Welcome Home!

You Served Faithfully, Honorably and with Pride!
Time to Relax

• Family functions
• See old friends
• Attend parties
• Go to clubs/bars

Increased access to alcohol and maybe drugs
A Different War at Home

- The war against drug and alcohol abuse and the other high risks associated with them
  - Since 9-11 the Army has had a 7% increase in problem drinkers*
  - Alcohol related incidents have increased for Soldiers returning home

* Reintegration Unit Risk Inventory Survey data
Alcohol/Drug Related Problems

- DUI
- Vomiting
- Hangover
- Unexpected guest for breakfast
- Unprotected sex and/or unwanted sex
- Possible STD
- Fighting
- Loss of control – doing stupid things
- Reduced work quality and performance
- Financial problems
- Injury
- Problems with friends and family
- Health related problems
- Spouse/child abuse
- Passing out
- Black outs
- Death
Risk Factors

• Potential factors that may contribute to substance abuse
  – Reduced Alcohol Tolerance
  – Stress associated with reintegrating into the family
  – PTSD
  – Boredom
  – Availability of drugs and alcohol
Tolerance

• Alcohol Tolerance – The body’s adaptation to alcohol use. It takes more alcohol to reach the same level of intoxication.

  • As tolerance increases you may not feel intoxicated, but you could be over the legal driving limit. Some alcohol dependent people can have a 0.2 or higher Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) and show little to no signs of being intoxicated.

  • As a person’s tolerance increases, so does their chances of eventually becoming alcohol dependent.

Note: Legal limit BAC for driving is .08
Tolerance - Example

When you first started drinking you may have starting feeling intoxicated after 2 or 3 beers

But after a while, it may taken up to 6 beers to feel the same way

This is the body’s way of adapting to the alcohol, but it can fool you into getting a DUI or other alcohol related incident
Tolerance

• Individuals with low tolerances or people who have not drank in a long time (i.e. deployed) may show effects of being intoxicated at BAC levels as low as 0.05.

• If you begin drinking on a regular basis, your tolerance level will quickly return and eventually surpass what it was before you deployed.
Tolerance - Example

Before you deployed, it may have taken a six pack before you felt the effects of the alcohol.

But now, it may only take 3 beers to feel the same way.

This happens because your body has not had alcohol in a long time and the tolerance level is reduced.
Reintegration

• The stress associated with potential conflict between spouses and children after a long separation.
  – New routines at home
  – Children resentful, afraid, or not bonding
  – Doing to much or not enough
  – Unfaithfulness

• Using drugs or alcohol to reduce this stress will only increase your problems at home.
PTSD

• Many Soldiers will experience some stress associated with their experiences while deployed
  – Loss of Fellow Soldier
  – Guilty feelings
  – Unpleasant memories

• These thoughts and feeling will subside over time in most of you
PTSD

• Some Soldiers will become overwhelmed by flashbacks, memories, nightmares, frightening thoughts, sleep disturbances, depression, anxiety, and irritability.

• If these symptoms persist, seek medical treatment.

• Do not try to use alcohol and/or drugs to overcome or reduce these symptoms; it will only make things worse.
The National Center for PTSD states that people with PTSD also tend to have substance abuse issues:

- 51.9% of men with PTSD abuse alcohol or are alcohol dependent
- 27.9% of women with PTSD abuse alcohol or are alcohol dependent
- 34.5% of men with PTSD abuse drugs or are drug dependent
Boredom

- Since we were notified of our deployment
  - You have been on an adrenaline high
  - Working 7 days a week at least 12 hours a day
- Now
  - Less excitement
  - Leave and then returning to normal duty days
- You may become a thrill seeker – Drive fast, party too much, try drugs, etc
Availability

• We know that some Soldiers used drugs and/or drank alcohol while deployed – of course no one in this unit

• Now you can buy alcohol almost anywhere (if you are 21) and drugs are pretty much available anywhere
Personal Courage: Possess the Personal Courage not to use drugs or abuse alcohol and to notify the Chain of Command of Soldiers that do.

Respect: Show your Respect to the Army, your unit, fellow Soldiers, and yourself by staying drug free and drinking responsibly.

Integrity: Stay true to the Army Values and Warrior Ethos by supporting the Army’s drug and alcohol policies.

Duty: Do your duty as a Soldier and stay mentally and physically tough by not using drugs or abusing alcohol.

Excellence: Exhibit honorable behavior on and off duty - don’t be a substance abuser!
Summary

• You have served Faithfully, Honorably and with Pride!
• Maintain that Warrior Pride!
• Don’t use drugs!
• If you drink, then drink
  – Responsibly
  – In moderation
  – Safely (DUI)
• Don’t use Reintegration, PTSD, or boredom as an excuse!