



OVERCOMING INFIDELITY

How you can heal, rebuild, &
strengthen your relationship.

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*When the heart grieves over what it has
lost, the spirit rejoices over what it has left.
~ Sufi Epigram*

OVERCOMING INFIDELITY

Discovering that your significant other has been unfaithful is one of the most devastating instances you'll experience in life. You may feel broken, ashamed, and even sick to your stomach.

You may decide to hibernate for weeks, while stewing about your partner's act of infidelity. Or, you may choose to ignore the news and continue on with your life as if nothing has happened.

It's important to understand that both are perfectly normal reactions. In fact, *there's no right or wrong way to react to such devastating news.*

But at some point or another, you *will* have to come to terms with what has happened. You'll have to find the will to dig yourself out of the emotional slump you're currently in.

Though you may not realize it at the moment, your hurt is only temporary. There will be calm after the storm.

And, if you're willing to take strides towards a future together, you and your partner can endure the healing process jointly as one.

*Love doesn't make the world go round.
Love is what makes the ride worthwhile.
~ Franklin P. Jones*

ACCEPTING WHAT HAS HAPPENED

Your partner has wronged you in the most hurtful way a lover can possibly fathom: *betrayal*. The fact that your partner has been unfaithful is never easy to accept. It's an especially tough pill to swallow if you were under the impression that your relationship was better than ever.

There are two aspects to acceptance: mental and emotional. Both are equally important in overcoming the effects of infidelity. But for the moment, let's zone in on the mental aspect of acceptance.

The Mental Aspect

In order for your mind to fully accept that your partner has been unfaithful, you must set aside your emotions. It's important to understand that ***there is logic behind every action, even one as foolish as infidelity.***

Most people believe that infidelity stems from sexual dissatisfaction. But, a lacking sex life isn't always to blame for an act of infidelity.

Infidelity typically stems from a lack of a *vital factor* in a romantic relationship. Below is a list of the 7 "lacks" that lead to infidelity.

The 7 "Lacks" of Infidelity

1. Lack of affection
2. Lack of attention
3. Lack of admiration
4. Lack of sexual attention
5. Lack of attraction
6. Lack of excitement
7. Lack of communication

The fact of the matter is that infidelity doesn't *"just happen."* No one wakes up one morning and thinks, "Hmm, I think today is a nice day to cheat on my spouse."

Your partner was unfaithful because your relationship lacked something that they found necessary.

As hard as it may be to hear, ***infidelity is a byproduct of problems that have been stirring in your relationship*** for months, perhaps even years. However, this is not to say that you are to blame, because you certainly aren't.

If your partner was dissatisfied with an aspect of your relationship, it was their responsibility to confess their worries. Your partner should've expressed such important concerns. Dropping subtle hints or acting out their frustration aren't effective ways of approaching marital or relationship problems.

Maybe you argue too often, maybe your lover is feeling belittled or ignored, or perhaps they're tired of the same old routine every day.

If you aren't planning on ending the relationship, the good news is that each of these culprits of infidelity can be turned around. But, you must be willing to work together.

Remember, it takes two people to build a relationship, but only one to tear it down.

Ask yourself: **Has your relationship changed recently (before the infidelity)?**

Before having a discussion with your partner about what happened, take a long look at your relationship. As previously mentioned, push your emotions to the side and think only in a factual state of mind.

Put yourself in your partner's mindset, and try to understand their reasoning.

Explore any and all weaknesses. Has your sex life drastically changed over the years? Have you stopped taking care of your appearance? Or, perhaps you've stopped paying your partner compliments that used to make their day.

In relationships, both men and women want to feel adored and as if they can trust their partner with their deepest darkest secrets.

If you feel that perhaps your partner isn't getting all of these things from you, you just may have found the reason for their infidelity.

It may not be a good reason, but it might contribute to one of the "lacks" that they feel.

*Betrayal can only happen if you love.
~ John Le Carre*

The Emotional Aspect

Your heart is hurting. Your mind isn't at its best. And it feels as if the world is caving in on you. All of these feelings are perfectly normal and quite expected.

