combat experience with loved ones. Armstrong, Best, and Domenici state “You may feel that you have to tell everything you did while you were at war or nothing at all. If you’re thinking in these terms, it seems logical that you would choose not to share anything, because the risk of sharing everything is overwhelming”<sup>17</sup>. The authors say that it is the feelings

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<sup>14</sup> Laurie B. Slone, and Matthew J. Friedman. *After the War Zone: A Practical Guide for Returning Troops and Their Families*. Perseus Books Group: Philadelphia, 2008, 116.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 55-66.

<sup>16</sup> Keith Armstrong, Suzanne Best, and Paula Domenici. *Courage After Fire: Coping Strategies for Troops Returning from Iraq and Afghanistan and Their Families*. Berkeley, CA: Ulysses Press, 2006, 176.

of guilt, shame, and secrecy can be released when sharing occurs<sup>18</sup>. The clergy or chaplain can encourage the service member to share their experience with their spouse. They can also convey to the spouse the deep need to be understanding throughout the process and reserve any reactions until after.

The stay-behind spouse may have built the same kind of emotional barrier to prevent the appearance of “whining”. There can be fear of how the other will react or worry that their feelings may cause guilt in their loved one. There may also be lingering issues that developed prior to deployment<sup>19</sup>.

In Philippians when Paul says, “But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead<sup>20</sup>”. The clergy or chaplain can help the couples define what problems they are experiencing in the present. When this is defined, the couple can determine what can be solved and learn how to accept those problems that cannot be solved. According to Armstrong the way to know if a problem is unsolvable is if a couple continues to fight about the same issue over and over again. Dr. John Gottman and Dr. Robert Levinson state, “That the majority of disagreements one has with their partner will be lifelong”<sup>21</sup>. This is one reason why it is important to have the couple determine what can be solved and accept what cannot be solved.

In order to ensure adequate time and attention to the reconnection process, the couple should be encouraged to schedule time with one another alone. The rule is that this is not the time to discuss major issues going on in the marriage but to have fun with each other and allow

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 176.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 176.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 116.

<sup>20</sup>Philippians 3:13

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 188.

themselves to see why they fell in love in the first place. The couple should learn about each other's dreams for the future, and what is important to the other, as they did when first establishing a connection with one another. This time can be structured or unstructured; the couple can design it together or in rotation. The couple can refer to it as a date night or any other title they wish to give it.

The couple also requires dedicated time to discuss active plans within the family. This allows both individuals to speak, change, and work together as a team to form new patterns. Subjects for these discussions can include<sup>22</sup>:

1. Understand that the family, house hold tasks, and goals will be shared. This can be used to discuss changes that have occurred in the household over time. The deployment map can also be used during this process to show when processes changed and why they changed.

2. Put a plan in place to help the service member reconnect with the daily schedule and responsibilities. The couple can take this time to restructure the work in the house to have shared responsibility.

3. Remember that everyone in the family unit is important. Some of these discussions can include children.

4. Share and be honest of each other needs and discuss them openly. This is excellent practice for developing communication skills. This also allows for all items that need attention to be accessible and not hidden away to become trouble later.

5. Being supportive of the time to readjust. Both individuals have undergone changes and both need to change again to accommodate the new reality of the situation.

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 130.

6. Being open to getting help if the readjustment is too difficult to handle. The couple can lay in a plan to signal times that outside support is needed. If the plan and the agreement are in place the couple will have less feelings of failure or betrayal when it is time for that support.

Scripture passages that can be shared by the clergy or chaplain are:

1. “Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others” (Philippians 2:4 [ESV])<sup>23</sup>. This is how the couple reconnects because they have a spirit of understanding each other’s needs.

2. “My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, (James 1:19 [NIV])<sup>24</sup>. This scripture demonstrates the need to listen, to delay speaking as to let yourself have time before reacting, and to have patience with one-another.

3. “Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God (Philippians 4:6-7 [NIV])<sup>25</sup>. This scripture relates that each person should remind themselves to be thankful and to give their worries to God.

4. “You shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these” (Mark 12:31 [NRSV])<sup>26</sup>. This scripture reflects the need to not place yourself above another, but to treat them as equally important, equally loved.

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

5. “Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law. The commandments, "Do not commit adultery," "Do not murder," "Do not steal," "Do not covet," and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: "Love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law (Romans 13: 8-10 [NIV])<sup>27</sup>. This passage by Paul means that loving, honoring, and respecting each other is living by God's command.

6. “Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end... And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love (1 Corinthians 13:4-8, 13 [NRSV])<sup>28</sup>. This verse describes how love is defined, how it behaves, and how it lives. Having love can be described as both verbal and non-verbal forms of communication. When a military couple displays love towards one another they are communicating closeness and intimacy towards one another. Couples who engage in showing love as described in the scripture passages are less likely to engage in domestic violence. Brown and Hall state, “Couples who engage in hostile behavior, and who communicate about problems using aggression are more apt to experience intimate partner violence”<sup>29</sup>.

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Jessica Brown and Brenda Hall. Exploring Intimate Partner Communication in Military Couples: Implications for Counselors. Compelling counseling interventions: VISTAS 2009 (pp.55-65) Alexandria VA: American Counseling Association.

### WEEK 3: Crisis Response and Pastoral Counseling Techniques

The presentation used as a practice model was named “Crisis Response and Pastoral Counseling Techniques”. The lesson plan in week three, included crisis response tools, four goals of crisis intervention, identified pastoral care techniques to assist military families, and provided several scripture references in reference to crisis and communication.

A military family who is having issues reintegrating may be dealing with a crisis. A crisis can be defined as a situation that has unique circumstances and are usually short term and stressful<sup>30</sup>. A crisis is a severe disruption in a person’s life or a family’s normal level of functioning; some examples of a crisis are the death of a family member, an automobile accident, suicide, or a natural disaster. When a family deals with a crisis they need the support of their community which, for those who belong to one, includes their church or congregation.

The common symptoms of a person or family in crisis include: physical and/or psychological agitation, drastic change in appetite, drastic change in sleep, emotional distress, anxiety, and an inability to solve problems. Military families live in a state of stress; the family may have an anticipation of a worst-case scenario which can add depression to their state of being when crisis hits. The pastor can assist the military families with the use of effective problem solving skills and understanding the four goals of crisis interventions. Those goals are:

1. Relieving the immediate symptoms
2. Restoring the person to his or her previous level of functioning.
3. Identifying the factors that led to the crisis state.
4. Identifying and applying remedial measures.

