



How Can I Avoid An Affair?

"It just happened," explains Samantha, an up-and-coming corporate executive, about her recent extra-marital affair with a co-worker. "We'd just won a lucrative new deal and went out for drinks after work to celebrate. One thing led to another." But the truth is, things never 'just happen'. If you're careful, you can see the warning signs and avoid them before something potentially irreversible occurs.

Over time, love changes. There's a dramatic difference between new, blissful love and that you feel five to ten years or deeper into the relationship. It doesn't matter how beautiful or seemingly perfect your lover is when you first meet. This eventually transitions into diapers, bills and day-to-day stressors. But this doesn't mean the love is gone.

Regardless of the level of commitment you have for your spouse or partner, there will be times when you're tempted to stray. So what can you do to avoid an affair?

- Don't flirt. This gives a message that you're available and fuels the fire of temptation.
- Don't go to bars, or other places where singles meet, alone. While your intentions may be innocent, you're exposing yourself to opportunities that are best avoided.
- Question friendships that don't encourage your marriage or have ulterior motives. This can only lead to trouble.
- Learn how to set firm boundaries.

- If you're tempted into a workplace affair, avoid the person and consider changing jobs altogether before things get out of hand.
- Remind yourself that the grass is not greener on the other side. Every relationship moves from elation to comfort eventually. A new person may seem tempting only because you haven't seen all of his or her idiosyncrasies - yet.
- Avoid spending time alone with people you could potentially become sexually attracted to.
- Don't discuss marital problems or intimate details of your relationship with people you could potentially become sexually attracted to.
- Don't reveal your romantic or sexual feelings toward anyone other than your spouse or partner.

Finally, and most importantly, stay connected to your spouse or partner. Keep communication lines open, avoiding secrecy at all costs. Reinvigorate the romance, plan a date or quality time together. Seek marriage counseling to delve deeper into the problems at hand. Try to understand why you're tempted to stray, and what emotional needs you may be lacking. Then take steps to fulfill this need or emptiness within the safety of your marriage. Had Savannah taken a step back and tried these options before the situation went too far, she might have avoided a huge and irreversible mistake.

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