In fact, if you don't feel at least *one* of these symptoms even mildly, you likely aren't as emotionally attached to your partner as you'd like to think.

In such a painful time, you may want to be around family and friends. Though being with your loved ones may lessen the emotional impact of the infidelity, it might do little good otherwise.

Until you've talked things through with your partner, it's often best to spend time reflecting on your relationship by yourself for a few days. Surrounding yourself with the overwhelming advice and strong opinions of others may drive you towards making a decision you may later regret.

Take a few days to think about what has happened away from the distractions of others. Send your kids to grandma's house for a few days. And send your partner to a hotel, or at the very least, the guest room, until you've accepted the situation and thoughtfully determined your next step.

Accept Your Emotions

Allow yourself to feel the natural emotions spilling from your soul. Trying to oppress them will only make them lie dormant for the time being. Then they'll eventually work their way to the surface and you'll experience them all over again.

Allow yourself to cry, scream, sulk, curse, and do anything else (within reason) that your emotions compel you to do. You'll feel better once all of the angst and depression is out of your system.

Let your emotions flow freely, and then pick the pieces back up in a day or two. *You'll make a more rational decision once your emotions have had their time to steal center stage.*

Reflect on Your Relationship

In your time alone, reflect on your relationship. What are your partner's good traits? Where does he fall short? What has he recently done that made you smile? Make a list and check it twice.

Unfortunately, people often remain together due to a high level of comfort, not love. When you've been with someone for so long, it's easy to fall out of love and not even notice.

If you have nothing nice to say about your partner, you both may have neglected your relationship for far longer than you've imagined.

*There is no disguise which can hide love for long
where it exists, or simulate it where it does not.
~ Francois de la Rochefoucauld*

COPING WITH YOUR PAIN

Whether you're planning on remaining with your partner or diving into the single life, coping with your pain is necessary in order to give yourself a fresh start.

There are productive and unproductive ways to deal with your pain. To clear the air, let's discuss the unproductive methods of coping with your pain.

Unproductive Methods of Coping with Pain

- Drinking Alcohol
- Binging on food
- Chain smoking
- Taking drugs
- Hurting yourself
- Hurting your partner

It's true that everyone needs an outlet, but defaulting to unhealthy, dangerous and potentially life threatening methods of coping with your pain will do more harm than good.

Avoid drinking alcohol and taking drugs because you won't be in your right state of mind and may do something you may regret. Furthermore, by exposing yourself to these harmful indulgences, you risk becoming dependent on drugs and alcohol.

Though a bit of ice cream and chocolate does your achy heart some good, binging on junk food each day isn't a healthy outlet. Not only will you gain weight, but you're only masking the true problem.

Hurting anyone, including yourself, is unacceptable. Resulting to violence will only complicate the situation and leave you with plenty of regret.

Do yourself a favor and ***be smart about the way you cope with your pain.*** Preserve your life by writing off these excuses to sabotage yourself.

Now, let's discuss the productive methods of coping with your pain.

Productive Methods of Coping with Your Pain

- Consulting with a certified couple's therapist
- Attending spiritual retreats or church groups
- Seeking online forums dedicated to overcoming infidelity
- Reading relevant books

- Journaling your feelings
- Confiding in a friend

The best way to cope with your pain is seeking comfort from those who have gone through similar situations. Perhaps you have a friend, family member, or coworker that has overcome infidelity. If so, contact them and ask them to tell you how they dealt with the situation.

Generally, people like telling their untold stories of hardship and will be honored that you've turned to them for help.

If you don't have a personal friend that can see you through this time, mingle online and in local organizations with those who can help. You'll often find forums online and local groups filled with members that are ready and willing to help you cope.

Explore your options. You can contact a professional, close friend, or a complete stranger online. The important thing is to get your feelings out into the open.

Alternatively, if you prefer to keep your partner's act of infidelity private, simply journal your feelings. ***Journaling can help you express your emotions and think through different options.***

The basic fact is that all sentient beings, particularly human beings, want happiness and do not want pain and suffering.

