



Fostering Resilience in Military Families Over Time

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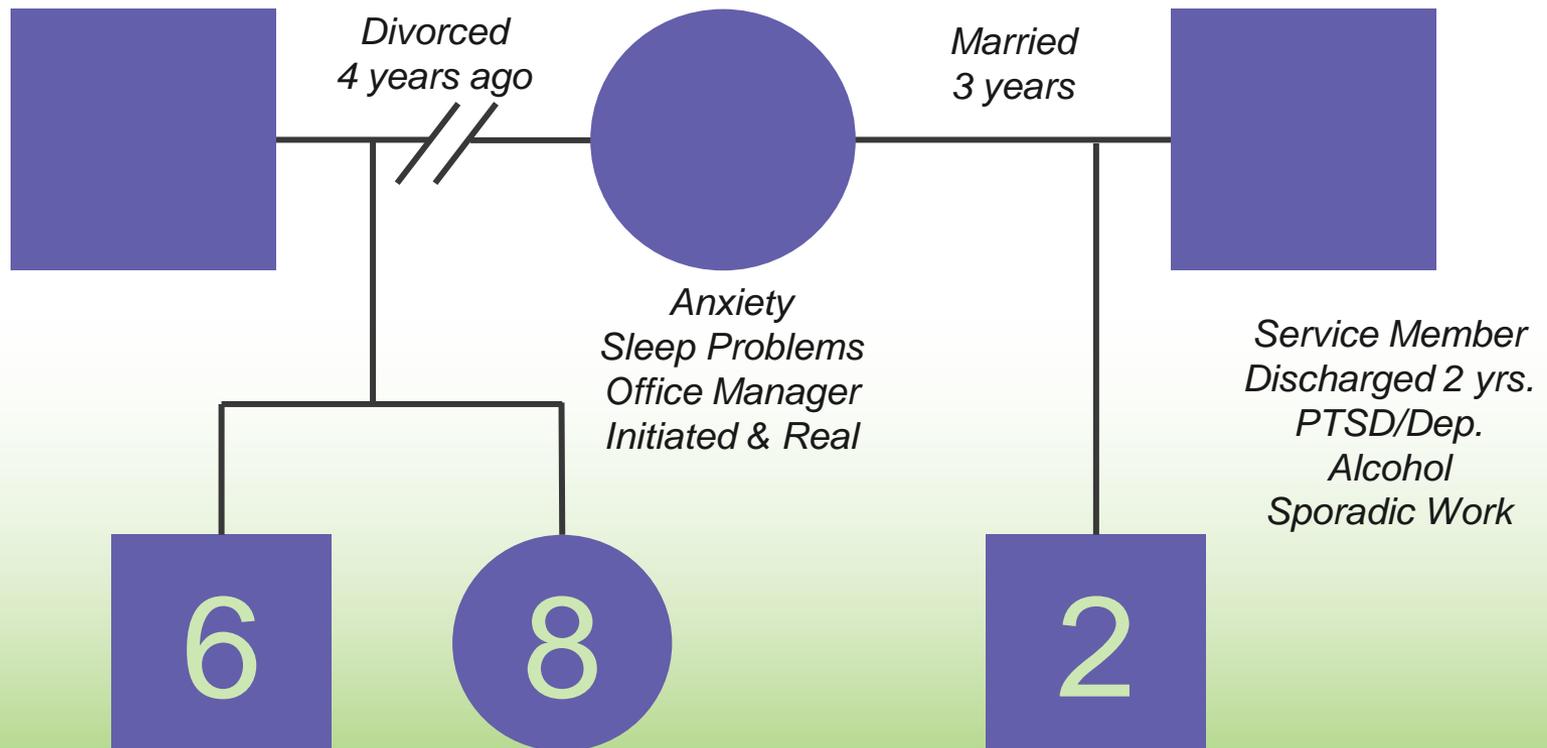
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Case Example

The Andersons



Family Organization

Flexibility: balance between change and stability (adaptation vs. maintaining rituals and routines).

Cohesion: balance between separateness and connectedness (closeness, accurate support, commitment, but also respect for individual differences and needs)

Appropriate boundaries and hierarchy (within family and to outside world)

- Parental leadership
- For children, usefulness of developmentally appropriate responsibility
- Access to external support

Family Communication and Collaborative Skills

- Affective communication patterns
 - Sharing and tolerance of wide range of emotions
 - Expressions of love and support
 - Appropriate expression of distress
- Instrumental communication patterns
 - Communicate how things are done (roles, rules, decisions, etc.)
 - Effectiveness (clarity, honesty, consistency)
 - Developmentally appropriate
 - Communication with outside resources
- Family-level collaborative skills (problem solving, affect regulation, goal setting, etc.)