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<sup>30</sup> Kendra Cherry. What Is A Crisis? About.Com Guide. Retrieved on August 1, 2012 From: <http://psychology.about.com/od/crisiscounseling/f/crisis.htm>.

In the military suicide is the second leading cause of death and is also a crisis that the family may face after a deployment<sup>31</sup>. Ruiz states<sup>32</sup>:

Suicide in the military is a very serious problem. Historically, suicide rates have been lower in the military than those rates found in the general population. However, with the continued wars in Iraq and Afghanistan military suicide rates have been increasing and surpassing the rates at large”.

With the above supporting knowledge of suicide and when addressing a family with a crisis it is imperative that any possible issues of harm be addressed. When assessing for suicide, one may begin by simply asking the service member if he or she is thinking about killing himself or herself. In listening to the reply, the pastor should address the following:

1. Detail or specificity in the plan (is there a mention of a method, time and date, or planned or written suicide note?)
2. Lethality and reversibility (e.g., shooting vs. cutting oneself)
3. Intentionality (providing for the possibility of rescue)
4. Proximity (find out if important support people know of the plan, are nearby, and express care or concern for the family member)
5. Additional risk factors include psychiatric diagnosis, antisocial or borderline personality disorders, substance abuse, poor reality testing, serious medical illness, and life stress.
6. The crisis response should cover what would prevent the service member from committing suicide.

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<sup>31</sup> Augusto, Ruiz. Deployment Behavioral Health Psychologist. Retrieved on October 24, 2012 from: <http://deploymentpsych.org/topics-disorders/suicide>

<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

If the service member or a member of the family unit has a detailed plan, professional help should be sought immediately. The pastor should escort the suicidal person to the nearest emergency room, the nearest base medical facility, or call 911 for emergency assistance. The clergy or chaplain can use the following scripture for support, “Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God. Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows”<sup>33</sup>. The bible clearly says that a person is not forgotten by God even when one is going through a crisis; in this case suicidal ideation.

Patton states, “Pastoral counseling is the type of pastoral care in which the receiver of care has in some way initiated the pastoral conversation and directly or indirectly asked for help”<sup>34</sup>. By joining up for a faith-based reintegration program the couple as initiated this conversation. Hall as she states, “The defining word for the military family is change; change is what their lives are about”<sup>35</sup>. By initiating this conversation and seeking assistance, the couple demonstrates a desire for change.

The clergy or chaplain must have a developed active listening skill, experience counseling, and be able to provide wisdom and guidance within the context of the Christian faith. They must also have an understanding and working knowledge of these changes to assist the couple in their time of need. Reintegrating after deployment is change. Some of these changes are planned while others are unplanned. Hall defines these types of changes as<sup>36</sup>:

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<sup>33</sup> Luke 12:6-7 NIV.

<sup>34</sup> John Patton. *Pastoral Care: An Essential Guide*. Abingdon Press. Nashville, 2005, 97.

<sup>35</sup> Lynn K. Hall. *Counseling Military Families*. Routledge: New York, 2008, 193.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 194.



*Those that are planned, in which some amount of forethought decision making, and choice has gone into the creation of the transition; and Those that are planned, in which some unplanned or unexpected event has occurred that demands our attention as we face a new transition.*

Whether the cause of or the result of change, loss is always involved. Identifying if what is lost and whether it is the cause or result change will assist the clergy or chaplain when assisting the couple. For example, when a crisis is faced in a family and it may end with a loss of a relationship. That loss is the result of change. That loss can also be the reason for additional changes when the person changes to live a productive life. Sharing this knowledge with the couple can assist them with identifying points that require closer management, communication, and compassion. In the book of Proverbs it says, “Without counsel plans fail, but with advisers they succeed”<sup>37</sup>. The pastor serving as the counselor can provide counsel and advisement to assist the couple in succeeding.

Scripture passages that can be shared by the clergy or chaplain are:

1. "For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and self-discipline" (2 Timothy 1:7[NIV])<sup>38</sup>. This passage reminds people that they have the power to sustain through a period of crisis by leaning on their faith.

2. “Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered” (Romans 8:26 [KJV])<sup>39</sup>. According to this scripture it does not matter if someone knows how to pray for help as long as the attempt is made.

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<sup>37</sup> Proverbs 15:22

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

3. “I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little. For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.” (Phil 4:12-14 [NLT])<sup>40</sup>. This passage encourages military couples as they can do everything through Christ who strengthens them.

4. “Therefore consider carefully how you listen” (Luke 8:18 [NIV])<sup>41</sup>. This scripture encourages active listening skills which are essential for good communication.

#### WEEK 4: PROGRAMS TO ASSIST MILITARY FAMILIES POST-DEPLOYMENT

The presentation used as a practice model was named “Programs to Assist Military Families Post-Deployment”. This presentation discussed locally found resources that can be utilized by clergy or chaplains as well as military families.

The lesson plan included reference for encouraging spiritual disciples such as prayer/mediation. Utilizing and encouraging personal prayer and meditation for military families relates them to God and helps them deal with everyday situations. When a family is encouraged to pray, God is put at the center of the process. When God is put at the center it makes the Christian more receptive to God’s love and it reduces anxiety about what is going on around them because the focus of trust is placed off of the situation and it focused on God and his faithfulness.

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

The pastor can encourage listening prayer as a means of resource. In 2 Corinthians Paul discusses his fear to the church that as the serpent deceived Eve that our minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ<sup>42</sup>. One has to practice listening prayer to understand what direction God wants them go. As Paul discussed in the above scripture that we can be deceived so we have to pay attention to God. Also the scripture encourages the reader not to complicate what is in Christ; not to complicate what is in the gospel. It means that God will articulate a word or command that will simplify, heal and deliver us in our situation<sup>43</sup>. Hearing God not only changes minds but also a situation. Thus, the pastor is encouraged to keep the Gospel message simple when conveying it to the military couple as a means of a resource.

