

THE USO PRESENTS



A MONTHLY SERIES FOR MILITARY FAMILIES

You're Leaving... Again?

WITH MATT & CORIE WEATHERS



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You're Leaving... Again?

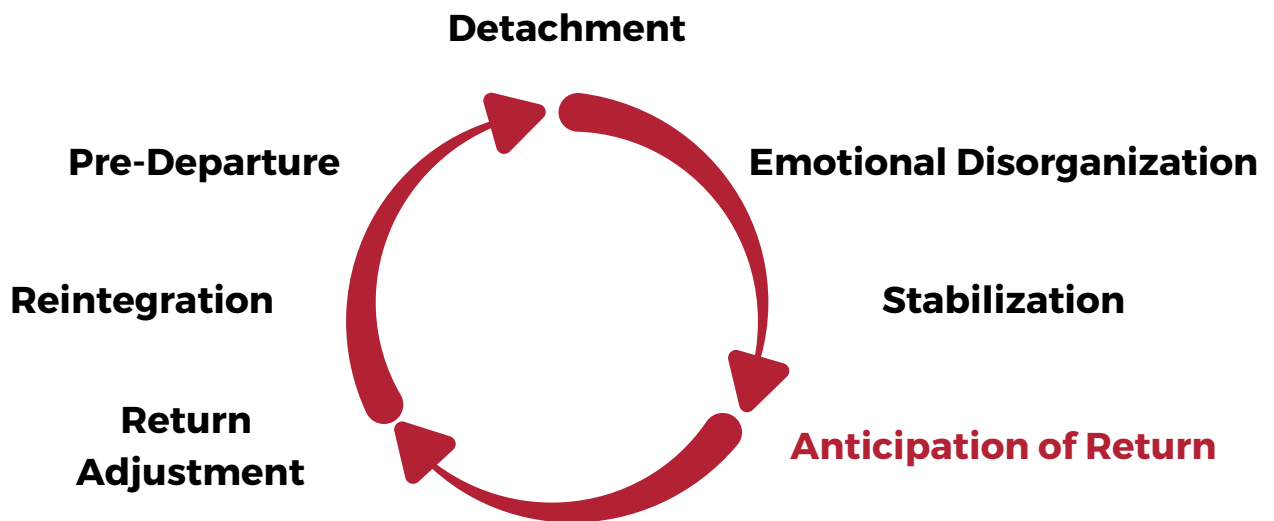
REBUILDING TRUST WITH
MATT & CORIE WEATHERS

Spending any time apart as a family can be difficult, but as a military family that happens more often than you would like. In fact, many military families spend almost half of their married time apart.

How do you keep a marriage and family strong despite the distance?

This series aims to answer that question. We believe that your relationship can not only stay connected, but it can actually grow and deepen even when you are apart. Whether you are going through a deployment, TDY, unaccompanied tour, temporary geo-batching situation, or other extended separation, this series is for you.

SEPARATION CYCLE- Finding a new pattern while living apart.



REBUILDING TRUST

"The secret to building trust with your spouse and others is to do the right thing, for the right reason, for a really long time."

~Matt & Corie Weathers



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A MARRIAGE WITHOUT HURT DOES NOT EXIST.

As much as we would like this to be true, it cannot be if we are all flawed and imperfect. Hurt will happen when there are two humans "doing life" together.

HURTS COME IN MANY SIZES AND SHAPES

- **SMALL INFRACTIONS (OFTEN BUT NOT ALWAYS ON ACCIDENT)**

Small infractions are often neglectful "one-off" behaviors that are not in line with your spouse's character. Addressed quickly and with a sincerely-contrite heart, they can become a means of growing together over time.

- **PERPETUAL INFRACTIONS OVER TIME**

The cumulative result of multiple small infractions can become a "Death of a Thousand Cuts."

Examples:

- Neglecting your spouse or agreed upon activities, household chores
- Unplugging from the family during key moments
- Not communicating on important issues
- Breaking or halfway fulfilling small promises

- **LARGE INFRACTIONS**

These rarely start with a desire to inflict harm but are destructive to the relationship. They are often seen where small infractions have been present for a while. There is often a motivation to push the boundaries and/or rules of the relationship. Behaviors are characterized as selfish and if consistent are a precursor to and indicative of an abusive relationship.

Examples:

- Betrayal (sexual, digital, financial, or otherwise)
- Disregard for boundaries
- Lying, deceiving, or hiding information
- No remorse or accepting responsibility for infractions



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UNDERSTANDING TRUST

We all differ in how much we naturally trust others. From the time we're born, all of our interactions with the world tell us who & what is safe. A good way to visualize our capacity & willingness to trust is to think of it as a "trust bucket."

- Capacity: How much trust you are naturally able to give. Depends on the amount of safety & predictability we experience growing up.
- Willingness: Your choice to extend that trust.

If you grow up feeling like you can trust the world & others, you are able to hold more trust. The opposite is also true. In marriage, we do & say things that can either build or damage trust.

DECIDING WHETHER TO REBUILD TRUST REQUIRES:

- Shared values of what marriage is
- Healthy Boundaries
- Deciding if healing the relationship is realistic or safe
- Both spouses agreeing they are "all in" to doing whatever it takes to heal the relationship.



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TRUST BUCKETS

Building Trust: Every time we do something "trustworthy", we pour water *into* our spouse's bucket. When they look inside, they can see all the behaviors and actions you invested in their "trust bucket".

Damaging Trust: Each infraction pokes a hole in our spouse's trust bucket, where the water starts to leak out. If there are too many infractions, we won't be able to keep up the level of water (trust) in our spouse's bucket, no matter how much we try.

Damaging trust requires that we have to over-work in order to give our spouse something that they can actually lean on as a reminder that they should trust us. But large infractions aren't just poking a hole in the bucket...it's like ripping the bottom off of it. And at that point it feels like there is nothing we can do to rebuild trust, so we stand there looking at a broken, empty bucket.



At that point, each spouse has a choice to make. If a marriage wants to repair & rebuild, then they have to choose to trust & to act in trustworthy ways. Any & all infractions have to stop. Immediately. New rules for the marriage have to be agreed upon regarding infractions. Agreeing to those rules is like putting a patch on the holes of your own bucket. Abiding by those rules is like pouring water into your spouses bucket. In time, that water (trustworthy behaviors) will heal that patch. Over a long time, those patches remind us that we can grow.

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RESOURCES MENTIONED:

RESOURCES :

"The Lifegiver 5 Minute Check-in@" www.life-giver.org

Better Love Assessment

For Couples Only, Feldhahn

PODCAST EPISODES:

The Impact of Family Readiness on Marriage

Communicating Through Change/PCS

Addiction & Marriage

My Spouse Doesn't Care About My Feelings

Set Backs in Marriage

COUNSELING:

The Lifegiver Directory: (Military spouse, veteran, or culturally competent clinicians) Lifegiver: Breathe life into your service family www.life-giver.org

OTHER RECOMMENDED RESOURCES:

Sacred Spaces: My Journey to the Heart of Military Marriage (Corie Weathers)

Lifegiver Podcast with Corie Weathers

