

Anchors Aweigh

Maintaining Healthy Military Relationships

GOAL:

To focus on healthy interactions with others.

SECTION TAKEAWAYS:

- Stronger Families Equal a Stronger Fleet.
- There are many proactive things you can do to forge a healthy relationship with your service member.
- All relationships take work... Military relationships may take a little more work.
- Long-term success requires healthy communication and planning.
- There are many resources available to you as a military couple to help navigate this lifestyle.

Wave Tops

- Characteristics of a Healthy Relationship
- Trusting Others
- Managing and Resolving Conflict
- Unique Aspects of Military Relationships
- What Does a Healthy Military Relationship Look Like?
- Barriers to Healthy Military Relationships
- Create a Communication Plan
 - Some Tips for Writing Your Communication Plan
 - The 5 Love Languages: The Secret to Love that Lasts* by Gary Chapman
- How Do You Build Trust in a New Military Relationship When You Don't Have Predictable Communication?
 - The Golden Rule
- Becoming Comfortable with the Uncertainty of Navy Life
 - Write a Navy Life Charter
- Spouse to Spouse Military Relationships

HOW DOES MAKING THE EFFORT TO EDUCATE YOURSELF ABOUT HEALTHY MILITARY RELATIONSHIPS BENEFIT YOU?

If we could give you just two words of advice to help cultivate your healthy military relationship they would be: BE PROACTIVE. By choosing to review this module of Anchors Aweigh, you are investing in yourself and your loved one. Relationship issues can take their toll on us, both personally and professionally: but they don't have to. Relationships are like bank accounts. When we take the time to proactively invest in each other by putting more effort into the relationship account, the relationship yields a higher return on investment. The more targeted effort you put into the account, the more healthy your relationship will be in the long run. When you are genuinely working to build your relationship together, you will definitely get more positive outcomes than the amount of effort you put in. It is gratifying to participate in a healthy relationship.

STRONGER FAMILIES EQUAL A STRONGER FLEET

The information presented in this module, perhaps more than any other, has the potential to change the trajectory of your Navy life experience.

One thing we know for sure in Navy relationships is that Stronger Families Equal a Stronger Fleet. It may seem like a stretch to you, but our most senior Navy leadership believes we can tie our national security directly back to the strength of our families on the home front.

If you're well versed in Navy life, self-sufficient, know where to go and who to ask for help, it really does make it much easier to navigate this lifestyle. The free government resources available to you as a service member's spouse are unparalleled. All you have to do is ask!

Naval Services FamilyLine has been around for more than five decades and currently has more than 624 Navy spouse volunteers who dedicated 32,056 hours last year to our programs as we passionately believe the degree to which a spouse or significant other is invested in Navy life is directly proportionate to his or her ability to support the challenges and obstacles that will inevitably arise.

This is not an easy life, but it is a GOOD life. The Navy lifestyle is "the road less traveled" to some degree, Deployments and moves can be challenging, but they are more manageable when you understand and are proud of what your Sailor does, and know what you're working towards together. YOU are serving too!

And yet, as you support your service member, you must continue to grow and develop as an individual. Use the time apart and the various opportunities available at each duty station to continually become your best self. Whether you are an experienced or new military spouse, Naval Services FamilyLine programs and its volunteers are designed to be with you all the way.

Long-married military couples report that when their spouse identifies with their job, understands what they do and why they choose to do it, they are happier. The military lifestyle is exponentially easier to navigate when you see yourself not merely as someone who is married to someone who serves, but rather when you self-identify as part of a military family. When it comes to healthy military relationships, being well versed in what makes this lifestyle special and knowing the resources available to you go a long way towards helping you build your resiliency and satisfaction.

Welcome to our ONE NavyFamily! We're so glad you're here!

HOW DO THE MILITARY'S CORE VALUES TRANSLATE TO YOUR RELATIONSHIP?

Your significant other has just completed military training. Whether he or she enlisted or was commissioned, some very important core values were ingrained in him or her over that time period.

The Navy and Marine Corps Core Values Are:
HONOR, COURAGE, COMMITMENT

The Coast Guard Core Values Are:
HONOR, RESPECT, DEVOTION TO DUTY

Both military service and marriage require basic training in the areas of honor, courage, commitment, respect, and devotion. They also require a lifelong promise to live those values.

