

Successful Deployment Reunions
6 Rules of Thumb
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1. **Beware the fairy tale!** Don't expect life to be perfect. Don't set yourself or your significant others up for disappointment.
2. **Make realistic expectations, and be patient.** Instead of expecting the fairy tale, plan for a good reunion, including things to say, do, and talk about. Give yourself time to adjust to being back together. Both parties have changed.
3. **Avoid 'pissing contests.'** Both parties had it bad. No one wins when partners fight over who did more work, and who suffered the most. It only takes one person to stop this contest.
4. **Use good timing!** A basic rule of communication: it's not only what you say, but when and how you say it. Choose the right time to say something, when the person you're talking to is open to listening in ways you need.
5. **Avoid the 'stupid questions.'**
 - a. Did you kill anyone?
 - b. How was it?
 - c. Are you glad to be home?
 - d. Any variation, like: Did you see any camels? Did you talk to any Iraqis/Afghanis?
6. **Thank each other!** Don't forget who kept the house standing while the other was fighting for the freedom to have it.