

HEALING AFTER INFIDELITY

Betrayer:

- o Must show remorse
- o Must become the vigilante of the relationship
- o Might express impatience with his partner to forgive them quickly
- o Might miss the other person from the affair
- o Needs to show personal clarity about what they want moving forward with their partner
- o Needs to show empathy for the hurt they caused
- o Might be sorry they hurt their partner while also not regretting the affair
- o If choosing to stay with their partner, the betrayer should communicate “why they’re choosing to stay” as part of the repair process

Betrayed:

- o Needs to validate the full range of often contradictory emotions they’ll feel (vengeful, ashamed/humiliated, fearful of the future, abandoned, etc.)
- o Might experience conflicting feelings at once (Leave and don’t go, Love me and I hate you, Touch me and get your hands off of me, Stay and go away)
- o Might feel morally superior and hold that over their partner
- o Might feel angry the unfaithful partner got to experience something (aliveness, the forbidden, passion) that they didn’t
- o Might want to set limits around contact with the other person
- o Might feel angry if asked to be understanding of their partner’s pain in cutting ties with the other person
- o Might want to know if their partner still thinks about the affair or the other person
- o Might fear that forgiving their partner will minimize the severity of the betrayal
- o Might refuse sex as a way to communicate how much the affair hurt
- o Will have trouble healing if their partner doesn’t express remorse
- o Might take several stages to forgive- it might not happen all at once or fully/entirely. Forgiving enough might be enough.
- o Might question how much the affair had to do with their sex life
- o Might want to know everything about the affair or nothing at all

Both Partners:

- o Need to negotiate new boundaries/rules/expectations
- o Might have a renewed sense of sexual desire prompted by the fear of loss→
- o Lack of sex between partners following the affair can widen the emotional distance →between them and shake trust that an affair won’t happen again
- o Need to consider: Their first marriage might be over- do they want a second one with each other?

**Prepared Dec. 2018 for members of the Esther Perel Discussion Group on Facebook.*

Source: **Esther Perel Infidelity Resource Guide*

**Download the Guide at: <https://thestateofaffairs.estherperel.com/infidelity-resource-guide>*