The lesson plan discussed means of support, such as FOCUS and VA Chaplain Service. FOCUS is a program offered on Navy and Marine Corp installations is a program such as Families Overcoming and Coping Under Stress (FOCUS). The FOCUS program has an adult/parent, child/children, and family components and is delivered in eight sessions. The goal of the intervention is to promote healthy development in children by increasing positive family relationships and coping skills through the use of psycho-education, cognitive-behavior therapy, and narrative. The FOCUS program also uses a strength-based model, family strengths, adaptive coping responses, and available resources and is highlighted throughout treatment<sup>44</sup>. This program is designed to assist military couples, without faith-based counseling. Referral to the program will act as a continuing education for couples who need more intense assistance.

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<sup>42</sup> 2 Corinthians 11:3.

<sup>43</sup> Steve Sampson. *You Can Hear the Voice of God: How God Speaks in Listening Prayer*. Grand Rapids: Chosen Books, 2003, 24.

<sup>44</sup>MacDermid, Shelley. "MFRI Purdue University." *Military Family Research Institute at Purdue University*. July 2008. <http://www.cfs.purdue.edu/mfri> (accessed 05 01, 2012), 4.

Local VA medical centers will also have a Chaplain Service able to assist both clergy and military families. These chaplains have been trained to understand the additional stressors of mental or physical diagnosis, spiritual trauma, and emotional breakdowns. VA Chaplain Services are willing to assist local clergy in training, resources specific to the area, and can consult with the military family directly if needed.

The lesson plan included creating a military friendly society within the church as another means of support. The military family needs the faith community to help them create a healthy home environment. Families need concepts based on covenant, grace, empowering, and love. The church itself should resemble a family and its members are described as children of God and brothers and sisters in Christ. Selby states<sup>45</sup>:

*Understanding of the church as a “family” has its origin in the determination of the New Testament to speak of the human situation in terms of transformed relationship... [We must] recognize that the language of family and kinship is there in relation to church not for the purpose of encouraging some of the attributes which we have been seen to be associated with the concept of family in our time. Rather, it is there to emphasize the character of the transformation which has taken place in the relationships which human beings have to each other and to God in the light of God’s grace.*

The church has the opportunity to take care of military families and become their extended family and act as a model for the family. The church can follow the following principals<sup>46</sup>:

1. The church must be a place of diversity that support military families who come from various social classes, races, ages, backgrounds, and religious experiences.
2. The church needs to be a place where people can get to know one another. And unity is based only in Jesus Christ.

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 359.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 365.

3. In order to be a resource the church must create (or re-create) roles for all its members. This may include programs that focus on spiritual formation, worship, hospitality, and justice, that are unique to the military community.

The church should be a place of peace (shalom). The concept of shalom in the church will promote an atmosphere of peace in the military members home. A biblical example is found in Isaiah<sup>47</sup>:

*The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. The infant will play near the cobra's den, and the young child will put its hand into the viper's nest.*

Thus, the term shalom represents a culture characterized by justice and righteousness as well as peace and is described in the above passage. If a hurting military couple comes to the church for post-deployment for marital issue assistance, and the church is not equipped to help them, they did not find peace. This makes the concept of peace within the home for the military family not possible for lack of assistance.

To continue outreach to these families beyond the doors of the church, the church can establish a fostering system. Individuals will to foster or “adopt” these couples provide support for the military families on a deeper level, within their homes and lives. These individuals can pray with the family, provide breaks for the family for the couple's scheduled time together, and ease tension through communication facilitation. These volunteers should be carefully screened by the clergy or chaplain to ensure they live according to the good news of the gospel, have excellent communication skills, and will not try to take charge of the family.

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<sup>47</sup> Isaiah 11:6-8 NIV.

The church may also implement other supportive programs based on the needs of the couples and regional cultural needs. Such activities can include special picnic lunches to allow these similar families to interact. Below are a scripture basis to Christian covenant communities and how the local church provides a means of support to the military family through hospitality and encouragement.

Scripture passages that can be shared by the clergy or chaplain are:

1. “Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling (1 Peter 4:9 [NIV])<sup>48</sup>. This hospitality means we are to be kind to strangers and be welcoming to guest. Military families can utilize this when welcoming assistance in the home.

2. “Not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another - and all the more as you see the Day approaching” (Hebrews 10:25 [NKJV])<sup>49</sup>. This is a reminder that some members of the church or congregation may need gentle encouragement to return to gatherings.

3. “But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ” (2 Corinthians 11:3 [NKJV])<sup>50</sup>. This scripture encourages the reader not to complicate matters. Simple is desirable and Christ-like.

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

## FOLLOW-UP CARE

During the research phase, follow-up was used to discuss how each church could implement the ministry model. Each participant shared their thoughts on the way ahead and the final workshop was closed with prayer. The Ministry Model for Reintegration uses follow-up with each couple to assess the current state and needs of each couple. At this time, the clergy or chaplain conducts a spiritual assessment.

When an assessment is completed on a service member or their family then the pastor can identify a plan to assist the family. A Gallup poll found that 50% of elderly people surveyed said they wanted their doctors to pray with them as they faced death, and 75% said that physicians (and therapists) should address spiritual issues as part of their care<sup>51</sup>. If this holds true in the secular arena then it should hold true in the local church and its members.

This spiritual assessment is based on Fitchett's 7x7 model for spiritual assessment<sup>52</sup>. This model is composed of seven areas of concentration that cover a wide range of spiritual experience, beliefs, and needs. These areas are:

1. Belief and meaning: What beliefs does the person have which give meaning and purpose to his or her life? What major symbols reflect or express meaning for this person? What is the person's story? Are there any current problems which have a specific meaning or alter established meaning? Is the person presently or has he or she in the past been affiliated with a formal system of belief (i.e. church)?

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<sup>51</sup> Patterson, JoEllen. *Essential Skills in Family Therapy: From the First Interview to Termination*. New York: The Guilford Press, 2009, 24

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

2. Vocation and obligations: Do the person's belief and sense of meanings in life create a sense of duty, vocation, calling, or moral obligation? Will any current problems cause conflict or compromise in this person's perception of his or her ability to fulfill these duties? Are any current problems viewed as a sacrifice or atonement or otherwise essential to this person's sense of duty?

3. Experience and emotion: What direct contacts with the sacred or divine or with the demonic has the person had? What emotions or moods are predominately associated with these contacts and with the person's beliefs, sense of meaning in life, and associated sense of vocation?

