

PAIRS Relationship Skills Training Program Evaluation: Army Soldiers and Spouses Preparing For Deployment



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PAIRS Foundation delivered nine hours of instruction to 200+ Soldiers and spouses of the 101st Airborne Division based at Fort Campbell February 12-13, 2010. Nearly all of the Soldiers present will deploy to Afghanistan within 30 days. The majority of participants have been previously deployed at least twice, completed their education with a high school degree, and were over the age of 28. The program was delivered following the *PAIRS Essentials* curriculum with the addition of supplemental exercises on letting go of grudges and the death/loss meditation. Two lead trainers facilitated in a large single room with seven teaching assistants and two PAIRS trained Chaplains.

Demographics

Previous Deployments

- None = 17%
- 1 = 30%
- 2 = 25%
- 3 = 12%
- 4+ = 17%

Ethnicity

- White = 65%
- Black/Non-Hispanic = 15%
- Hispanic/Latino = 12%
- Asian American = 4%
- Other = 4%

Age

- 18 – 21 = 7%
- 21 – 24 = 12%
- 24 – 28 = 20%
- 28 – 35 = 23%
- 35 – 41 = 31%
- 42 – 51 = 7%

Education

- Less than 12 Years = 1%
- 12 Years/HS Diploma = 56%
- Some College = 4%
- Associates Degree = 20%
- College Degree = 15%
- Advanced Degree = 4%

Evaluation Summary

Following the program, written evaluations were provided by 147 participants.

- 99% said as result of their experience, they would recommend PAIRS
- 88% rated the program “Very Good” or “Excellent”
- 89% rated the instructors “Very Good” or “Excellent”
- 89% said they would like to participate in additional PAIRS classes

Overall satisfaction with PAIRS program

- Excellent: 47% (n=69)
- Very Good: 41% (n=60)
- Good: 10% (n=14)
- Average: 2% (n=3)

Overall satisfaction with instructors

- Excellent: 57% (n=84)
- Very Good: 32% (n=47)
- Good: 9% (n=13)
- Average: 1% (n=2)

Would you recommend PAIRS?

- Yes: 99% (n=145)
- No: 2% (n=2)

Would you like to participate in more PAIRS classes?

- Yes: 89% (n=131)
- No: 11% (n=16)

Participant Testimonials**Preparing for Deployment**

- *"I know my wife and I will have a better deployment as long as we use the tools we learned in PAIRS."*
- *"My husband and I will utilize these tools throughout deployment to enhance our communication."*
- *"My spouse and I can use the skills to better ourselves while I am deployed and when I return."*
- *"PAIRS has given our marriage new tools to prepare us for deployment."*
- *"PAIRS has given us the opportunity to say all the things we needed to say before our time apart."*
- *"PAIRS skills will contribute to strengthening our relationship through deployment by us being able to look back at the cards as reminders, and to relate and talk to my husband during stressful times for the both of us."*
- *"PAIRS tools will help keep us together even though he is half way around the world."*
- *"The information and skills will be something to think about when gone on deployment"*
- *"This experience has helped clear the air before deployment, how well we do now often influences how well we do when we're separated. I feel we are now set up for more success."*
- *"We have learned how to talk and listen in ways that I think will allow us to get through deployment without growing apart. "*

Talking about PTSD

- *"This weekend my husband has shared deep feelings for the first time about his PTSD."*

Emotional Connection

- *"I enjoyed PAIRS because I was able to learn a definite process of handling difficult emotional experiences and learn constructive speaking and listening techniques."*
- *"This experience has allowed my husband and I to remember that we both have worries, strengths, weakness, and fears but we still need to communicate, listen, and understand each other."*
- *"PAIRS gave me an opportunity to explore new ways to become openly emotional and see how much good we still have to look forward to."*

Building Strong Bonds

- *"From PAIRS I learned, even after 18 years of marriage, a better way to communicate with my wife."*
- *"I think my husband and I have a new foundation and more helpful methods of strengthening our bond."*
- *"I took in everything and I know my marriage will benefit!"*

- *“If we use the PAIRS skills we will be able to build a stronger more cohesive relationship.”*
- *“My husband and I definitely found better ways to communicate and the PAIRS program helped bring up ideas and topics that we have neglected to talk about. “*
- *“Our experience in PAIRS has given us the tools to broach topics otherwise too hard to deal with.”*
- *“PAIRS has helped us get to the root of our issues and problems and has helped us rescue them in a positive way.”*
- *“PAIRS has opened my eyes to communication.”*
- *“PAIRS will be useful in my life by helping me communicate with my husband at a level of understanding. Being able to show appreciation more, I know I can communicate with my husband and come to an agreement.”*
- *“The information and skills learned in PAIRS class will be very helpful not only with my relationship with my husband, but with parents and friends.”*
- *“The skills that I have learned will give me a better understanding on how my wife feels and being more attentive to her needs.”*
- *“The skills will enable us to work together more instead of against each other.”*
- *“The techniques I learned this weekend will greatly advance my marriage.”*

Passing it On

- *“I will pass PAIRS on to my soldiers as well as using what I have learned in my marriage.”*
- *“I intend to give the PAIRS seminar to my daughters as wedding presents.”*

Safe Environment

- *“The PAIRS staff were very nice people, caring, sincerely concerned with the problems addressed.”*
- *“I felt that because of the way the PAIRS instructors taught they truly believed in the techniques and had a genuine concern for my relationship.”*
- *“I like that PAIRS was presented in a safe, non-threatening way.”*

More Information

Research data was collected using PAIRS Demographic Questionnaire and the Relationship Pleasure Scale. Follow-up activities will be implemented to measure the lasting impact on program participants. For more information, contact Amanda Falciglia, Research Director, (954) 703-4533 x801, e-mail amanda@pairs.com.