

Introduction (Section 1)

- This class will help you better understand stress and how to cope with it
- Class objectives
 - Define stress and understand the differences between good stress and bad stress
 - Identify stressors associated with reintegration with a deployed family member
 - Identify positive strategies for dealing with stress
 - Practice effective stress management strategies to cope with stress around reintegration

Stress (Section 2)

- Stress is a common thing that affects almost everyone
- Good stress is when we face a challenge that we are able to handle and overcome
- Bad stress is when we face a challenge that is overwhelming, and, it lasts for a long time or happens too often; bad stress can cause physical or mental harm
- **Exercise 1:** Good Stress vs. Bad Stress
- **Handout 1:** Good Stress vs. Bad Stress

Reintegration Stress (Section 3)

- Aspects of reintegration can generate good or bad stress for family members
- Common stressors exist; however, no two families will have the same experience
- **Exercise 2:** Reintegration Stressors

Handling Stress (Section 4)

- Individuals need to find coping strategies that work for them
- Breath control involves getting control of your breath, which helps to settle our bodies, thoughts, and feelings
- Breath control demonstration
 - Please sit comfortably in your chair with your back straight
 - If you want to close your eyes you can or just gaze softly with your eyes looking down at the floor
 - Take in a long deep breath – and as you do, count to yourself – one, two, three – and then exhale counting to yourself – one, two, three
 - Let's take another long deep breath and this time put your hand on your belly and notice your hand moving as your belly expands as you inhale – one, two, three
 - Now, notice your hand again as you exhale and your belly gets smaller – one, two, three
 - Let's do that a third time
 - Focusing on breathing can help you be calm and present or more focused
 - Now open your eyes if they were closed

- ☐ **Handout 2:** Steps and Strategies for Managing Stress
- ☐ **Exercise 3:** Dealing with Stressors
- ☐ **Handout 3:** Stress Management for Teens: Handling Reintegration

Summary (Section 5)

- ☐ Reintegration is a happy time; yet, it can also be stressful
- ☐ If people perceive stress as a challenge and not necessarily a bad thing, then, they can overcome a stressful experience with confidence
- ☐ Three things you can do to manage your stress:
 - ☐ Take a deep breath
 - ☐ Be calm
 - ☐ Be present
- ☐ Review
 - ☐ What is the difference between good stress and bad stress?
 - ☐ What are some examples of stressors that families experience during reintegration?
 - ☐ What are some positive strategies for dealing with stress?