Family Beliefs and Meaning Making

“Mastery orientation:” Adversities are comprehensible, manageable and potentially meaningful.

Capacity to "make meaning" out of stressful and destabilizing experiences, and adopt beliefs that are protective in that they preserve a family's sense of agency and optimism.

Protective beliefs and attitudes

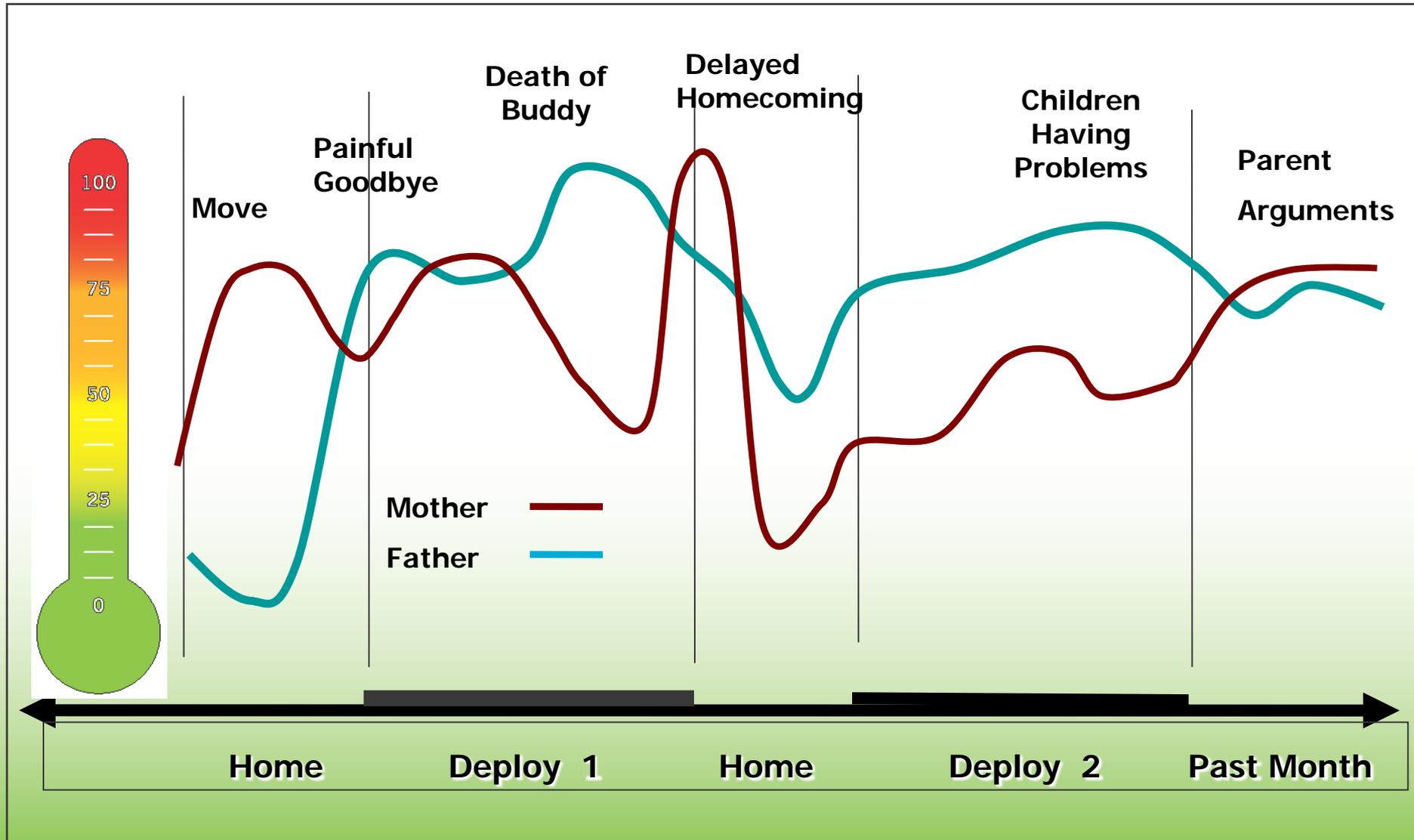
- Distress and difficulties are expected given the circumstance
- A crisis should be approached as a shared family challenge
- The family should avoid focusing on blame, shame and guilt
- A sense of hope based on acceptance and a focus on “the possible”
- Views of future not dominated by catastrophic fears
- Connection with transcendent values or spirituality (includes trust in military institutions and “mission”)