~ Dalai Lama

There's always someone ready to listen to your troubles, even if that someone is you.

SEEING THE RELATIONSHIP THROUGH

Dealing with infidelity is one of the most trying situations a couple can encounter.

After the fact, there's only one of two roads which you can embark on. You can either try to forgive the betrayal and rebuild your relationship, or you can let the relationship go and start anew.

If you feel you must leave because you'll never be able to trust your partner again, you may wish to end the relationship. Such a decision should be made only *after* you can think rationally again, and hopefully after you and your partner have had ample chance to communicate with each other about the future. Counseling may also help you arrive at a realistic decision for you.

No one will think any less of you because you could not forgive and forget; many people do not possess the ability to let something of such a large magnitude go.

However, if you do want to see the relationship through, it *is* possible! You've invested love, time, and effort into this relationship. It's well within your rights to want to protect your investment!

Rebuilding a Loving Relationship

Some days will be easier than others. All you can do is take each day as it comes and keep your goal in mind: a harmonious life with your partner.

In the beginning, you'll likely feel as if you must control your partner's every move in fear of them cheating again. It's important to resist this urge!

This is their chance to prove to you that they are worthy of your forgiveness. If they truly aspire to live their life beside you, no temptation in the world will be worth sacrificing your life together.

On the other hand, when a person truly wants to do something, they'll find a way to go about it. If your partner isn't in it for the long haul, your attempts to control them will do no good.

Rebuilding your relationship after infidelity is much like courting a new romance. You'll get to know each other again. You'll spend romantic evenings together. Each kiss will hold meaning and emotion. And your time together will be a priority, not an afterthought.

This act of infidelity was a bump in the road. If you're both willing to pour the necessary effort into rebuilding your love and trust, you *will* make it work.

Couple's Counseling

As mentioned above, couple's counseling can be an effective remedy to mending your broken heart and strengthening your bond. Book an initial consultation with a reputable therapist and, if you're comfortable with their techniques, schedule a weekly counseling session.

In couple's counseling you'll be able *to tap into each other's most reserved feelings* and get to know each other all over again. Though couple's counseling is effective, it's also an expensive form of rekindling your romance.

If your finances are in good standing, go ahead and schedule a few sessions. However, if you're struggling financially, find out what your insurance covers and whether the counselor offers reduced rates based on income.

Strengthening Your Relationship

Rev up your sex life by purchasing sexy lingerie or trying new techniques. Strengthen your bond by spending more quality time together. If possible, schedule daily lunches together or call each other on your lunch breaks. Small gestures go a long way.

Here are 10 activities to rekindle the romance:

1. Schedule a weekly date night.
2. Have dinner together *every* night.
3. Sincerely compliment one another at least 5 times per day.

4. Buy each other small, thoughtful gifts.
5. Cook a home-cooked meal together.
6. Treat each other to weekly massages.
7. Have sex at least 3 times per week.
8. Take romantic trips regularly.
9. Visit the place where you had your first date or were proposed to.
10. Have fun! Go to a concert, race, or romantic getaway.

By incorporating the activities listed above into your weekly routines, you just may feel like newlyweds again. All anyone wants is to love and to be loved. Nothing says *"I love you"* like having the spirit of an infatuated teenager and the bond of an 80-year old couple.

The only way to overcome infidelity is to truly re-dedicate your life to one another. Your partner should be your main priority, the reason you wake up every morning, and the person that makes your heart flutter. Whether you've been married for 20 years or have been dating for just 8 months, by taking it one step at a time, you can successfully overcome infidelity.

Infatuation is when you think he's as sexy as Robert Redford, as smart as Henry Kissinger, as noble as Ralph Nader, as funny as Woody Allen, and as athletic as Jimmy Connors.

Love is when you realize that he's as sexy as Woody Allen, as smart as Jimmy Connors, as funny as Ralph Nader, as athletic as Henry Kissinger and nothing like Robert Redford - but you'll take him anyway.

~Judith Viorst, Redbook, 1975