

STRONGER FAMILIES

CONNECTION

Connecting You
With the Families
You Serve

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Your Support brings *Love Styles* to a New Audience

REMOTE DEPLOYMENTS AND LONG SEPARATIONS CAN STRAIN MARRIAGES. *OXYGEN* BRINGS FRESH AIR TO SERVICE MEMBERS STATIONED IN BAHRAIN.

NSA BAHRAIN

Deployments in geographically isolated locations bring unique challenges to marriages and families, particularly when service members are "geo bachelors" separated from their spouses for up to a year at a time. In November, Stronger Families had a special opportunity to bring the *Oxygen* program to service members stationed at NSA Bahrain who provide vital Operational Support to U.S. and Coalition Forces.

More Help on the Way

Love Styles was the first of three relationship workshops held for this



<< *Top: NSA Bahrain is home for 8,500 military personnel and DoD employees*

<< *Middle: The 'words of affirmation' group discuss specific needs.*

<< *Bottom: Stronger Families presenter Jaci Wolcott teaches on ways to affirm each love style.*

"Great class on learning 'Love Styles'! Knowing what to look for created a whole new level of awareness for me. I now know I have some work to do."

—Scott T., US Army, NSA Bahrain

group, who hadn't experienced any other events like this. Many of the attendees weren't quite sure what to expect as they learned each love style: words of affirmation, acts of service, gifts, quality time, and physical touch.

Said one participant, "These classes are really needed, especially in Bahrain. Being in the military and being separated from your family for weeks or months at a time can be challenging. The class would be helpful in refocusing on people's relationships and marriages." ■



^^ Stronger Families' Sean Sanberg welcomes couples from Fort Wainwright to the Oxygen seminar.

Your Gift of Hope for a Marriage in Crisis

THRIVING RELATIONSHIPS REQUIRE CONSISTENT WORK. OXYGEN HELPS REINTEGRATING COUPLES IMPROVE COMMUNICATION, RESOLVE CONFLICT, AND BUILD HOPE FOR THE FUTURE.

FORT WAINWRIGHT, ALASKA

Reintegrating military couples are in a state of transition, a life stage that brings excitement, uncertainty, and relationship stress. During transitions like these, relationship support can help to facilitate a successful reintegration, energizing couples to help them face the challenges ahead.

At November's Oxygen 365 seminar hosted by the Gimlet Unit Ministry Team at Pike's Waterfront Lodge in Fairbanks, Alaska, 24 reintegrating couples refreshed communication skills and renewed their hope for the future. Participants received eight hours of training in self-awareness and interpersonal

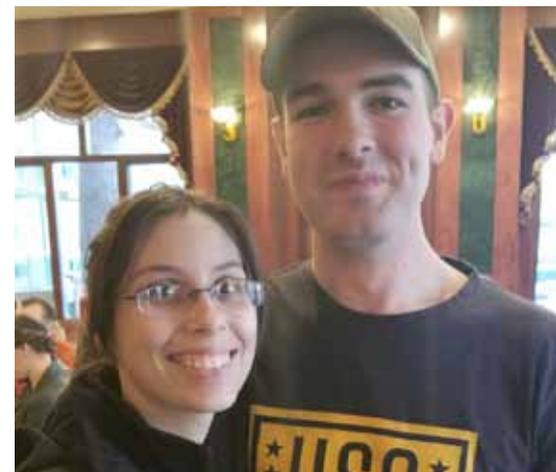
communication techniques, along with a catered lunch made possible through funding by the USO and support from Stronger Families.

Trying to Make Things Right

Couples came to the seminar with a variety of goals and challenges. One service member shared his struggle with stalled communication, conflict, and forgiveness, and his appreciation for International Training Manager Sean Sanberg.