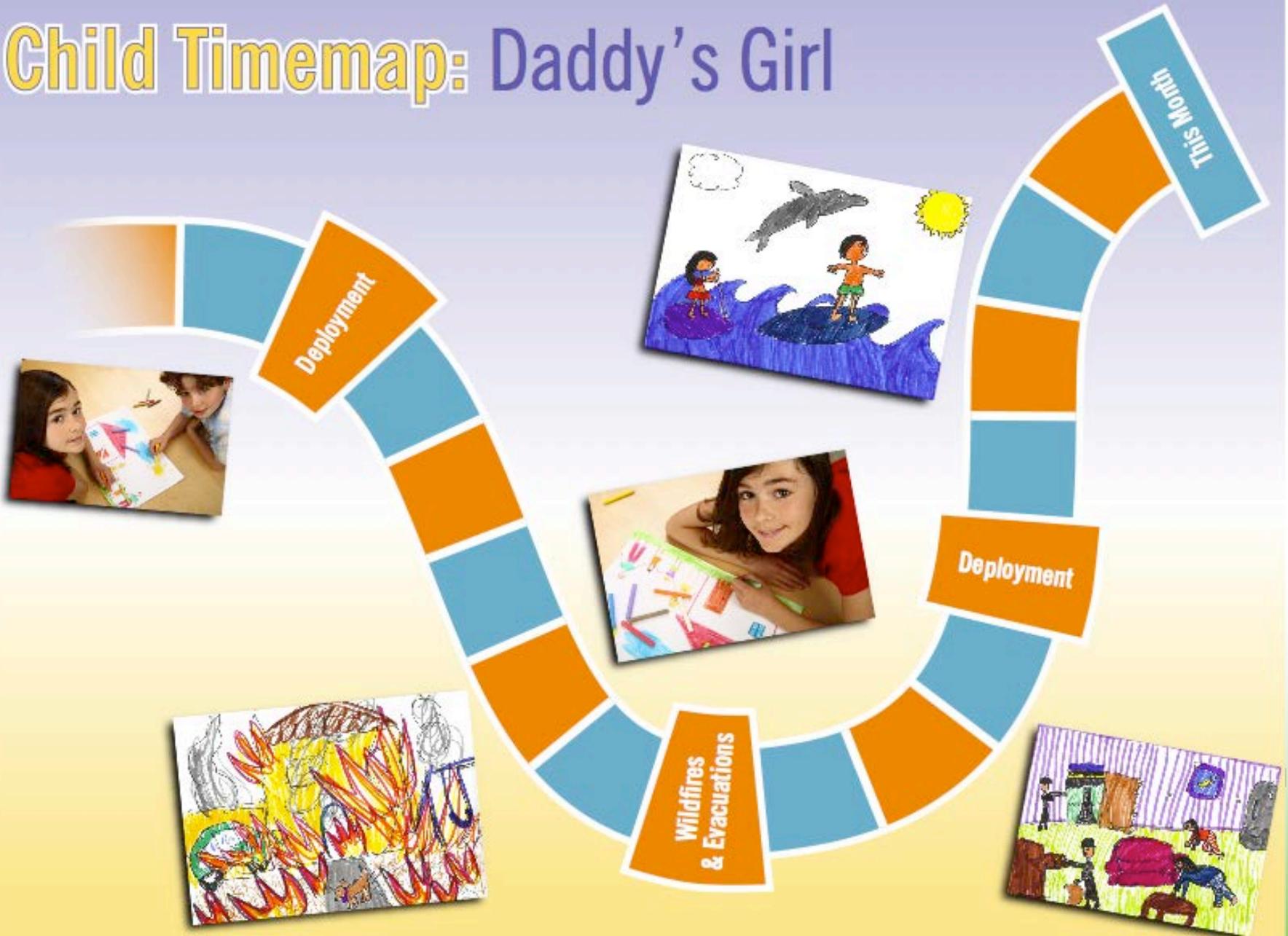
“...it is by constructing a narrative that we make an experience knowable, integrate it into our conscious life, and then access it as memory.”