4. Courage and growth: Must the meaning of new experience, including any current problems, be fit into existing beliefs and symbols? Can the person let go of existing beliefs and symbols in order to allow new ones to emerge?

5. Ritual and practice: What are the rituals and practices associated with the person's beliefs and meaning in life? Will current problems, if any, cause a change in the rituals or practices the persons feels are required or in the person's ability to perform or participate in those which are important to him or her?

6. Community: Is the person part of one or more formal or informal communities of shared beliefs and meaning in life, ritual, or practice? What is the style of the person's participation in these communities?

7. Authority and guidance: Where does the person find the authority in his or her beliefs, meaning in life, vocation, rituals, and practices? When faced with doubt, confusion, tragedy, or conflict, where does he or she look for guidance? To what extent does the person look outside or inside him- or herself for guidance?



During the assessment, clergy and chaplains should ensure that they use open ended questions to encourage involved and representative responses. Patton states, “Pastoral counseling involves all of the wisdom that the pastor has developed in pastoral care plus the ability to structure the counseling situation through the use of questions”<sup>53</sup> There are four types of questions that the pastor can use to gage conversation with each individual family member. The four questions are: lineal, circular, strategic, and reflexive.

Lineal questions are used questions are investigative, deductive, and content-loaded, involving just the facts. The information gathered by these questions is thought to explain the problem. Lineal questions point to something or someone who is wrong or need to be fixed.

Circular questions are used the pastor will use questions that are exploratory and stem from a posture of curiosity this is considered circular. Circular questions help to expose patterns in the relationships. For example, a pastor might ask, “What, if anything, is different about the days when you first deployed to the combat-zone”?

Strategic questions, or influencing questions, are challenging in nature and are used to pose new possibilities in a particular direction. For example, the questions would be directed so the family would change the way they currently respond to a family problem.

Reflexive questions facilitate change in the family without moving the family in any particular direction. The way the researcher views the reflective questions as one of the most important aspects of the questions that assist in facilitating change. This goes back to the scripture in Proverbs that a family can make a plan to change but it is God who directs the steps of that family<sup>54</sup>.

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<sup>53</sup>John Patton. *Pastoral Care: An Essential Guide*. Abingdon Press. Nashville, 2005, 106.

<sup>54</sup> Proverbs 19:22

When assessing the service member special attention should be placed on the extent to which they may be in crisis and how you can assist them in identifying where they have been and where they would like to go. This is an excellent time to consider available resources.

Additional questions can be asked to address the level of crisis. These questions need to evaluate the following:

1. Is there a specific event that brought them to the pastor, or has there been pileups of life events that has created stress?
2. Is the stressor of an acute or chronic nature?
3. What extent are the life stressors an underlying cause of the presenting problems?
4. What resources does the service member have for coping?
5. Is the stress imposing a burden that exceeds their coping resources?

## CHAPTER 4

### PREPARING THE LOCAL CHURCH

In Acts 5:42 it says, “And daily in the temple and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ”<sup>1</sup>. From this scripture it is clear that in the early church people met together in their homes for fellowship and encouraging each other as they lived out their faith in Christ. These fellowships built up the early church. The early church experienced periods of persecution for the first few centuries after Christ and were not able to meet openly. The home was used to care for and shield the gospel in the lives of believers. Arnold states, “They relied on the more protective environment of the home to nurture and protect the gospel in the lives of the believer”<sup>2</sup>. What can be learned from the early church is that having fellowship in a small group is beneficial because the gospel encourages the believer. This model defines a small group as people who come together for a specified amount of time and are led by a leader who assists the participants through a process of reintegration. This is done through providing a safe environment for reconnection and spiritual development. This concept of having small groups in the church is still relevant today and is the basis and intention for implementing in the researchers reintegration ministry to be utilized in the local church. This model is based on small groups and is faith-based. Arnold states “A small group is intent on participating with Christ in

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<sup>1</sup> Acts 5:42 NKJV

<sup>2</sup> Jeffery Arnold. *The Big Group on Small Groups*. InterVarsity Press: Downers Grove, 2004, 4.

building his ever-expanding kingdom in the hearts of individuals, in the life of the group and, through believers, in the world”<sup>3</sup>.

## TRAINING LAY LEADERS AND VOLUNTEERS

In Ephesians 4:11-16 it discusses various aspects of church leadership with Christ as the head to equip believers for the works of service<sup>4</sup>:

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

The above scripture states that ministry leaders are to equip God’s people for works of service and each Christian is a part of the body. Each part of this body relies on one another to function properly and recover from injury, as used in the context of this ministry model. The lay leaders to be developed to be equipped and trained to conduct the s ministry model on behalf of the church or congregation’s leader.

Prior to instituting a faith-based model of ministry for reintegration, the foundation for the model must be in place. The pastor is encouraged to find a good leader and church volunteers

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 7.

<sup>4</sup> Ephesians 4:11-16( NIV).

within the congregation who display good leadership qualities to be a facilitator and work with military families. Some of the qualities are the person should be mature, have good Christian character, and have a heart dedicated to God. Further, the person should be grounded in biblical knowledge and want to serve others. For example, in Philippians 2:6-8, Paul encourages the Philippians to be just like Christ<sup>5</sup>:

Think of yourselves the way Christ Jesus thought of himself. He had equal status with God but didn't think so much of himself that he had to cling to the advantages of that status no matter what. Not at all. When the time came, he set aside the privileges of deity and took on the status of a slave, became *human*! Having become human, he stayed human. It was an incredibly humbling process. He didn't claim special privileges. Instead, he lived a selfless, obedient life and then died a selfless, obedient death—and the worst kind of death at that—a crucifixion.

Arnold quotes, “Servant will take the lead when things aren't glamorous, and they may be willing to take up the rear when others may benefit during more visible time”<sup>6</sup>. Some of the leadership skills and traits have to be taught to lay leaders and church volunteers by the pastor because they might not be developed. The following lists are leadership skills that will can be built upon and explored with lay leaders:

1. Providing understanding of various dynamics of small groups as the groups intended in this model are no larger than ten people or five couples
2. Understanding the importance of a Covenant Communities:
3. Establishing a Covenant with participants:
4. Logistics planning
5. Learning effective questioning techniques
6. Explaining the importance of confidentiality in the group setting

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<sup>5</sup> Philippians 2:6-8 (The Message).

