

WORKBOOK

TRUCKERLIFE

LEAVING & RE-ENTRY



family CULTURE

Every family has a culture.

Your family culture is defined by what your family values and the general way you do things, like your traditions and routines. *How you leave and re-enter is an important part of your family culture*, especially when one parent is on the road for extended periods of time.



look back

How did your parents say goodbye to each other before going to work or away on a trip? If applicable, how did your partner's parents? How did your parent reconnect when they returned home from work or a trip? How did your partner's parents reconnect?



look around

What are your current routines with how you leave and re-enter? Would you describe your current routines as purposeful and planned or more haphazard and chaotic? How would your partner and/or children finish these sentences: "Before _____ leaves, we always..." and "I love when _____ gets home, because we..." What are your partner's and children's expectations when you leave & when you return?



look ahead

"When people leave well, they still feel connected."
Brainstorm some ideas for what "leaving well" might look like for your family. What routines, rituals, or traditions could help you leave well? They don't need to be elaborate or complicated and they will probably evolve over time.

REMEMBER THIS: routines help provide stability and security.

the parental side of **LEAVING**

It's important to leave

your children in a way that empowers and supports your partner or whoever is taking care of them while you're gone, since they will be the one providing supervision and discipline.

Here are a few things you can say to make sure your children feel encouraged and accountable for their own actions:

"Make sure you keep up with your chores while I'm gone."

"I want to get a good report from _____ when I return."

"Do what _____ asks while I'm gone and be sure to help out."



Have a conversation with your partner about ways you can be supportive of them while you're on the road and share ways your partner can be supportive of you.

making a plan for re-entry:

In order for the person who has been on the road not to feel like the "odd man out" when they get home, discuss some ways you can make re-entry a smooth transition rather than a bumpy landing.

Think about how you want things to go with your partner or your children's caregiver when you come home. Share your thoughts with them.

Consider how your actions upon re-entry show your children that your relationship with your partner is the most important.

expectations are **EVERYTHING**

Your partner might be expecting

a break as soon as you get home since they have been holding down the fort by themselves. On the flipside, you might be expecting a break since you just returned home from work. Have a conversation with your partner about what their needs are when you get home and what your needs are. What are your children's needs when you return home?



Have a family meeting to establish the routines that will be a vital part of your family culture.

The ultimate goal is

**FOR EVERYONE IN THE FAMILY TO FEEL
CONNECTED AND UNDERSTAND THEIR ROLE.**

Being intentional about how you leave and how you re-enter will help you decrease drama and ultimately strengthen your family.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TIPS TO STRENGTHEN YOUR RELATIONSHIPS, CHECK OUT:

FIRSTTHINGS.ORG

