



# OUR PCS STORY: BE POSITIVE AND FLEXIBLE (MIL SPOUSE EDITION)

By [Christine Carol "C.C." Gallagher](#), [Wendy Way](#),  
[Faith Bomar](#) and [Lynda Lind](#)

May 27, 2022

<https://warroom.armywarcollege.edu/podcasts/pcs>

## EPISODE TAKEAWAYS:

- 1. The moving industry is stressed this year.** Like so many other businesses the moving industry is affected by supply chain issues, rising fuel costs and labor shortages. Be prepared for delays, changes and potential frustrations.
- 2. If it's been a while since you've moved don't forget to budget for those things that can't travel with you to the new destination.** The general public doesn't realize that every move means all new condiments, cleaning supplies, frozen foods and other perishable items that movers won't pack and often can't travel cross country or to another continent.
- 3. C.C. likes to sort her items into four groups – TOSS, SELL, DONATE, KEEP.** Think of each move as an opportunity to clean house, closets and drawers. Get rid of those things that are broken or unserviceable, make a little cash on those things that are valuable to someone else, help out the less fortunate with items that you aren't using anymore, and take good care of those things that are moving on with you.
- 4. If at all feasible send a box ahead to meet you.** Whether you place an order with some online store and schedule it to meet you, or you send items already in your possession it's a great way to supplement unaccompanied baggage shipments. Send it to your new address if you can or to sponsors or friends or family if you can't.
- 5. Redefine success with each move.** Whatever you considered success 5 moves ago may not meet your standards on this move. Adjust your expectations (up or down) to make sure you and your family is clear on what makes a successful move. Be sure to enjoy the small wins and make smaller reasonable goals. How do you eat the elephant? One bite at a time.
- 6. Your kids (and your pets) feed off your energy.** If your energy is negative and frantic your children will see that and it will negatively impact their behavior. Likewise they'll be bolstered by calm, positive actions. And don't be afraid to empower your kids by asking what will make the move better for them. Every PCS involves loss of control. Find ways to regain/maintain control wherever you can.

7. **Your favorite assignment may have nothing to do with location so don't prejudge your where you're heading.** Your stage of life, the age of your kids, the unit you're joining and any number of other factors will determine how much you enjoy your next duty location. Installations that might have a bad reputation might be your best assignment ever because of job or development opportunities, great neighbors and friends or just the time you finally get to spend with your family. Your family's best move is a personal thing.
8. **Establish a NO-GO ZONE for the packers.** Whether it's the car or a bathroom or a bedroom that the kids can hideaway in, put keys and the PCS folder, uniforms, pets and anything else that cannot get packed.
9. **Moving is exhausting.** Long days on the road or in planes, unfamiliar beds in motels and hotels along the way and at the far end it seems like it's always either raining or 102° and humid. Faith and her family use the "bed in a bag" method. Each family member packs up clean sheets and pillows in an individual bag for each member. Then those bags get clearly marked and tagged as OPEN FIRST. When the movers arrive, they find those boxes ASAP and set up beds first. That way at the end of the day when everyone is exhausted, they have clean beds waiting for them to rack out.

## 10. TIPS & TRICKS SPEED ROUND

- a. **Faith – Ziplock™ bags.** Pack entire drawers in resealable plastic bags and label them. It keeps like items together, minimizes handling by many dirty hands and you'll know right where the items go on the other end. Save all the bags for the next move and be sure to mark them clearly so you can find them quickly as the process starts next time.
- b. **C.C – Unpack the kitchen.** Movers have the responsibility to unpack requested items on delivery. Make a point to oversee the unpacking of the kitchen first. An Army marches on its stomach – make sure you can feed the troops as soon as possible and there will be far more work and far less complaining.
- c. **Lynda – Shower curtain and rod.** If at all possible, take a shower curtain and rod with you in the car on your travels. The last thing you want to do is crawl into your clean sheets hot and sweaty. Make sure everyone can get clean on the far end to ease the family into your new home.

- d. **Wendy – Give yourself grace.** The life of a military family is pretty non-traditional. Moving every couple of years isn't normal. It's stressful, it's difficult and it doesn't seem to get any easier the longer you do it and the more your life and family grow. Don't be too hard on yourself or your family and don't compare yourself to anybody else. You're doing your best and your best is different from everybody else.

## 11. Resources and Programs

- a. [Military OneSource](#) from the Department of Defense is your 24/7 gateway to trusted information, resources and confidential help. When MilLife happens, it's your "first line of support" — giving service members and military families tools to stay well and thrive.
  - i. Take a look at the [Moving and Housing](#) page.
  - ii. The [Military Installations](#) search tool allows you to find contact information for the relocation assistance program at your new duty station - all you need is the zip code.
- b. [PCSGrades](#) is a site by service members and their families for service members and their families and is focused on smoothly out the relocation process. The site includes lots of great articles as well as downloadable move checklists to keep you organized. Reader note: PCSGrades does receive a commission from realtors who are connected with clients via their network.
- c. [PCS Like A Pro](#) is the site that Wendy recommended. It's run by Megan Harless. Megan was named the 2020 military.com Spouse Changemaker of the Year, and the 2020 Armed Forces Insurance Red River Army Depot Military Spouse of the Year for her advocacy work on Permanent Change of Station (PCS) reform for military families to improve the process for when they have to relocate from one duty station to another.
- d. [Stressless PCS Kit](#) is C.C. Gallagher's company that "creates an all-in-one labeling system that ensures an organized move each and every time." C.C.'s motivation - "I wanted better efficiency, organization, cost savings, and further accountability of our Household Goods (HHG)."
- e. [LOGSA Mil Moves](#) is Wendy Way and her partner Isabel Garcia Schmitt's company. Their mission "is to create positive customer experiences while driving transformation in the moving industry to become the BEST at contract household goods packing. We build relationships, improve quality & focus on standards and

care. We are committed to optimizing our efforts by hiring Military Spouses and Veteran partners to work alongside local community workforces.” They currently operate at Fort Bragg, NC; Fort Leavenworth, KS; Hampton Roads, VA and the D.C. areas.