

Healing After an Affair

October 2017

Volume VII Issue 3



Dina L. Garza, M.A., LPC

The decision to remain in your relationship after your partner has cheated on you cannot be easy. Betrayal can be traumatic and sometimes evoke symptoms associated with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. The recovery could take years. Some may take a steadfast approach to resolution and dissolve the relationship without discussion. But some may want to consider staying together for the sake of their feelings for each other or maybe because of their children or finances. For those couples that choose to reconcile, there is hope for their relationship.

An evidence based treatment for those couples wanting to stay together and heal by addressing the infidelity and strengthening the relationship is available. Dr. John Gottman began his research into relationship stability 25 years ago. Because of his scientific research, we now know what will end a relationship, what makes a relationship successful and how to treat the betrayal of infidelity. The Gottman's "Trust Revival Method" will help in rebuilding the trust and recover from the affair. It is important to remember that the relationship will not be as before, but rather new and different.

The first phase of the treatment is "Atonement", where the cheater must express his genuine remorse. The cheater must accept responsibility. While the problems in the relationship must be explored, it is important that it is done without blame.

The second phase is "Attune", where forgiveness is bestowed and the couple are committed to move forward. The relationship is now a priority to both parties and learning to resolve conflict so that rebuilding the relationship is not interrupted with harsh words and hurt feelings.

The third phase is "Attach", where a loving connection is made. Sexual intimacy is an important part to all committed relationships. Both parties are now trusting each other enough to allow themselves to be vulnerable to their partner. Sex needs to be pleasurable to both parties so that the new relationship can begin. Finally, both parties agree that there are no second chances. Commitment and prioritizing the relationship is vital.

Lastly, finding a therapist is important in the process of healing after an affair. Using couple counseling allows the couple the ability to express feelings in a safe environment. Trauma is serious and the consequences could be detrimental. Professional treatment for trauma because of the infidelity should be part of the plan toward rebuilding a trusting relationship. The therapist can help the couple form a solid foundation in their relationship and build on that by finding ways to support each other's dreams and learn how to share a sense of purpose.

www.professionalcounselingservices.us

Food for thought:

MAYBE IT'S ABOUT STARTING OVER AND CREATING SOMETHING BETTER.

You can start over again with the same person and see if that makes a difference.

If you both really want to be together then give each other some space and time to grieve the relationship that was lost (destroyed) by the betrayal.

When you are both ready, start from the very beginning. Slowly get to know each other again, become friends, go on dates, have fun and see if you fall in love all over again.



Reading Suggestions:

