

Infidelity Revealed

Did you know???

- Couples who constantly argue about trust are at a higher risk for infidelity.
- Contrary to what many believe, infidelity is not just about opportunity. Opportunity paired with weakened self-control leads to infidelity.
- Men's acts of infidelity are strongly influenced by their own characteristics, rather than the characteristics of their spouse.
- Women's acts of infidelity are typically tied closer to relationship dissatisfaction, rather than sexual dissatisfaction.

Reasons that Lead to Infidelity

Marriage Characteristics Influencing Acts of Infidelity:

- High levels of marital dissatisfaction
- Insufficient opportunities within the marriage for self-expansion
- Time spent away from each other

Personality Characteristics Influencing Acts of Infidelity:

- Low Self-Esteem
- High Narcissism
- Weak Religious Beliefs

The Impact of Infidelity

- Infidelity has a devastating impact on partners and relationships.
- Often causes irreparable damage, commonly leading to separation or divorce.
- Discovery is shattering and shocking.
 - Easier to cope if deliberately confessed
 - Difficult to overcome if accidentally discovered

Devastating impact on cheated partner

- Depression, shame, persistent anger, victimization, abandonment, powerlessness, disruption in daily life .

Infidelity Resulting in Divorce/Separation

- Current data from a large representative U.S. community sample indicate that more than half of individuals who engage in extramarital affairs do, in fact, divorce or separate from their spouse
- Infidelity substantially increases risk for divorce

Some couples used the crisis of infidelity to improve their marriages, and existing data from therapy with couples with a history of infidelity suggest that these couples can be helped with intervention.

What to Expect in Treatment:

- 1.) We will deal with the initial crisis.
- 2.) We will assist the couple in deciding the future of their relationship.
- 3.) We will examine the broader issues that led to the affair.

Interventions that Promote Recovery

Stage 1: Dealing with the Impact

- Infidelity has a devastating impact on partners and relationships, often causing irreparable damage, commonly leading to separation.
- Devastating impact on the cheated partner often involves: depression, shame, persistent anger, victimization, abandonment, powerlessness, and/or disruption of daily life.
- Assessing the relationship and individual functioning is **key** in dealing with the impact of infidelity.

Stage 2: Exploring Context and Finding Meaning

- Explore factors that contributed to the affair.
- Consider: aspects of the relationship, situational factors, and characteristics of each partner
- Therapists should be careful to differentiate between understanding the context of the affair, versus blaming the victim.

Stage 3: Moving On

- Using information gathered to reach a collaborative and informed decision on how to move on.