Ask your loved one about those Core Values and discuss ways you might be able to incorporate them into your relationship as a couple.

WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP?

The long-term goal when you say, "I do!" is to have a healthy, happy, long and strong relationship built on trust. A healthy relationship is a reciprocal relationship where your needs are met and you feel valued for the effort you are putting in, but also one where you are meeting the needs of your partner.

Basic characteristics of a healthy relationship:

1. Communication

We are communicating at all times with our words, our actions, and our body language. What is Communication? **All behavior is communication.** This is a very powerful thought. Getting along with others is what communication is all about. Communication involves a sender and a receiver, and can be verbal as well as non-verbal. Communication is defined as the action we take to be "at one" with another. People communicate in different ways.

Characteristics of Effective Communication

- Be an active listener.
- Be aware what your body language is conveying.
- Be aware that differences in background, experiences, race, culture can lead to misunderstandings.
- Respect others' differences.
- Be aware that men and women sometimes communicate differently

2. Honesty

Honesty truly is the best policy. When you are honest you never have to worry about your lousy memory. Be honest, even with the small things.

3. Loyalty

The deepest devotion that can be felt between two human beings is the belief that there is another person who will never betray you or leave your side, regardless of what life circumstances you experience separately or together.

4. Trust

It takes a lot of work to build trust and only a few seconds to tear it down. Trust is the bedrock of a healthy relationship.

5. Teamwork

Teamwork makes the dream work. Truer words have never been spoken!

6. Understanding

Compassion and empathy for why you are who you are goes a long way in a healthy relationship.

7. Respect

A genuine feeling of “I want good things for you.” Even if we disagree, I honor you.

8. Love

A couple has mature understanding of love when they surpass the infatuation stage and understand that the other party is not perfect. Through their recognized differences, they are able to cultivate a lifelong relationship built on the all the above characteristics.

9. Establish Realistic Expectations

It is hard to live up to another person’s vision of a healthy relationship if you don’t know what that consists of in their mind. Establishing realistic expectations is like taking out an insurance policy on your relationship.

For more information on relationships and a quiz to determine where your relationship lies on the continuum, see these links below from Military OneSource.

<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/family-relationships/relationships/relationship-challenges-and-divorce/understanding-healthy-relationships>

<https://a.pgtb.me/xZ9qtT>

TRUSTING OTHERS

As mentioned above, trust *truly* is the bedrock of any healthy relationship. Dr. Brené Brown is a research professor who has spent the past two decades studying courage, vulnerability, shame and empathy. When it comes to trusting others she believes these seven principles are the foundation for healthy, long-lasting relationships.

Boundaries--You respect my boundaries, and when you're not clear about what's okay and not okay, you ask. You're willing to say no.

Reliability--You do what you say you'll do. This means staying aware of your competencies and limitations so you don't overpromise and are able to deliver on commitments and balance competing priorities.

Accountability--You own your mistakes, apologize and make amends.

Vault--You don't share information or experiences that are not yours alone to share. I need to know that my confidences are kept, and that you're not sharing with me any information about other people that should be confidential.

Integrity--You choose courage over comfort. You choose what is right over what is fun, fast or easy. And you choose to practice your values rather than simply professing them.

Non-judgment--I can ask for what I need, and you can ask for what you need. We can talk about how we feel without judgment.

Generosity--You extend the most generous interpretation possible to the intentions, words and actions of others.

Brown, Brené. *Braving the Wilderness: the Quest for True Belonging and the Courage to Stand Alone*. Random House, LLC. 2017, (38-39.)

WHAT IS CONFLICT?

Conflict occurs when two or more people disagree and believe that what each wants is incompatible with what the other wants. When we don't get along with others, we are in conflict with each other. There are lots of ways to handle conflict. Some ways of handling conflict are appropriate, some are inappropriate and some are illegal.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CONFLICT

- Conflict is going to happen. It is inevitable.
- Most people do not like conflict or are afraid of it.
- Conflict can be handled constructively or destructively.
- At times, it's not anyone's fault.

POSITIVE RESULTS OF CONFLICT

- You may learn something useful about another person or how to handle issues.
- Long-standing problems come to the surface and you have to deal with them. This is especially true with family issues.
- Conflict resolution can improve relationships and communication.
- Conflict can help you focus on what is really important.