"I plan on working on our communication. I didn't know the problems my wife and I have been facing. It's been almost two years, and I have not asked my wife for forgiveness. I want to come up with a game plan to properly ask her for it. I don't want my wife to think that I don't

care about her feelings; I cherish her and love her probably more than she knows. I truly love how Sean shared his experiences with the group. He made me feel like if he can share with people he doesn't know, I can do that with my wife. The time to strengthen my marriage is NOW. Thank you Sean." ■



“ This is great teaching! Our biggest relationship ‘growth area’ is conflict resolution. I plan to use what I learned to begin to solve our issues. ”

—Kimberly M., Fort Wainwright, AK

Teaming Up to Better Support Our Nation's Military Families

YOUR SUPPORT BRINGS NEW COMMUNICATION SKILL-BUILDING TO ARMY COUPLES.



<< Families pose for a group photo afterward in the Carolina Panthers' game viewing theater.

CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA

Charlotte, North Carolina's Bank of America Stadium often hosts cheering crowds, impressive plays, and feats of athleticism. In November, the stadium was the site of a different sort of team endeavor: a group of Army couples dedicated to building communication skills and strengthening their marriages. As part of a special outreach to military families, Stronger Families partnered with the USO North Carolina and the Carolina Panthers to bring *Oxygen* to Army couples serving at Fort Bragg.

The families were treated to a special lunch created by the Carolina Panther's executive chef, and an *Oxygen* workshop on *Breaking Barriers to*

Communication. Couples left with new communication tools to use at home and work and vital skills to improve family relationships. More importantly, they left feeling valued, supported, and honored for their service to our country. ■

"I learned to understand his feelings, and accept what he is telling me. I will definitely use this in my daily life."

—Donna L., Fort Bragg, NC



^^ Army couple John and Donna work through an *Oxygen* communication exercise during the workshop.

ARE YOU IN NEED OF OXYGEN?

Join us for one of two upcoming locally held events!

Friday, March 23, 2018 | *Breaking Barriers to Communication*

6:30-8:00 pm. Presented by Garrick Pang. Refreshments included. Location TBA.

Friday, April 24, 2018 | *Knowing Your Unique Love Style*

6:30-8:00 pm. Presented by Sean Sanberg. Refreshments included. Location TBA.

For more information and to sign up, go to:
strongerfamilies.com/events/

“ I loved attending the [*Oxygen* training] and look forward to being able to share this with military couples. ”

—CH Alyssa McGrath, U.S. Navy, Japan



^^ Top: U.S. Navy Chaplains stationed in Japan train to lead their own *Oxygen* seminars.

>> Right: Sean Sanberg coaches prospective *Oxygen* leaders at a training session at USAG Camp Zama in Japan.



Raising up *Oxygen* Champions to Serve Military Couples Overseas

STRONGER FAMILIES EMPOWERS NEW *OXYGEN* LEADERS WITH FOUR TRAINING SESSIONS ON THE PACIFIC RIM.

USAG CAMP ZAMA, JAPAN

Oxygen for Your Relationships was designed to uplift, heal, and inspire. For prospective leaders called to the Stronger Families mission, helping reach other couples takes the inspiration even further.

Leading couples through transformational *Oxygen* seminars takes dedication, skill, and a heart for family, along with study and preparation. Prospective *Oxygen* instructors devote hours of their time learning to lead, building life-changing communication, conflict resolution,

and marriage support skills before ever stepping in front of a seminar.

Leaders-in-Training

This January and February, leaders-in-training took an important step toward facilitating *Oxygen* events by attending leader training sessions at USAG Camp Zama in Japan and USAG Yongsan in South Korea.

Trainees experienced transformational moments in their own relationships as they prepared to bring *Oxygen* to other families. Attendees called the events “life-changing;”

soon, they look forward to helping change lives themselves.

Stronger Families’ National Training Manager Sean Sanberg shared, “I was so thrilled to see our trainees respond to the presentation training. Knowing *how* to deliver, not just *what* to deliver, has added value to the curriculum and to the overall impact of the event. Hearing the stories and sharing in the lives of these men and women makes me so proud! The passion and sense of calling they feel for this mission is amazing.” ■