



Men Who Have Affairs and How to Recover From Them

Imagine that you have just found out that your man, the love of your life is having an affair. How would you feel? How would you deal with this situation? Therapists frequently help people as they come to terms with such a painful event. Usually in shock, frequently overwhelmed with hurt or anger and their relationship in crisis people come to therapy seeking to resolve the trauma of betrayal. In addition to being full of emotion, they are often full of questions. "What type of man would do this to me? I thought I knew him." In my years in private practice, I have seen several different profiles of men who have affairs:

- 1)The Sex-Addict: This type of man is a true addict. He is out of control in his life. He is medicating his emotional pain with sexual activity. His exploits and sexual infidelity are a big part of how he creates excitement. He will never be monogamous with you or anyone until he gets into recovery for his problem.
- 2) The Grass Is Greener Guy: This man usually marries young and has always wondered about other women. He may be questioning, "is this all there is for me in life?" His marriage may have become more of a to-do list than a shared joy. At a vulnerable moment, he may turn to another woman trying to fill his emptiness or boredom. He may confuse Eros or romantic infatuation with real love. He can benefit from therapy himself and the marriage may be salvageable if the couple seeks help.
- 3) The Angry Man Acting Out: This man is very angry with his partner. He may have saved up enough hurt or anger for a guilt free affair. He may also set it up so that his woman finds out so that she feels as hurt or angry as he does. This emotional time bomb usually blows the marriage up. This man needs to find constructive ways to deal with his anger and the problems in his relationship.

4) The Dead Relationship Guy: The love has died in his relationship but he will not bury it. He may stay in it for the kids or other reasons but look elsewhere for love he needs.

5) The Unhappy and Sabotaging Type: This man is unhappy in his relationship. However, he will feel guilty if he leaves. Therefore, he may try unconsciously to sabotage the relationship with an affair so that his mate will leave.

6) The Too Happy and Sabotaging Type: Some people stumble into a great relationship but then at a psychological level do not feel they deserve it. They are out of their comfort zone. Their ulterior agenda is to get back into their element. They usually find someone to have an affair with who helps them to feel unhappy. This is what they are most familiar with at a psychological level. This destroys their happy home and lets them recreate a relationship that feels more like the unhappy home of their childhood.

7) The Non-Monogamous Family Tradition: This man saw his father have affairs and knew his grandfather did also. The verbal and nonverbal messages in his family were that affairs were OK. As the twig is bent, so the tree grows.

8) The Criminal Thinker: This man has no conscience, no morals and no values. He is a professional liar and user of people. He is preoccupied with being one-up and getting away with something. He has no guilt or shame although he may be a good enough actor to fake the performance. He sees people as things.

9) The Scared of Engulfment Type: He equates closeness with pain. If he gets too close, he may need to create some distance. An affair will certainly do that. Affairs have devastating effects on relationships. They destroy trust and often the relationship too. The betrayed partner feels emotionally traumatized. Even if she divorces, this trauma can result in suspicion, irrational mistrust and generalized anger toward other men that she may date in the future. The other question that women frequently ask is, "How can I recover from his affair?" First, one must deal with the shock and trauma of betrayal. There are new therapeutic methods that can help people resolve such pain faster than ever before. A therapist who is skilled with an approach such as the REMAP process, EFT (Emotional Freedom Techniques) or Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) can help. Next, the grief and sense of loss must be resolved. Whether it is the loss of the relationship or the loss of trust for your partner, this is an important part of healing. The feelings of anger, hurt and disappointment will need attention. If your current partner has the profile of a repeat offender, it is important to develop the skills to pick someone else who is likely to be faithful. Finally, whether you stay with your partner or not, it is crucial to develop the type of skills that help relationships remain strong enough to deter affairs.

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