

# Preparing Your Relationship For Military Life

*These strategies are tailored to address the specific emotional and psychological challenges faced by couples in the military, helping them maintain a strong, healthy relationship despite the distance and stress.*

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## **1. Effective Long-Distance Communication**

Utilize various communication methods (emails, letters, video calls) to stay connected. Be expressive and detailed in sharing daily experiences and emotions.

## **2. Coping with Separation Anxiety**

Acknowledge feelings of loneliness and anxiety. Engage in activities or hobbies that are fulfilling and maintain a sense of normalcy.

## **3. Dealing with Military Stress**

For the military partner, find healthy ways to decompress and share work-related stresses without overwhelming your partner. For the non-military partner, be a patient and understanding listener.

## **4. Creating Shared Experiences**

Plan activities that can be done together while apart, like watching the same movie simultaneously, or reading the same book.

## **5. Maintaining Trust and Honesty**

Trust and honesty are crucial, especially in long-distance relationships. Be open about feelings, challenges, and fears.

## **6. Managing Expectations**

Set realistic expectations about communication frequencies and availability. Understand that the military partner may not always be reachable.

## **7. Support Networks**

Both partners should develop strong support networks of friends and family. These networks can provide emotional support when your partner is not available.

## **8. Embracing Independence**

Use time apart as an opportunity for personal growth. Develop new skills, pursue education, or invest in personal hobbies.



## **9. Preparing for Reunion**

Discuss expectations for reunions. Sometimes, reintegration can be challenging, and it's important to be patient and understanding as both partners readjust.

## **10. Counseling and Support Groups**

Consider participating in counseling or support groups designed for military families. They can offer tailored advice and support.

## **11. Planning Future Visits**

Regularly plan and look forward to future visits. This gives both partners something positive to anticipate.

## **12. Expressing Appreciation and Love**

Frequently express love and appreciation. Small gestures, like sending care packages or love notes, can have a big impact.

## **13. Understanding Military Culture**

For the non-military partner, make an effort to understand military culture and the demands it places on service members.

## **14. Dealing with Changes**

Be prepared for changes in your partner due to their experiences. Offer a safe space for them to share and adapt together.

## **15. Encouraging Emotional Expression**

Foster an environment where both partners feel safe to express their emotions, whether it's through writing, talking, or other forms of expression.