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## WORKING ON YOUR MARRIAGE PREDEPLOYMENT

The period before a long scheduled absence can be extremely difficult. You might wonder how the separation will affect your marriage. With repeated deployments, you might ask, how can we go through this again?

An important time to work on your marriage is before you leave. You'll want to put effort into staying close, talking about what you both might need during the separation, about what worries you, and about what you have to look forward to once you're back together. Don't wait until you or your spouse is on the other side of the country or world to begin these conversations.

These tips can help:

- Prepare for the departure together. Decide how the bills will be paid (for example, online, at the end of the month, or as they come in). Write down the names of service and repair people and who to call for help (family, friends). The chart on the following page can help you keep a record.
- Talk! Discuss what's stressing you, how you are going to communicate during deployment, what kind of marriage you want, and what your plans and goals for the future are.
- Understand that you're both under stress and that it's normal to feel sad, afraid, or shorttempered. There may be more disagreements. Realize where they're coming from and don't overreact. Take a deep breath, talk about it, and know that this, too, shall pass. Stay positive!
- Spend time together. Shared experiences can bring you closer.
- Make plans together so that you have events to look forward to (buying a house, starting a family, having friends visit) when you are on your own.

 List one activity you will do each week for the first month; for example, exercise, engage in a hobby, meet a friend for coffee, join a support group, take your child on an outing with another family..

First week: \_\_\_\_\_

Second week: \_\_\_\_\_

Third week: \_\_\_\_\_

Fourth week: \_\_\_\_\_

 Use this space for any notes on how you might try out these tips.

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Use this chart to keep track of important contacts. As needed, include names, phone numbers, e-mail addresses, account numbers, payment due dates, and other helpful information.

**HOUSE**

Bank: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Mortgage company: \_\_\_\_\_

Insurance company: \_\_\_\_\_

Insurance broker: \_\_\_\_\_

Utility companies: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Electrician: \_\_\_\_\_

Plumber: \_\_\_\_\_

Carpenter: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**CAR**

Mechanic: \_\_\_\_\_

Dealership: \_\_\_\_\_

Lease company: \_\_\_\_\_

Loan company: \_\_\_\_\_

**KIDS**

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Babysitters: \_\_\_\_\_

Friends: \_\_\_\_\_

Pediatrician: \_\_\_\_\_

If you could work on one thing with your spouse before deployment, what would it be?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How could you get started working on this thing?

\_\_\_\_\_