<sup>6</sup> Jeffery Arnold. *The Big Group on Small Groups*. InterVarsity Press: Downers Grove, 2004, 34.

## 7. Follow-up for additional Military Support Resources

The leader of the group can utilize the model's spiritual assessment to understand the dynamics of what the group needs and then provide ministry according to the needs of the group. First the lay leader has to understand the purpose of the small group and that is to assist participants through the emotional healing process, community sharing, and outreach. This is accomplished through encouragement from Scriptures, fellowship, and prayer. Some of the dynamics that may exist in the group are individuals from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, individuals growing up from various denominational backgrounds, and serving from different Department of Defense Services. For example, you may have participants from Navy, Marines, Army, Air Force, or Coast Guard.

Teaching the lay leader how to establish ground rules and one of them is not talking about a member of the group if that person is not present. The Bible is clear and supports no gossiping as Ephesians 4:29 states, "Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear"<sup>7</sup>. Confidentiality and stating in the ground rules that what is talked about in the group stays in the group. Honesty rule making lay leaders aware that they should be honest and encourage participants to be honest as well.

The importance of covenant community is that it establishes roles and functions of the group and also relates our importance to God. This is one reason why the pastor should train and assist the lay leader in establishing the covenant for group participants. One example in the Bible

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<sup>7</sup> Ephesians 4:29 ESV

where one can find an example of covenant is in Genesis 1 and is established between Adam, Eve, and God. Specifically, Genesis 1:28-30<sup>8</sup>:

“God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food.” And it was so.

In the above Scripture we see God communicating with Adam and Eve a set of promises which is a covenant. This defines the word covenant. Arnold also supports this definition of covenant and states, “This simply means that he chooses to communicate with us in a form of a set of promises (a covenant). Through the creation covenant, the subsequent covenants with Noah, Abraham, Moses, and David and then the New Testament covenant of communion, we learn of God’s grace and the responsibilities that are ours as God’s chosen people”<sup>9</sup>. This example of covenant can also be an example of a covenant established amongst believers because we are a part of covenants in our everyday lives and even in our churches. Some of our churches have established church covenants that members abide by. For the purpose of the project the covenant should include ground rules, leadership and participant roles, lesson topics for upcoming weeks, and a signature for the participants. Also this covenant is to be established with the group participants because then there will be in from them because they helped establish it. An example of the ground rules are:

1. Participants will respect what each other says.

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<sup>8</sup> Genesis 1:28-30 (NIV)

<sup>9</sup> Jeffery Arnold. *The Big Group on Small Groups*. InterVarsity Press: Downers Grove, 2004, 50.

2. As participants we will keep what each other say and not talk about after the group session.
3. We will be honest.
4. We will let each person talk and not interrupt each other while each other are talking.
5. We will be on time to each session.
6. We will not use our cell phones during our sessions.
7. We will be honest with each other in the group.

The covenant can also go into attendance requirement the small groups should not last more than six sessions once a week over a course of six weeks and last for an hour and a half. Lastly, when the group identifies a covenant it helps participants understand its purpose for meeting and establishes accountability.

Another item to be taught to lay leaders is planning the logistics. The meetings with the participants should be at a church and not within a home as to move the discussion to a neutral territory and allow the couple to retreat, together, to the emotional and spiritual safety of their home. Children will be a distraction within the small groups so it is implied that the church will have child care available for couples with children or a volunteer who may watch the children within the home. The session room should not be too large as to make the feeling lack intimacy and should have the capabilities for learning media such as a project to display a power point or a movie to assist the lay leader in conducting the sessions. The chairs should be arranged in a “U” shape to encourage discussion and ensure that all participants can see the media used during sessions. Lastly, what goes with logistics is the amount of time the space within the church will be needed to be used, ensuring parking, bathroom access, access to a water fountain or coffee,



ability to turn on power for those building which require a special key, and other items specialized to churches, congregations, and participants. Again the sessions should not run longer than an hour and a half.

Another aspect is to train the lay leader and volunteer how to actually conduct the small group session; this includes several components. The lay leader should pray before each small group session for guidance, patience, and insight. The lay leader should be prepared for each session by know what topic will be discussed, have question for discussion prepared, and know the scriptures that will be utilized in teaching the session. The lay leader should be prepared on how to lead the session they should be on time, begin on time, and end on time. Each session should begin with group prayer. Relevant information should be taught to the participants in regards to reintegration, discussion questions for participants made by the leader. The leader needs to know how to management outbursts, disruptions, and guide the group to stay on the topic. Lastly, the lay leader should not dominate the session but should act as a facilitator.

The pastor will also need to answer the following questions which will guide in how the ministry sessions will be conducted:

1. How can the sessions establish meaningful support for the military couple? The overall focus is establishing a community of support for military families post-deployment.
2. When will you begin this ministry?
3. How will you advertise that this is a new ministry the church is presenting to the congregation? Examples are through flyers, church announcements, email, and church bulletins.
4. Who will you choose to lead the group under your supervision?
5. What is the accountability of the ministry leaders and participants?

6. How long do you want to conduct training for your lay leaders before the work with groups? This all depends on what skills and knowledge the lay leader already possess.

Below are considerations when considering the choice of lay leader:

1. Has a knowledge and desire to work with military families (a military member or retiree makes a good candidate).
2. Has a reputable character within your congregation.
3. Has respect for the military and its members.
4. Has a relationship with God.
5. Has a love for the military community willing to learn and has listening skills.
6. Is compassionate.
7. Humble.
8. Has facilitated a small group or is willing to learn.

When discussing the task with a potential lay leader, remember to include these items in the job description:

1. Commit to leading at least one full rotation of session lasting six weeks in length.
2. Be the administrator of all the functions of the group to include logistics including communication with the church leader, follow-up on any issues that arise during session, and completing spiritual assessments.
3. Lead the group according to the defined established covenant.
4. Recruit military families who have experienced a deployment and would benefit from a reintegration ministry.

5. Turn in a progress report from each session to the church leader and maintain regular communication.
6. Participate in training provided by the church and willingness to perform independent research to benefit the sessions as approved by the leadership
7. Pray for the military members present, those in harm's way, and their families.

