

**COMPASS SEMINAR 21**  
**Care Of Military Personnel And Spouse/Significant Other Support**  
**Fact Sheet/Invitation**  
**FEB 28-MAR 01, 2020**

**Goal: turning vulnerability into strength through learning and utilizing peer support.**

This is an experiential workshop for soldiers who are working through Trauma related to Deployment or Life. Despite the best support immediately following deployment or when experiencing a traumatic life event, there can be long lasting effects. Going to War and experiencing trauma in general are like crossing a fence, with no opportunity to jump back. Incidents which happen during wartime and on the home front, the reactions we experience can rupture an individual's basic worldview. One may feel vulnerable and may have to emotionally come to grips with a reality that someone who has never walked in those boots cannot understand. The civilian job, the neighborhood and one's relationships may now be perceived differently. COMPASS will provide education on trauma, patterns of resolution, and field-tested coping strategies to promote recovery and resilience. Because peer support is an important element of COMPASS, peers will lead discussion groups relating to deployment, post-deployment and life issues. This method helps promote normalization and recovery. The COMPASS format has been adapted from a model (Post Deployment Seminar – PDS) in use by the FBI for over 25 years.

**What Type of Issues Will We Discuss?** COMPASS will cover incidents and events that occurred in the war zone as well as events on the home front. We will talk about events that sometimes result in an overwhelming sense of vulnerability and/or loss of control. These may include:

- |  |                               |   |
|--|-------------------------------|---|
| * Separation from family                         | * Jumpiness                   | * |
| * Going outside the wire                         | * Sleeplessness               | * |
| * Convoy duty                                    | * Difficulty Concentrating    | * |
| * Fire-fights                                    | * Replaying Events/Nightmares |   |
| * IED's  | * Shutting off emotions       |   |
| * Getting shot or seriously hurt in the war zone | * Shutting out the world      |   |
| * Observing personnel getting wounded or killed  | * Relationship Issues         |   |

Soldiers who have been through COMPASS report that it has helped them to talk about relationships, sense of guilt, having a short fuse, easily getting angry, and for some, the strong desire to go back.

**What will the Soldier get out of this?** (1) An opportunity to share one's experience with one's peers as well as give and receive support (2) Teachings by military/ mental health professionals on proven trauma recovery methods, and (3) Learning coping strategies that can enable recovery from deployment and post-deployment reactions. Soldiers report that the COMPASS has strengthened their ability to deal with work, relationships and life in the future.

Few organizations around the country offer COMPASS-type programs for their own Soldiers and to the best of our knowledge there is no such program which is regional in scope. While we may not be able to include everyone who wishes to participate in the program, we are planning a COMPASS Seminar consisting of 30 participants + **spouses/significant other** and 15 facilitators. The facilitators will be peer support soldiers who have been deployed themselves, mental health professionals as well as military chaplains. This program is open to any guard or reserve Soldier in South Carolina as well as those who served as full-time Soldiers prior to becoming sworn.

**Location:** (For all SCNG Attendees) Clarks Hill – SCARNG Training Site, Plum Branch, SC

**For more** information call CH (CPT) Jason Strong: 803.457.4196 or Eric Skidmore: 803.206.8961

**Sponsor:** The SC Army National Guard/SCLEAP

**Cost:** For SC Guard personnel, there is no fee for this training. The PDS, all meals and all housing will be provided at no cost to the soldier. For non-guard personnel, the sending agency is responsible for the cost of housing.

**Housing:** Cottages for Non-Guard Personnel are available at Elijah Clark State Park, 2959 McCormick Highway, Lincolnton, GA 706-359-3458 Reservations: 1-800-864-7275 or [www.gastateparks.reserveamerica.com](http://www.gastateparks.reserveamerica.com) (2BR Cottage/\$150/night)

**Date/Time:** 28 FEB-MAR 01, 2020 **Start Time:** 1000 on Friday 02/28/20

**Dress Code:** Business Casual (Nice shirt and jeans/pants without holes)