

A Battle Buddy's Guide To Relationships

“Men are disturbed not by things but by the view which they take of them”

Epictetus



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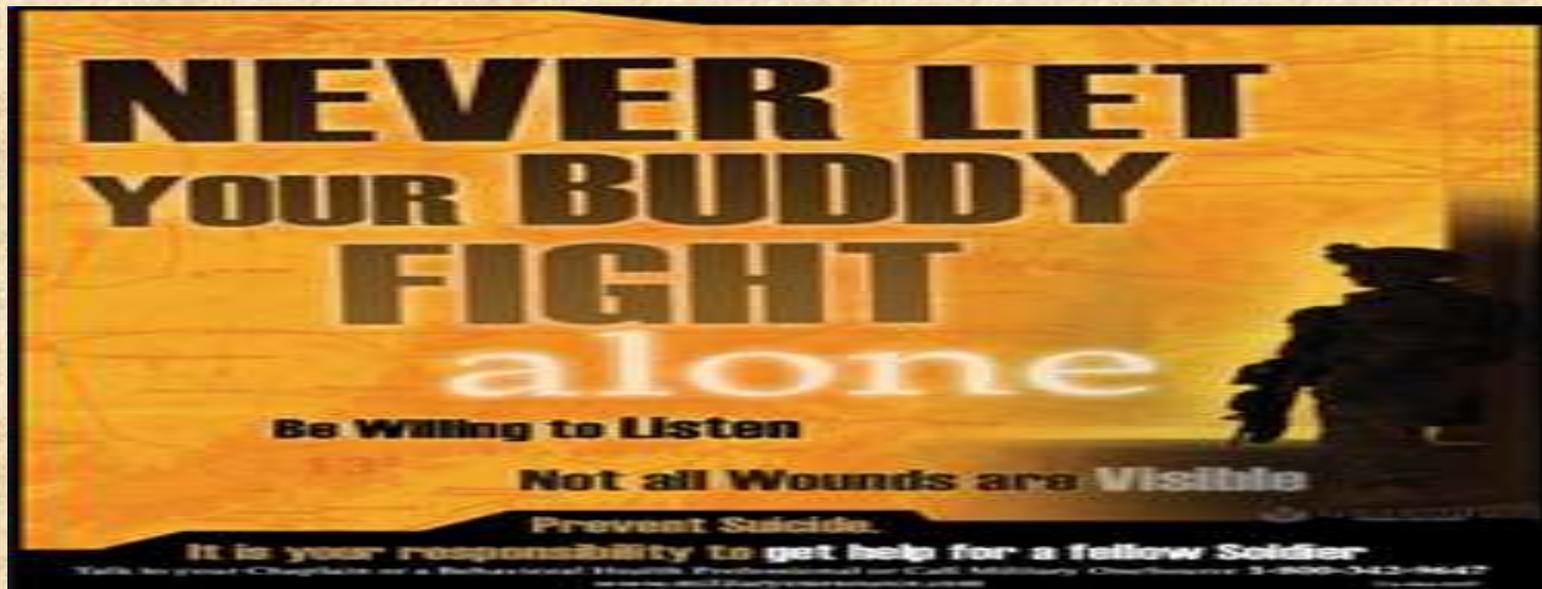
Troubled relationships can lead to many problems including divorce, financial, and substance abuse.

Relationship issues have also been identified by the Army as a factor in suicides in CY 2007.



