

**Your Spouse's Infidelity Revealed:
Getting Over The Shock And Getting to Recovery
Part 2**

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Marital infidelity can be revealed in a whole host of different ways. Regardless of how the infidelity is revealed, the revelation of the infidelity creates a crisis within the marital relationship and within the faithful spouse. The shock of discovering the infidelity leads to compulsive attempts to gather information to try to make sense of how this could possibly happen, and to gain enough information to be able to make a decision about whether to leave or stay in the relationship.

The feelings associated with the betrayal are intense and all-consuming. The compulsion to run the information through one's mind over and over is so strong and consuming, that it takes a great deal of conscious effort to stop obsessing. The constant bombardment of those mental images leads to physical and emotional exhaustion.

There are steps you can take for letting go of the obsessions. When you want to quit recalling, sorting, and rehashing the events, the pieces of evidence, the theories, move toward the feelings that you may be indirectly processing. Identify and take direct responsibility for your feelings. Label them. Own your feelings; express them; write about them. Don't act them out.

Identify and make a list of everything you are angry about. As yourself these questions instead:

1) Why am I angry (or other feeling)?

"I am angry that he would rarely have sex with me."

"I am angry that she lied to me"

"I am angry that he had sex with my best friend"

"I am angry because when I asked him about it, he turned it around on me, trying to make me believe I was paranoid"

"I am angry because I always hated her working there anyway".

2) What did I tell myself about my suspicions?

"You are just paranoid; she would not do that"

"You don't trust anybody, not even your wife"

3) What beliefs do you or did you have about infidelity?

"If your spouse is unfaithful, you have to leave him/her."

"If your spouse is unfaithful, you must not be showing him enough love"

"If your spouse is unfaithful you must not be having enough sex.

"If your spouse is unfaithful you must not be pretty enough,

"If your spouse is unfaithful you must not be sexy enough,

"If your spouse is unfaithful you must not be very good in bed"

"If your spouse is unfaithful they don't love you."

"If your spouse is unfaithful they will always be unfaithful."

"If your spouse is unfaithful you will never be able to trust them again"

- 4) What messages am I telling myself now about this that is having a negative effect on my emotional, physical, psychological health
- 5) Are any of the above messages true? Which ones are false?
- 6) Which “what if” questions am I dwelling on?

When you think that your spouse is not having sex with you because you are not good enough, you feel angry, hurt, worthless and rejected. Are you worthless? No, of course not. And his acting out was not about you. It wasn't about you being less than the person he had sex with. When you keep asking “why” this may be one of answers that you are seeking. But it comes from within, not from him. Another vein of questioning of the unfaithful spouse may come out as a “why” question but could be about wanting reassurance that your spouse is experiencing enough remorse that it will not happen again. The question may come out as “why would you jeopardize our marriage for this”, when the feelings involved are anger and fear. Example: “I am angry that you jeopardized our marriage for this.” When I think that you jeopardized our marriage for this, I think that you don't love me, that our marriage is not important to you and that you will do it again. If you love me, you would feel great remorse and shame and try to make it up to me. If you love me and really understand that you risk losing me, you won't do it again. The spouse with interrogation, may be looking for some indicator or reassurance not only that it won't happen again and that they are sufficiently remorseful, but that they don't have low regard for them as a person. That thought often comes out crooked in statements indicating that they believe that they have been taken for a fool. The compulsion to try to gain reassurance and information is a strong compulsion and we think that with enough information we can figure it out. We think we won't feel as powerless. Even though the compulsion is strong, you can stop obsessing.

Work on living in the present. Let go of worrying about what will happen tomorrow. Give up your investigative efforts. If the infidelity is ongoing or it will occur, you don't have to go out of your way to find out about it. It will be revealed without being compelled to be hyper vigilant. Get busy taking care of you today. Do the things that you may have wanted to do, but have not carved out time for yourself to accomplish or learn. Establish priorities and let go of some things that have low priorities. Practice thought stopping techniques. Listen to music. Dance, exercise, have lunch with your friends. Find someone to talk to. Get a counselor. Talk to a friend. It is not advised to bring your parents or his into your marriage by making them your confidante. If or when you decide to stay in the marriage and heal the problems, you may forgive, but your parents may not. Read recovery literature. Keep a journal.

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