## THE EMOTIONAL CYCLE OF DEPLOYMENT (ECOD)

See "Family Readiness: Essential to Mission Readiness-Unit Deployment Guide for Families," marineparents.com/usmc/downloads/family-readiness-guide.pdf, 14-15.

## **Anticipation of Departure**

- i 1−6 weeks before departure
  - · Spouse may protest or be in denial.
  - · Family members may feel tension.
  - · Spouse may avoid the reality of the service member's departure.
  - · Spouse may feel frustration, sadness, and unexpected emotions.
  - Time for family activities may be constrained.

**Detachment and Withdrawal** 

- Last week before departure
  - · Spouse may feel anger and create emotional distance.
  - · Spouse has mixed feelings and tries to protect himself or herself from hurt.
  - · Family members may experience grief.
  - · Feelings of detachment or withdrawal may accompany the whole period of separation.

Reintegration and Stabilization

- = 6-12 weeks after return
  - · Reintegration of family is complete.
  - · Things have stabilized.
  - · Spouse moves from "me" (my house, my car, my kids) to "us" (our house, our car, our kids).
  - · Returning spouse is part of the family again.
  - · Normal life resumes.

**Return Adjustment and** Renegotiation

- ₱ 0-6 weeks after return
  - · Assumptions and expectations need to be reset, reevaluated, and fine-tuned.
  - · Family members need time to adjust to changes.
  - · Tension and fighting may occur.
  - · Open and honest communication can solve many problems and conflicts.

**Emotional Disorganization** 

- id 0−6 weeks into deployment
  - Spouse makes new routines and carries out duties.
  - Spouse may withdraw from friends and neighbors.
  - Spouse may feel overwhelmed as he or she faces total responsibility for family
  - Disorganization passes as the spouse recovers

Anticipation of Return

- 6 weeks before return
  - · Family members may feel excitement and anxiety.
  - · Family members may be frenzied trying to make everything perfect.

**Recovery and Stabilization** 

- Variable; about 3–5 weeks into deployment
  - · Spouse gets into a routine.
  - · Spouse's confidence increases.
  - · Spouse subconsciously moves from "we" to "I" and from "our" to "my"
  - · Feelings of independence and freedom increase.
  - · Pride in the ability to cope begins to develop.