Throughout the model volunteers are discussed and used to facilitate family support and participation. The following is a job description and responsibilities for church volunteers:

1. Willingness to bond with an individual military family for consistent support throughout group sessions, fellowships, and beyond.
2. Be mature and have a working knowledge and understanding of the dynamics of the military family who have experience a deployment.
3. Have a relationship with God.
4. Assist the lay leader tasks such as advertising, setting up/breaking down the space for the sessions, and individual prayer.
5. Be a good listener and offer wise advice based on experience, biblical scriptures, and pastor guidance.

The pastor should follow a clear path in choosing and developing lay leaders who will work together as a team to implement this program into the local church. These lay leaders have to have a spiritual gift of leadership. It is also important that the pastor appoint a ministry leader who will serve and will be responsible for making sure this ministry is implemented with their particular church. Often times within small group ministry churches do not appoint a leader

specifically for small groups. The dynamics are different and this is supported by Bill Hybels; he states<sup>10</sup>:

The lack of a designated point leader over small groups will doom a ministry before it even gets off the ground. When you look at the kind of individual you want to oversee this organization in terms of small groups, what are some of the qualities and characteristics and experiences that you want that person to have? It all rises and falls on leadership. For churches thinking of starting a small group ministry, the most critical decision to make is whom has God anointed for this mission. Who will be the man or the woman who will embody and cast the vision, organize and implement the small group ministry? The selection of that individual sets the dominos in motion for everything that follows. We've had several different people lead our small group ministries over the years at Willow. But I always made sure that they have the spiritual gift of leadership. This is the leadership-intensive position around a church. This is not just an administrative function not just a shepherding function, even if that's what small groups are about. What can be learned from this quote is the importance of selecting the right leader for a

small group, and making sure that person has the gift of leadership. This also holds true for who the pastor selects to be the leader for the reintegration ministry for military member and their families.

## STEPS OF IMPLEMENTATION

This last section is intended to be recommendations on exactly how to implement the researcher's reintegration program within the local church. The first item to consider is to evaluate the church facility. The church and its congregation will need to determine if they are willing to support the ministry and have the time and or funding to conduct the program. The church may benefit from identifying the weaknesses, strengths, and its ability to support such a

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<sup>10</sup> Bill Donahue and Russ Robinson. *The Seven Deadly Sins of Small Group Ministry*. Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 43.

program. Some churches and congregations may find it advantageous to work with the sister church to set up a mutual program.

Second the church will need to determine what aspect of reintegration is affecting their military service members and their families. Once this is established the small group sessions can identify goals and objectives. These goals and objectives should be clearly defined and include its goals, values, and will need to be communicated to the congregation. Leadership should determine the means in which evaluation of the ministry program will occur assessing if established outcomes and goals are achieved.. This can come from all perspectives the volunteers, lay leaders, military members, military spouses, and the group participants.

Third, the church will have to identify which military families will participate in the program. The church will also determine what non-spiritual reintegration issues these families are facing and determine if the program is appropriate for the couple. For instance, adjusting to an amputation may have more to do with the logistics of how the house is set up than marital issues. Is the church location to the military installation? Know the number of military personnel that are members or attending the church; know the number of retired veterans and active duty who may be interested in supporting this ministry. This is important because veterans and active duty have gone through several stressors and can relate to the participants. They are also excellent advisors because they know military resources, and can help others interact with military families. Then decide what events you may want to plan when you conclude the small group sessions. Planning and deciding what families will benefit from being adopted as a means for follow-up resource and support.

Fourth, the research project identified the dynamics and stressors military members and their families' experience. Having knowledge of those issues will be paramount as you identify the ministry approach.

Fifth, the church will want to identify leaders that will be involved in implementing and act as advisor for the ministry. Utilizing the job descriptions is a guide and looking for leaders within the congregation who have served in military, local and base resources can be utilized for leadership development in addition to the pastoral staff. Also the advisors provide insights about the operation of the program, identify problems, and can act as catalyst for pitfalls. They will be instrumental promoting this program.

Six, make a budget and secure funding. The budget should estimate the cost of training supplies and materials, space, equipment, and labor. The small groups should be no more than ten participants and taking this into consideration when seeking staff and volunteers to run the ministry. Determine how much funding can come from within your organization, and explore outside funding from private organizations and government agencies.

Seven, define the leadership approach and select military resources. When determining the leadership approach asking how and what you want to your military families post-deployment. Then military resources can be utilized based on the approach.

Eight, from prior guidance establish standards and expectations of both the leader and the church volunteers. The church should have a screen process that should include references.

Nine, the church leadership need to develop and train who they identify as church volunteers and lay leaders.

## MILITARY PERSONNEL

The church will need to determine and define who have recently deployment, come back from a deployment, or been back from a deployment to a combat-zone. Finding out the locations and combat-zones the military personnel have been located. Identifying the various jobs the military personnel performed is also invaluable as it will provide a means of understating. Other Ministry considerations to include are:

1. Wounded Warriors and Amputees
2. Emotional Wounds and Invisible Wounds (Spiritual)
3. Marital discord
4. Financial burdens
5. Dealing with the Death of a service member (Grief)

## MILITARY FAMILIES

The military family understands, has experienced, and should still be undergoing the stressors explained during the post-deployment phase. Their ideas and input on the ministry is valuable and should also be utilized for structure and support. The church will need to consider and understand their needs, such as childcare, when conducting small group sessions. The church will also need to consider the ages of children, the number of children. Knowing if the military spouse or the children are dealing with medical issues is useful information in planning.

## CONCLUSION

The basis of the model was a combination of small group sessions, and short term pastoral counseling for military families that is based on the model all taught to pastors in the general vicinity of the research area. The ministry model was composed of four two- hour sessions held weekly within the research area. The sessions addressed what families and service members might experience during reintegration. The model addressed what the military member can expect while they are readjusting with work and family and how pastors can assist through pastoral care tools.

The objective of the questionnaire was to find out what issues impact military service members and their families after deployment, what programs were offered to the military community post-deployment, and to validate interest in a faith-based reintegration program from the military community and the local congregations or churches. The questionnaire measured the issues and concerns of the service member and military spouses as it relates to post-deployment. It also measured how many military families are within local area churches and congregations, and exactly what programs are offered to these families.

