

Quick Tips for Keeping a Strong Relationship During Deployment

Some ways to nurture your love through the ups and downs of deployment:

- **Talk about your upcoming separation.** Set aside some quiet time to talk about your feelings and plan how each of you will manage during your time apart.
- **Discuss how you will stay in touch.** Explore the available options, such as e-mail, phone calls, and regular mail.
- **Keep busy and stay active if you are the at-home spouse.** The more fulfilled you feel, the better you will handle separations and difficult times. (Of course, if you have children you won't have concerns about not being busy.)
- **Share daily happenings from home.** Hearing about your life (even the everyday routine) will help your deployed spouse feel closer to you.
- **Learn about your spouse's job and other interests.** Learning what your spouse's life is like will help you better understand his or her experiences while you are apart.
- **Send care packages.** Be sure to include special treats, funny notes, and items that have special meaning for the two of you.
- **Record your thoughts in a journal to share with your spouse.** You may want to keep an online journal with pictures for your spouse to access over the Internet.
- **Record a tape or CD with songs that remind you of your spouse.** Make a copy for each of you.
- **Send handmade coupons to your deployed spouse.** Your coupons might be for a special dinner or hour-long backrub when your partner returns home.
- **Be realistic about communication.** Keep in mind that your deployed spouse may be in an area with limited mail or e-mail service, or too busy to respond right away.

Your Family Support Center can give you information and support on many issues that affect service members and their families. And Military OneSource, a free 24/7 service from DoD, available to all active-duty, Guard, and Reserve members and their families, provides information and referrals plus face-to-face counseling. Call 1-800-342-9647 or access <http://www.militaryonesource.com>.

© 2007 Ceridian Corporation, Military OneSource. All rights reserved. 010907