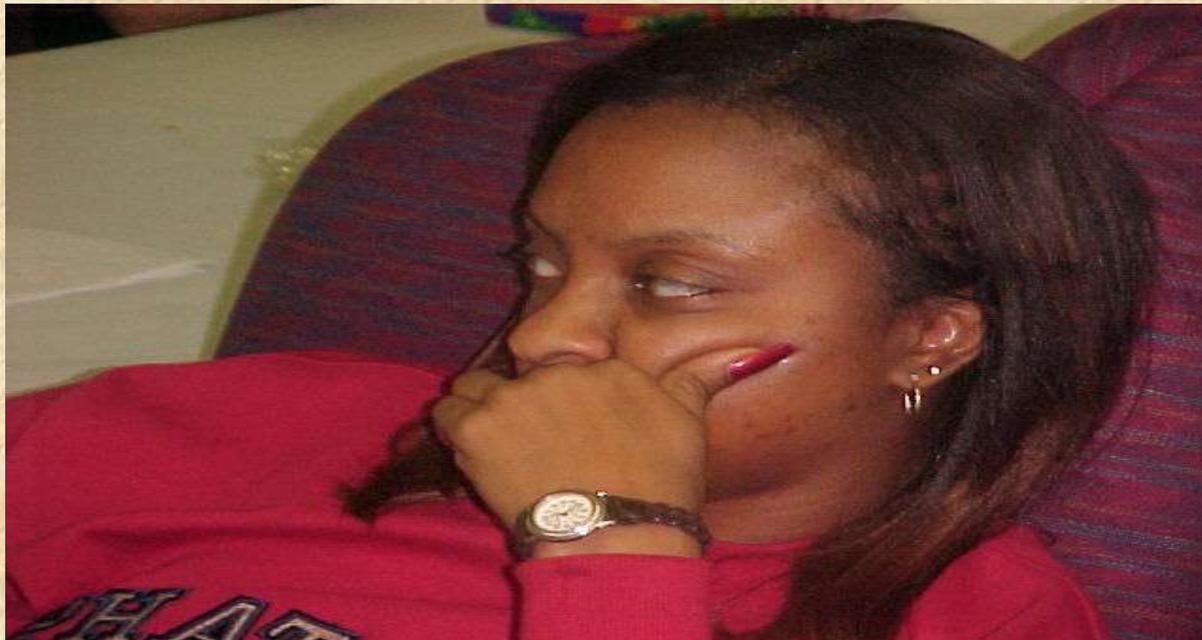
A Battle Buddy's Guide To Relationships

- A Battle Buddy helps take care of their fellow Soldier.
- A Battle Buddy stays close enough to pick up on changes in behavior and emotions and intervene to get help.



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- Everyone has relationships. Our first relationship is with ourselves. It is important to get to know ourselves and decide what we want in our relationships.



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What Do You Want In A Relationship?

RELATIONSHIP JOY	RELATIONSHIP HEARTACHE
* commitment, fidelity	* infidelity, pornography
* love	* self centered
* kindness	* deliberately hurting others, violence
* common goals	* apathetic, unwilling to work on relationship
* honesty in word and deed	* lying, secrets
* compliments	* name calling
* having fun together	* in a rut
* open to change	* controlling
* communication is respectful	* refusal to listen
* positive outlook/attitude	* alcohol or drug abuse
* common values/spirituality	* arguing; not "being on the same page"

Relationships with behaviors in the heartache scale can cause increased stress.

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Relationships in the fast lane – **WHY RUSH ?**



It takes time to get to know people.

People are like onions, several layers need to be peeled back to get to the core. Time invested in really getting to know each other forms a firm foundation.



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WHEN RELATIONSHIPS END

Most people will feel some of the following symptoms and emotions:

- guilt
- fear
- anger
- anxiety
- grief
- fatigue
- nausea
- muscle tension
- sweating/chills
- dizziness
- word loss
- mental confusion
- difficulty making decisions
- intrusive memories
- depression

Remember it is normal to feel a wide range of emotions. These feelings usually are temporary. Leaders and Battle Buddies need to be aware that a "Dear John or Jane" letters may leave Soldiers more vulnerable to impulsive behavior.

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WHEN RELATIONSHIPS END

- Let go in respectful manner
- Make a list of lessons learned about yourself and the relationship
- Work on yourself, call Military One Source, Chaplain, or other Helping Professionals
- If attracting people with issues, look at the core reasons and stop trying to change or help them
- If children are involved, work at staying in contact in a healthy manner
- Stay in touch with family and friends
- Remember, there will be opportunities for other relationships

A WORD TO FRIENDS AND FAMILY

When a person has a broken relationship, they may be more impulsive for 90+ days, especially during a deployment. Stay in supportive contact and get help for the person. Be aware of the following Suicide Warning Signals;

- Current suicide thoughts / plan
- Prior suicide behavior
- Giving away possessions
- Alcohol / drug abuse
- Perceived loss of military career
- Sudden purchase of firearms / weapons
- Domestic issues
- Legal problems
- Financial issues
- Depression / Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Relationship problems
- Traumatic childhood experiences



Never Leave A Battle Buddy Alone

Ask directly if they are thinking of suicide. If you get a yes answer, stay with the person until they see a helping professional.

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A Special Note About Substance Abuse and Relationships

Substance abuse can take a toll on relationships. Relationships are challenging already and when too much alcohol is added or illegal drugs are used the situation can deteriorate quickly.

(1) Get the facts about alcohol. Responsible drinking is 00013;

0 Drinking under 21

0 Drinking on duty

0 Drinking and Driving

1 Drink per hour

3 Drink maximum per day

* *also...* 0 medication and alcohol mixing



(2) If alcohol is being abused, seek help early - covering up is a form of enabling.

(3) Family violence is increased in homes where alcohol and drug abuse are present. Family violence is a crime and needs to be reported.

POINTS OF CONTACT

✓ **DURING DUTY HOURS**

(0800 – 1700)

UNIT CHAPLAINS

Department of Behavioral Health

(706) 544-3590 / 2273

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

(706) 545-1138 / 4415

Family Life (706) 545-5301/1760

Emergency – 911

✓ **AFTER DUTY HOURS**

(1701 – 0759)

Emergency Room, MACH

(706) 544-1502

Duty Chaplain – (706) 545-2218

Emergency – 911

✓ **Off Post Hours**

(24 Hours)

Military OneSource

1-800-342-9647

www.militaryonesource.com

Anonymous self-assessment

www.MilitaryMentalHealth.org

24-Hour Help Line – (706) 327-3999

Police Emergency - 911

Getting help is a sign of strength!



The DoD Questionnaire for National Security Positions (SF-86) has been revised. Specifically, question 21 which asks about mental health counseling and treatment now excludes counseling related to marital, family, or grief issues and counseling for adjustments from service in a military combat environment.