NEGATIVE RESULTS OF CONFLICT

- People may feel devalued, demeaned and defeated.
- The distance between two people may be increased.
- A climate of distrust may begin or be intensified.
- Narrow, subjective self-interest is reinforced.
- The situation can escalate to a worsened conflict.

HOW DO MILITARY RELATIONSHIPS DIFFER FROM TYPICAL RELATIONSHIPS?

All relationships take work. Military relationships *may* take a little more work, but with an earnest attempt, spouse mentorship, and some great resources, your relationship can be stronger than many civilian relationships, in part, because you may be devoting more time to making it stronger!

The most obvious way military relationships differ from typical relationships is that from time to time you will have to learn to love long distance. The first time you are called to do this can be bewildering. The reality that many days and months will pass, sometimes with little communication to and from your loved one, can *and likely will* hit hard.

Part of your heart, someone you have come to love and rely on is not near. It's normal to sometimes physically ache for that person. There are many ways that we will cover in the Deployment Section you can learn to cope. It's very important at this time that you make the effort to reach out to others, especially other military spouses who genuinely understand how you are feeling.

Suffice it to say, we stand by our earlier assertion ...When you believe you are serving too and embrace the ONE Navy Family experience, you will foster a lot more resiliency for the military lifestyle. You will make military friends who understand your feelings. As you adapt, you will see many more positives in the experience of being a military family that you can translate to making your loving relationship stronger. From this day forward, you are *not* alone. There are many, many people in your command, FamilyLine volunteers, chaplains, ombudsmen, military websites, and professionals who staff installation resources standing by ready to coach you through the coping process. Please know you must make the first attempt to reach out. Once you do, you will be pleased you did.

It would be wrong for us to promise that over time it will get easier to say goodbye, either to your service member or a beloved duty station, but we can promise to teach you skills so you'll gain the confidence that your relationship will survive and, in some ways, may even thrive despite the challenges.

Another way military relationships differ from typical relationships is that you may have moved away from your family to be with your service member and then he or she deploys. Perhaps you are living in a new community that is unfamiliar to you, where the people speak in a different accent or possibly even a different language. How do you navigate these environmental changes in a healthy way so you grow from the experience rather than feel as if something has been taken from you?

Usually the best way is to get involved locally, both on base and in the community. As soon as you are settled at a new duty station ask your Sailor to put you in touch with your **Command Ombudsman**. This ensures you will always have a lifeline to the command.

- Attend a COMPASS session and listen closely during the Local Insights section.
- Take a class at one of the community centers or community colleges.
- Check out what activities are offered by Morale Welfare and Recreation (MWR) and Information, Tickets, and Tours (ITT) on base.
- Commit to doing something to better yourself each time your service member is deployed.

In military relationships, the spouse is often tasked with creating the “normal” or the constant on the home front. Because the service member is sometimes absent for long periods of time, the responsibility for the structure of family life is often given to the spouse. Service members, especially those who have been involved in combat, report they find this very comforting. It is reassuring for them to know that no matter what happens there will always be structure on the home front.

<https://www.military.com/spouse/relationships/military-marriage/how-long-married-military-couples-stay-together.html>

WHAT DOES A HEALTHY MILITARY RELATIONSHIP LOOK LIKE?

A healthy military relationship looks just like any other healthy relationship. The only difference between the two is how you might arrive at that healthy place as a couple.

BARRIERS TO HEALTHY MILITARY RELATIONSHIPS

Poor Communication:

As mentioned earlier, there can be no “healthy” relationship without effective communication. The military lifestyle will definitely limit the frequency of communication from time to time, so the opportunities you do have to communicate must be cherished and capitalized upon. It’s not the quantity or even necessarily the mode of communication that matters nearly as much as the quality of the communication.

Texting is one of the most common ways of communicating today. If you must text, be sure to ask clarifying questions when you aren’t sure about meaning or tone.

Institute a 24-hour rule when you are emotional about a topic. Wait 24-hours before you write or say something potentially hurtful. Many times, after 24hours what seemed so critical to say in the moment does not seem nearly as important.

If you do have to confront your significant other, especially while separated on deployment, remember in addition to whatever the issue is, both of you are likely tired and lonely. The additional stress of separation, increased duties, and possibly even war can make even great relationships seem lackluster at times. Be gentle and compassionate with each other and try to remember what drew you to each other in the first place.

Finally, choosing not to communicate is not only unhealthy, it's also unfair to the person longing to build a relationship with you. Every person deserves to be heard.

If you find yourself having difficulty communicating, seek help from one of our resources, you would not be the first person to make that call.

Miscommunication:

Continually ask yourself:

- Did I mean what I said?
- Did I say what I meant?

Some Best Practices:

Choose your words carefully and always be **honest**. Establish as a rule early on in your relationship that you can always tell each other the truth about what you believe or how you feel without fear of being rejected for your honesty. Leave the door open that you may still choose to “agree to disagree,” but this is one way you can ensure you don't lose who you are as an individual in a relationship.

Speak up early and often. Don't wait until there are issues or until small things snowball into big things.

Anticipate what might be future sticking points and address them.

Being Unwilling or Unable to Commit to the Military Lifestyle:

It's normal to be a bit hesitant about what you are getting into when you begin life together in the military. It's one thing to “know” what you have committed to, but it's quite another to “realize” what that entails. If you find yourself struggling in this way, don't wait. Take action by reaching out to one of the resources listed below. Many compassionate people staff those phones, offices and Internet sites and dedicate much of their lives to helping military couples make the most of this lifestyle. Often, it is not the lifestyle, but the uncertainty of what lies ahead that is disconcerting. Education through FamilyLine programs like COMPASS and CORE events, where Navy spouses volunteer to mentor other spouses, can be especially helpful.

CREATE A COMMUNICATION PLAN

Whether on sea or shore duty, healthy communication is vital to any military relationship that is going to withstand the test of time. Just as we talk about honoring a budget in Finance, we have to have a Communication Plan and we have to honor it. Spontaneity is great, but you can't rely solely on spontaneity in military life. You actually have to communicate about *how* you are going to communicate!

Some tips for writing your Communication Plan:

- Articulate those things and make agreements based on them.
- Write your answers down so you can refer to them and check in with each other now and then to ensure you are honoring each other and your relationship.

In a perfect world, how often would you like to connect?

In what way would you primarily like to connect?

Do you like FaceTime? (Some people don't!)

Would you like to have a schedule? As you are building trust, if operations get in the way of that schedule, how will you help yourself stay calm and confident?

How many times per day, week, month feel right to you?

Would you like to be surprised from time to time?

When we are proactive and intentional in our communication our relationships thrive.

***The 5 Love Languages: The Secret to Love that Lasts* by Gary Chapman**

is a #1 New York Times Bestseller with more than 10 million copies sold. The premise of the book is that there are five love languages:

- Words of Affirmation
- Acts of Service
- Receiving Gifts
- Quality Time
- Physical Touch

Every person has one primary love language. When we identify and learn to speak the love language of our partner, even if it's not our primary love language--and maybe, *especially* if it isn't our primary love language--we fill their love tank.

Every day can't be Valentine's Day, but think about how you may have celebrated that day in the past and how you felt about your relationship immediately afterward. Many couples will fill each other's love tanks by intentionally speaking some or all of these languages that day, which is why we feel especially "in love" on February 14. Imagine if you focused on speaking each other's primary love language on a more regular basis. How might that improve your loving relationship?

Get started on living the language of love by taking the 5 Love Languages quiz: www.5lovelanguages.com Once you know what your love languages are, find ways to speak those languages to each other.

There's even an app called **Love Nudge for Couples**. It's described as "a fitness app for relationships." It's a playful, engaging tool that helps couples experience love more deeply."

Few of us are pining away for the days before we had access to Internet, cell phones, texting, FaceTime, social media or email. And in just a few years there won't be *any* active-duty couples left who remember what it was like to try to build a healthy military relationship in that environment. Having said that, there were a few really positive relationship-building opportunities that came out of the pre-technology era.

- We made our relationships a priority. There were very few distractions because they simply didn't exist. Can you imagine that?
- There was no time to waste. We might not have communication for days, weeks, or months at a time. Not necessarily because of operations or operational security, but because the technology to connect didn't exist. So we didn't take a single encounter for granted.
- If we had an opportunity to talk to or see each other, we did so. It was never a given we would have that opportunity again anytime soon.
- We wrote long, heartfelt letters, kissed them, spritzed them with perfume, mailed little tokens, like a piece of grass from the yard or a swatch of the blanket from our bed, back and forth. We numbered the letters because they sometimes took a month or more to arrive and they often arrived out of order so sometimes they were very confusing. If your service member did not receive at least an Honorable Mention in the fourth grade penmanship contest, that was always a challenge, too!
- There was no instant gratification, but we appealed to all the senses in heartfelt and meaningful ways. As a result, our relationships blossomed and many withstood the test of time.
- ALL of our communication was anxiously awaited and significant.

Guess what? ALL of *your* communication *can and should be* anxiously awaited and significant, too!

We understood this concept at our core: Love is a verb, an action word. "Love doesn't just sit there like a stone; it has to be made – like bread, remade all the time, made new."

This concept, too: "Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness" from the poem "A Desiderata for the Young."

Eventually what we learned is that we were surviving. Despite our fears, our loneliness, and our tears, the benefits outweighed the challenges and we were making our relationships work. And you will too!

Eventually you get enough experience under your belt and realize if you communicate effectively, there really isn't any experience you can't survive together. There is a special strength that comes with knowing that, which can only be gained through experience and an earnest desire to try.

HOW DO YOU BUILD TRUST IN A NEW MILITARY RELATIONSHIP WHEN YOU DON'T HAVE PREDICTABLE COMMUNICATION?

The easiest way to build trust is to establish yourself as someone who is reliable and trustworthy.

Keep your promises. For example: if you say you're going to be home at 4 p.m. to answer the phone, you have to commit to doing everything you can to being there. If by chance you miss the call, a better long-term outcome would be that your service member would be concerned about your safety rather than questioning your whereabouts.

When you are consistent with your affection and attention, reliable, and honest in small things you will accrue trust, just like a bank account. Over time, your partner will know they can trust you with their possessions, their finances, and their children should you choose to have them.

Some basics:

- Avoid doing anything you wouldn't want your service member to see or that could be misunderstood out of context on social media.
- Discuss and set clear boundaries and rules and honor them.
- Set expectations. Tell each other what you would consider to be a "deal breaker" as well as what you would ideally like to have happen. If your partner's expectations seem controlling or if you don't believe you could live up to them, you must advocate for yourself right away. Discuss why you think they are unrealistic. The passage of time does not make these challenges easier.
- Commit to having intimate discussions that may be uncomfortable in a newer relationship. The benefits of having these discussions far outweigh the risks of putting yourself out there. (We give you our permission to use this guide as an icebreaker!)
- Use your common sense.

When you feel confident in the level of trust in your relationship, most couples adopt a "no news is good news" perspective. When you don't hear from each other you don't worry the relationship is falling apart. You see the relationship as a well-oiled machine where each component is using the time apart to better themselves and positively impact others, while always tethered together by the heartstrings.

THE GOLDEN RULE

The Golden Rule is the most universal rule for ethical human behavior. Every philosophy and religion has it as a central rule:

“Do not do to others all that which is not well for oneself.” -- Zoroaster

“Hurt not others with that which hurts you.” -- Buddha

“Do not do to others what you do not want others to do to you.” -- Confucius

“ May I do to others as I would that they should do to me.” -- Plato

“ Do not do to others what, if it were done to you, would cause you pain.”
-- Mahabharata (Hindu)

“Do not do to others what you would not have them do to you.” -- Rabbi Hillel

“Treat others as you would like them to treat you.” -- Jesus

“ None of you truly have the faith if you do not desire for your brother that which you desire for yourself.” -- Muhammad

“Lay not on any soul a load which you would not wish to be laid on you and desire not for anyone the things you would not desire for yourself.” -- Baha'u'llah (Bahai')

BECOMING COMFORTABLE WITH THE UNCERTAINTY OF NAVY LIFE

The word and concept of uncertainty has a negative connotation. It's true, much of Navy life is digested in small chunks of time, several months or two or three year intervals. So how do you become comfortable with the uncertainty surrounding Navy life? What if you replace the word “uncertainty” with “possibilities?” Few vocations offer more possibilities for adventure than military life. What if we changed the title of this section to: “Becoming Comfortable with the Possibilities of Navy Life?”

Uncertainty is a feeling. “Research shows that naming negative feelings takes the sting out of them and makes us feel more in control,” says Tina Gilbertson, a psychotherapist in Denver and the author of *Constructive Wallowing: How to Beat Bad Feelings by Letting Yourself Have Them*. For example: “Things are up in the air right now, and it's making me nervous” or “I'm scared of what might happen.” Once you've identified the specific emotions, you can begin to deal with them.

<https://www.success.com/how-to-get-comfortable-with-uncertainty/>

Couldn't we also change that sentence to: "Things are up in the air right now, and it's making me nervous, yet I'm excited about the possibilities living overseas will offer." Put words to your uncertain feelings and make an effort to imagine the possibilities that lie in the uncertainty. Everyone is overwhelmed by military life sometimes. It can help to reframe uncertainty in positive terms like possibilities and opportunities for adventure.

Replace expectations with plans:

- Instead of expecting the future to give you something specific, focus on what you'll do to create what you want to experience.
- Be proactive and intentional about shaping the life you desire.
- What is the next best thing?

For example, when your service member is on deployment you will surely miss each other. No matter how your heart aches, the military can't send your loved one home until the deployment is over. What can you do to foster closeness when you are many thousands of miles apart for many months? Be creative! This can actually be a very fun way to bond with each other and grow your relationship.

Specific ideas:

- Mail something sentimental (but not fragile, valuable, or irreplaceable!) back and forth.
- If you are separated on shore duty, FaceTime all night and "sleep together" one night
- Scent is very powerful. Leave your scent on something and give it to your significant other to keep or wear.
- "Watch" a movie or show together on Amazon Prime, Netflix or with a device such as Slingbox.
- Carry something meaningful in your pocket to remind you of your loved one.

Become a feeling observer:

- You can't possibly predict the future, but you can help create it by fostering positive feelings about the possibilities.
- Where might you dream of being stationed some day?
- Explore the possibility of making that a reality.
- What would you do there?
- Who might you share that experience with? (Extended family and/or friends?)
- Believe that whatever the future holds you will be equipped, either naturally or with the assistance of friends, family or military resources to accept it.

Focus on what you can control:

- Set an approximate end date for being apart.
- Make plans for when you are together again and honor them at all costs.
- When communicating, delve into details. Rather than simply saying, "I went to dinner." Share details such as who you saw, what you talked about, what you ate, how did it taste, how did you feel? Even though you may be apart, these details round out your experience and help your service member feel included and valued in your life.
- Say you are sorry when it is warranted.

Power of Apologies

Gary Chapman has written another book with Jennifer Thomas, *Five Languages of Apology*. They include:

- Expressing regret: "I am sorry."
- Accepting responsibility: "I was wrong"
- Making restitution: "What can I do to make it right?"
- Genuinely repenting: "I'll try not to do that again."
- Requesting forgiveness: "Will you please forgive me?"

"Understanding and applying the five languages of an apology will greatly enhance all of your relationships."

Take the Apology Profile Quiz here and use the results to strengthen your relationship.

<https://www.5lovelanguages.com/profile/apology/>

WRITE A NAVY LIFE CHARTER

Taking the time to sit together as a couple to write a Navy Life Charter is a great example of time well spent together. The idea behind this practice is to help you be intentional about the military lifestyle and how you will navigate together as a couple.

- Start by listing all of the concerns, expectations and plans you have as a team approaching military life together.
- Talk about your personal, couple, and family goals and priorities.
- Spell out what your personal relationship will look like.
- How are you going to create and build intimacy?
- What will each of you bring to Navy life?
- What do you expect of each other, personally, professionally, in terms of level of participation in Navy life?
- How will your spouse team weather the storms?
- Chart the course of your dreams!

SPOUSE-TO-SPOUSE MILITARY RELATIONSHIPS

Another type of military relationship that is extraordinarily important to your personal growth and overall success in this lifestyle is the spouse-to-spouse relationship. We would be remiss if we did not mention the importance of cultivating military spouse friendships. Military spouses have a way of becoming fast friends. Though our time together is often brief, the friendships are often deep and lifelong. Some of the best advice we could give you would be to make the effort to meet and befriend other military spouses. Military spouses are a great resource for information on the experiences of military life. We form bonds that are difficult to describe but they are strong, and steadfast, and quite frankly, necessary.

RESOURCES:

The Five Love Languages: The Secret to a Love that Lasts (for Military Couples), Gary Chapman

The Five Languages of Apology: How to Experience Healing in all Your Relationships, Gary Chapman and Jennifer Thomas

The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work, John M. Gottman, Ph.D. and Nan Silver