(Bruner, 1986)

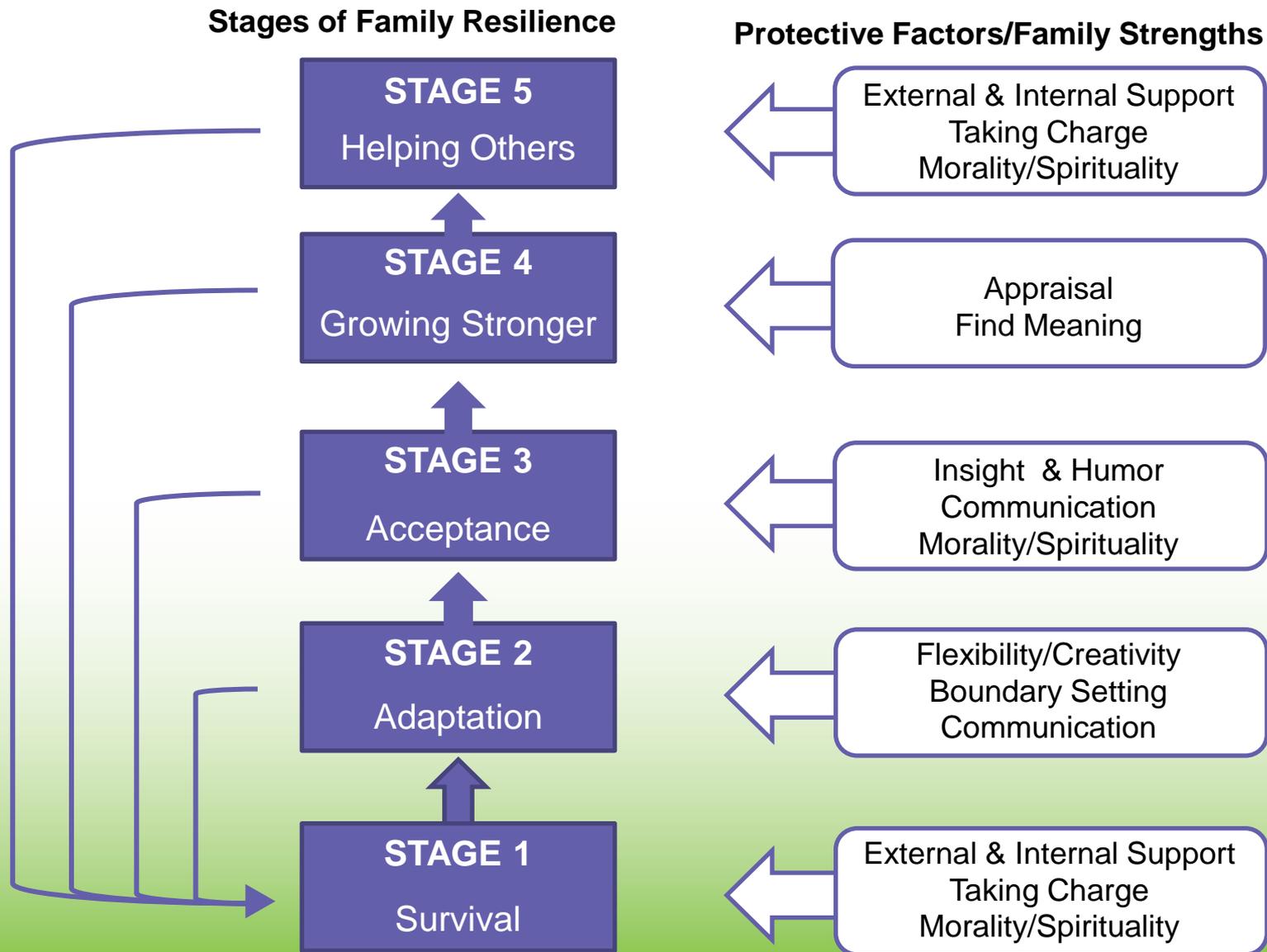
Parental Timeline



Child Timemap: Daddy's Girl



Changes in Resilience-Related Processes for Different Time Phases (Lietz, 2007)



Key Issues

1. Centrality of belief structures and meaning-making capacities for long-term resilience and recovery of service members and their families
2. Utility of narrative approaches and methods to enhance parental skill in co-constructing children's experience and understanding of stressful events.
3. The changing set of skills and resilient processes that are most helpful at different points along an individual or family's recovery trajectory.
4. The differential impact and trajectory of grief and moral injuries for the service member and the family.