The biblical basis of the model is pastoral care. The model integrated three types of pastoral skills to accomplish the goal of the model. Those pastoral skills are teaching coping skills, spiritual assessment, and identifying resources for military families. The model provides



clarity and guidance for the foundation of the reintegration model utilizing pastoral care to minister to military couples post-deployment.

The research proved community faith leaders are enthusiastic about assisting the military community and are willing to learn how they can assist these families within their churches and congregations. The Ministry Model for Reintegration directly works with issues that affect military families after deployment and can have a positive impact of outreach and support to these families. The model provides awareness; research performed indicated a lack of knowledge within leadership and the local churches on effective ministry to military families post-deployment. The issues of reintegration will become more continuous in churches and congregations as the drawdown of troops from combat-zones continue over the next few years. The model increases knowledge and trains couples to communicate and reconnect through the use of pastoral care tools.

In the introduction, the Theoretical Basis for the Thesis, A Statement of Methodology and A Review of Literature, provided an understanding the problem and associated issues.

Chapter 1, The Emotional Cycle of Deployment, provided research on the various issues that affect the service members and their families post-deployment. The emotional cycle of deployment is divided into three stages: pre-deployment, deployment, and post-deployment. Each stage has a stressor and normalization phase. The purpose of the information was to address where the service member and their family are in relationship to their emotion for awareness purposes. This chapter also provided a brief snapshot of what research is already known and what research is unknown as it relates to deployment and military families. The focus of present research has only been on the rapid cycle of deployment and then reintegration; none of which contained a spiritual aspect.

Chapter 2, Methodology, Presentation, and Findings, discussed the methodology and the design of the Ministry Model used in the field experience. The chapter provided a discussion of the purposes of the thesis and examined the following factors: hypothesis, research design, measurement, and instrumentation. The analysis of these items provided the reader with a clear understanding of the perspectives, procedures, and processes with which the researcher began the thesis.

Chapter 3, Ministry Model for Reintegration, the ministry model was presented. The model was broken down into five themes: Where I Have Been, The New Normal, Crisis Response & Pastoral Counseling, Programs to Assist Military Families Post-Deployment, and Follow-Up to accomplish the goal of the model. The topic of promoting resilience was discussed with the term resilience being defined. Each portion was discussed, activities for families were established, the role of the clergy or chaplain was explained, and scriptures were cited for support. The value of the assessment on the service member or their family assists the pastor in identifying a plan to assist the family. The assessment supports discovering underlying needs of the family to facilitate the concept of reconnection and spiritual healing. It was discussed the potential issues of harm during the assessment and how this can be dealt with during assessment.

This chapter also explored the importance of creating a positive environment within the local church or congregation as a means of support for military families. It was determined that military families would need the concepts based on covenant, grace, empowerment, and love.

The deployment of service members from the United States to various combat-zones is continual. This transition back to home life is both difficult and stressful; a reintegration program through the local church is an invaluable tool that can prevent the separation of a service member from his spouse or from a relationship with God. The objective of this thesis

was to increase awareness of the dynamics of military members and their reintegration back to their family after deployment. The thesis project used a questionnaire to reach pastor/chaplains, military service members, military spouses, and church volunteers to be utilized between local congregations and group participants. The implementation of a military reintegration program was utilized in the church all based on questionnaires, small groups, and observations by the military trained chaplain. The summary conclusions addressed how the model was facilitated by group participants, area pastors, and the congregations.

Providing an understanding of the experience of what service members and their families experience after deployment was beneficial in educating leaders within the local community on how to effectively reintegrate service members back to their families after deployment. The goal of the researcher was to educate congregations on the various issues facing the military community after deployment. The local church can play a vital role in assisting military families within their congregations with tools on how to work through reintegrating by using the researchers ministry model.

The ministry model was a success and the local churches within the community are more effective in their outreach to the military community, and they have an awareness of the needs that are specific to the military community. As a result of the reintegration model of ministry and its implementation pastors, chaplains and ministry leaders have better ways to meet the needs of military families within their congregations.

There was also successful collaboration between several ministry leaders within the local community. These leaders worked together and sought ways on how the model could be implemented within their respective churches. The hope is that more pastors and local

congregations will have a desire to provide a reintegration model of ministry to military families within their congregation after deployment.

While the sessions were being taught to pastors and ministry leaders in the local community several service members were excited to become a part of the ministry model and anticipated its implementation. There is more research that needs to be done in the area of how reintegration affects the family. The military has several resources for service members and their families as described in this project; while these can be used as support they are not faith-based models. The research in this project will be beneficial to those who provide ministry to military families and have a sincere desire in assisting them in transitioning from war to home.

The results from the questionnaire were instrumental in the development of the model of ministry. When the project was facilitated at the end there was ongoing dialogue between service members, their families, and faith leaders. Facilitating and implementing training at local churches and congregations is instrumental in seeing the gospel renewed in post-deployment families.

## APPENDIX 1

## MILITARY SPOUSES SURVEY RESPONSES

The following are the questions and results of the Military Spouse Survey:

1. Does your spouse serve in the armed forces?

Yes: 100 %                      No: %

2. In which branch(s) do they serve?

Army: %                      Navy: 33.3 %    Air Force: %

Marines: 100%    Coast Guard: 33.3 %

3. How many times have you experienced being away from your spouse because of deployments in the past 24 months?

One time: 100%    Twice: 0%    Three or more times: 0%

4. Do you have concerns about your military spouse since they returned from deployment:

Yes: 66.7 %                      No: 33.3 %

5. Since my spouse returned from OIF/OEF deployment, I have the following concerns:

Finances:33.3 % Communication:66.7 % Anger:33.3 % Stress:33.3 %

Resuming life together: 66.7 %

6. Did you attend a return a return and reunion brief offered by your unit:

Yes:100 % No: %

7. Did any of the following people offer you information about what to expect when your spouse returned home from deployment:

Chaplain:33.3 % Family Readiness Officer:66.7 % Pastor:0 % Church

Member: 0 %

No Person: 0% Person: % Person: % Person: %

8. The information I received in the return and reunion briefs was adequate:

Strongly Agree: 33.3 % Agree:33.3 % Neutral: 33.3%

Strongly Disagree: 0 % Disagree: 0 %

9. Do you have children?

Yes: 100 % No: %

10. I have the following concerns about my children's behavior since my spouse returned from deployment:

Displaying loyalty to the parent left behind: 33.3 %

Worry about the next deployment: 66.7 %

Feelings of abandonment due to deployment: 33.3 %

Conflict over household chores and homework: 33.3 %

Disagreement over new rules: 33.3 %

11. Do you attend a local church?

Yes: 100 % No: %

12. I have adequate coping skills after deployment and reintegrating with my spouse/service member:

Strongly Agree: 66.7 %    Agree: %

Strongly Disagree: 33.3 %    Disagree: %

13. My church offers a reintegration ministry:

Strongly Agree: 33.3 %    Agree: %

Strongly Disagree: 33.3 %    Disagree: 33.3 %

14. Would you be interested in being a participant in a reintegration program post-deployment if offered by your local church?

Yes: 100%    No: %

15. Do you agree with the following statement: "I have lost my faith in God during this time of reintegration with my spouse or family":

Yes: 100%    No: %

## APPENDIX 2

## MILITARY MEMBER SURVEY RESPONSES

The following are the questions and results of the Military Member Survey:

1. Are you currently serving in the armed forces?

Yes: 100 %                      No: %

2. In which branch(s) do you serve?

Army: %              Navy: %      Air Force: %

Marines: 100%      National Guard: %

3. Are you married?

Yes: 100 %              No: %

4. Do you have children?

Yes: 100 %              No: %

5. When were you last deployed (by return date if over-lapping):

With the last three months: %

Three-to-six months ago: %

Six months to a year ago: 100 %

Greater than one year: %



6. How many times in the past 24 months have you deployed?

One time: 50 %    Twice: 50 %    Three or more times: %

7. Did you receive pre-deployment and/or post-deployment briefs from your unit

Yes: 100 %                      No: %

8. During your post-deployment brief was reintegration with your spouse or children a

topic covered:

Yes: 100 %                      No: %

9. Who presented your post-deployment brief?

Chaplain: 100 %      Family Readiness Officer: %      Marine Corp Family

Team Building: %    I don't know: %

10. What concerns do you have with readjusting with your spouse, family, and/or children, post-deployment?

Resuming civilian life: 100 %

Communication: 100 %

Sufficient time for self: 50%

11. Do you attend a local church?

Yes: 100 %                      No: %

12. Does the church you attend offer a post-deployment reintegration program :

Yes: 50 %                      No: 50 %

13. If offered at your church, would be interested in participating in such a program:

Yes: 100 %                      No: %

14. I have adequate coping skills after deployment and reintegrating with my

spouse/service member:

Strongly Agree: %      Agree: 50 %

Strongly Disagree: %      Disagree: 50%

15. I have adequate coping skills after deployment and reintegrating with my spouse/service member:

Strongly Agree: %      Agree: 50 %

Strongly Disagree:50 %      Disagree: %

## APPENDIX 3

## PASTOR AND CHAPLAIN SURVEY RESPONSES

The following are the questions and results of the Pastor and Chaplain Survey:

1. What is your ministry position?

Chaplain: 66.7% Pastor: 33.3 % Priest: 0 % Lay Minister: 0 %

Person: % Person: % Person: % Person: %

2. I have a military ministry department at my church/chapel:

Yes: 66.7 % No: 33.3%

3. I have the following amount of military families in my church/chapel:

One-to-five: % Five-to-ten: %

Ten-to-twenty: 33.3 % Twenty or more: 66.7%

4. In the past 24 months how many of these families have experienced a deployment:

All of My Families: 100 % Five-to-ten: %

Ten-to-twenty: % Twenty or more: %

5. What types of ministries does your church/chapel offer military families after

deployment:

Prayer Ministry: 33.3 %

Pastoral Counseling: 100 %

Reintegration Ministry: 33.3 %

Other kind: %

6. My church provides information for service members and their spouses on how to reintegrate after deployment:

Strongly Agree: %

Agree: 33.3 %

Strongly Disagree: 66.7 %

Disagree: %

7. Would your church/chapel be interested in a model of ministry for reintegration to assist families and service members who have deployed

Yes: 100 %

No: %

## APPENDIX 4

## CHURCH VOLUNTEER SURVEY RESPONSES

The following are the questions and results of the Pastor and Chaplain Survey:

1. I would be interested in learning tools on how to assist families who are experiencing reintegration after deployment:

Yes: 100 %                      No: %

2. I would like to help set up/clean up and share a fellowship activity with military families:

Yes: 87.5 %                      No: 12.5 %

3. I would be willing to adopt a military family after deployment and build a relationship with the family:

Yes: 75.0 %                      No: 25.0 %

## APPENDIX 5

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The Graduate School at Liberty University

July 18, 2012

Carla Barry  
IRB Approval 1355.071812: Military Service Members: A Manual for  
Reintegration after Deployment

Dear Carla,

We are pleased to inform you that your above study has been approved by the Liberty IRB. This approval is extended to you for one year. If data collection proceeds past one year, or if you make changes in the methodology as it pertains to human subjects, you must submit an appropriate update form to the IRB. The forms for these cases were attached to your approval email.

Thank you for your cooperation with the IRB and we wish you well with your research project.

Sincerely,



Fernando Garzon, Psy.D.  
Professor, IRB Chair

(434) 592-4054

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## VITA

Carla Marie Barry

## PERSONAL

Born: August 5, 1972

Married: Willis E. Barry, SR, July 2, 1998.

Children: Willis Edward, JR, born May 3, 1995.

Josie Ann Marie, born May 4, 2001.

Ethan Jeremy, born September 2, 2004.

## EDUCATIONAL

B.A., Southwestern College, 1994.

M.A., Northern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1997.

M.Div., McCormick Theological Seminary, 1999.

## MINISTERAL

ORDINATION: August 12, 1999, Evangelical Church Alliance, Chicago, Illinois.

## PROFESSIONAL

United States Navy Chaplain Corp Chaplain Candidate, 1996-1999.

United States Navy Chaplain Corp, 2000-present.

## PROFESSIONAL SOCIETIES

Member, National Naval Officers Association, 2009-present.

Member, Military Officer Association of America, 2009-present.