



Reach out  
take a step

find hope

# Care to change

Counseling to help you move forward.

# Infidelity and Forgiveness

## Presenters

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- Sherry Follett, Certified Mental Health and Life Coach, Women and Marriage



# Progressive Muscle Relaxation



Take a few slow breaths



Focus on one muscle group



Tense the muscles



Slowly release the tension

This works because intentionally tensing and releasing muscles helps the body recognize and release stored tension, allowing the nervous system to settle into a calmer state. ❤️



# Infidelity and Forgiveness

## Objectives

- Discuss the spiritual, emotional and relational impact of infidelity
- Articulate the stages of healing
- Share ways to help couples walk through the aftermath of betrayal toward redemption
- Outline ministry-informed responses that support couples toward forgiveness and restoration



# Infidelity and Forgiveness

## Introduction

“... and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday.” Isaiah 58:10 NIV



# Infidelity and Forgiveness

## Introduction

### Talk & Turn:

Comfort level dealing with betrayal (1-10)



# Infidelity and Forgiveness

## What is infidelity

“...the act of engaging in emotional or sexual intimacy with someone outside the agreed-upon boundaries of your marriage or relationship. Infidelity may or may not involve sexual encounters, and can happen in person or online.”



# Infidelity and Forgiveness

## Impact on the Spouse Involved in the Affair

- Overwhelming guilt, regret and shame
- Low self-esteem
- Confusion and indecisiveness
- Loss of relationships, anger from others
- Possible rupture in relationship with children



# Infidelity and Forgiveness

## Impact on the Betrayed/Wounded

- Anger and confusion
- Depression, anxiety
- Negative self-beliefs, self-doubt
- PTSD: obsessive thoughts, intrusive memories, flashbacks



# Infidelity and Forgiveness

## Impact on the Betrayed/Wounded

- Loss of safety and trust
- Grief and loss
- Women tend to be more distressed by emotional affairs, and men tend to become more distressed over physical affairs



# Infidelity and Forgiveness

## Types of Betrayals

- Emotional affair
- Online affairs:
  - sexual or emotional affairs online, via chat rooms, messages, texts, and exchanging of photos and sexual fantasies.



# Infidelity and Forgiveness

## Types of Betrayals

- Physical affairs
  - One-night stand
  - In-charge affair
  - Escape affair
  - Compulsive affair
  - Revenge affair



# Infidelity and Forgiveness

## Types of Betrayals

- Physical affairs
  - Naive affair
  - Opportune affair
  - Lustful affair
  - Pursuing affair
  - Thrilling affair



# Infidelity and Forgiveness

## What does scripture say?

- Exodus 20:14
- Hebrews 13:4
- Psalm 51 (to the unfaithful spouse)



# Infidelity and Forgiveness

## Gottman's Trust Revival Method

Three stages:

- Atonement
- Attunement
- Attachment



# Infidelity and Forgiveness

## Stage 1 - Atonement

- Crisis and discovery stage
- Need to move from emotional turmoil to stabilization.
- Important in this stage that the betrayed is given information for understanding.



# Infidelity and Forgiveness

## Stage 1 - Atonement

- Encourage the couple that major decisions should wait until emotions are stable.
- Avoid addressing what was wrong with the relationship outside of the affair.



# Infidelity and Forgiveness

## Stage 1 - Atonement

- Posture of the one who had an affair
  - They take responsibility for their recovery.
  - Proverbs 12:22
  - They are transparent.



# Infidelity and Forgiveness

## Stage 1 - Atonement

- Posture of the one who had an affair
  - They do not minimize nor become defensive.
  - They are patient with the process.
  - James 5:16
  - They show genuine remorse.



# Infidelity and Forgiveness

## Stage 1 - Atonement

- Posture of the one who had an affair
  - They try to understand their spouse's pain.
  - They show appreciation to their spouse for staying and trying to work things out.
  - They stop any hurtful behaviors.



# Infidelity and Forgiveness

## Stage 2 - Attunement

- Moving from stabilization to understanding and forgiveness.
- Assess any issues the couple may have had prior to the affair.
- Improve communication.
- Begin to rebuild trust.



# Infidelity and Forgiveness

## Stage 2 - Attunement

- