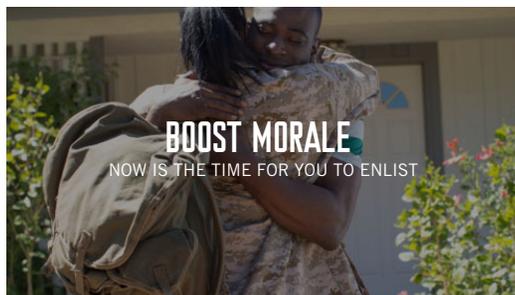


09

Your vet fought for you. Now you get to fight for him. Pick him up when he is down. Be there when he needs backup. And be at the ready to call in reinforcements. Most importantly, tell your soldier each day how good it is to have him home.



"It's helpful to find a way to laugh at the new realities of living with the effects of war. On days when my memory doesn't seem to keep up, my wife and I joke about having 'dust on my record.'" –Tom Spooner

10

There will be days when your soldier is out of commission. They'll hunker down and stay home. Let them. But also let yourself stay the course. Keep your routine. Don't let co-dependency creep in and take you both out of the fight.



UNITED IN THE WAR AGAINST VETERAN SUICIDE

MISSION22.COM

#MISSION22

UNITED IN THE WAR AGAINST VETERAN SUICIDE



INTEL FOR FAMILIES

Wars are won by families, so just as we'd never send a soldier off without training to win the war, it's important that you're trained to help your vet in the transition from soldier to civilian.

01

You can choose what defines your happiness and your family. Remember, it is not just about the soldier in your home. It is about you, your children and your family, too. You must define what is and what is not acceptable in your life and stick to it. As you do, you'll determine the success of your own mission.



02 GATHER INTEL ON YOUR ENEMY

LEARN ABOUT WHAT IT IS YOU'RE FIGHTING

You can't win a war if you don't know who the enemy is. Complacency, self-pity, laziness, hate, resentment and isolation are the real enemies. By learning more about your soldier's journey home, you can fight with him, instead of against him. A good tactical resource is Dr. Edward Tick's "War and the Soul."

03

No war is won by one. It takes an army. And there are thousands of families fighting the fight with you. So seek out allies, combine forces, and fight in formation.



04 RECRUIT REINFORCEMENTS

CALL ON YOUR COMMUNITY FOR SUPPORT

Don't simply defend. Reach out to your family, friends, and community. Find strength in numbers and push the enemy back. Isolation is one of the biggest causes of depression and suicide. Some days are better and some are worse. It's a process and you're going to feel how you feel. What's important is that you take each day as it comes. Deal with your feelings as constructively as possible. Most importantly, keep fighting. It's worth it.

05

KEEP CLEAR COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

TAKE TIME TO TALK. GIVE TIME TO LISTEN.

Entire wars have been won by jamming another's lines of communication. Let your vet talk. You don't need to have the answers, you just need to make time. Take an interest in them, and you'll find they'll continue to fight for you.

06

A veteran can't be the same person in the boardroom that they were on the battleground. And that means creating a new identity. For some, this mission is the hardest yet. Acceptance of the veteran and who they are is paramount.



07

FIGHT FOR PEACE

TAKE IT EASY WHEN THINGS GET HARD

Expectations are front-loaded resentments. Expecting soldiers to be who they were before they went to combat will lead to frustration. Take every day as it comes. And take them as they are.

"Everyone, vets and their families, want things to return exactly as they were before deployment. And that just isn't going to happen, and that's ok. People naturally grow, evolve and change based on things that happen in their lives, and war only accentuates this. You have to move forward—encourage your vet to look over the horizon and all of you should be open to new evolutions." –Magnus Johnson

08

It will seem easier for both the vet and their family to hide what's hard—to bury the personal battles. But both parties have to be honest about what's hard, face the enemy together, and never retreat.

