

Military to Civilian Life

As I assist military folks and spouses transition to civilian careers, I spend the majority of the time chatting about careers, skills, accomplishments, and various other technical pieces that need to be considered when making the move from military to civilian life. We all seem to focus on these nuts and bolts of the “process” without addressing a macro consideration. This came home when I was sent an email from Solara Mental Health that addressed the intrinsic concerns that get lost in the process.

By intrinsic, I mean the social and psychological aspects of leaving an institution that has been the major, and in some cases, the overriding influencer of your life. That institution, of course, is the military. We so often refer to it as “military life” because of its overriding presence in our lives. In so many cases, this is not just overriding but controlling as this life demands so much of us. We voluntarily entered into service and have willingly sacrificed much. The rewards have been great, but the cost could be I left the dots because only you can answer that.

And, the impact of military life is not only on the service member but the family as well. Spousal careers have been continuously disrupted. The spousal responsibilities during deployments, TDYs or PCS are limitless. Having spoken to many parents and military children, I find that many cherish the opportunities. However, the missing military parent does have an impact. So, we must also recognize the “intrinsic” impact on the military family.

MOAA is advocating for support to legislation to protect mental health care benefits for the military and family. This was one of the three initiatives brought to the attention of congress members during this Spring’s advocacy program. Jim Cunningham and I spoke to Texas reps advancing the cause.

There are resources available. I received information that was very comprehensive on discussing the issues from Solara Mental Health out of California. Reach the article at <https://solaramentalhealth.com/adjusting-from-military-to-civilian-life/>. A local resource that provides a wide variety of services is Endeavor’s Steven A. Cohen Military Family Clinics with facilities in El Paso, Killeen and San Antonio. Discover more on the Cohen Clinics at www.endeavor.org.

Please remember that you are NOT alone. Please reach out for assistance.

Kitty

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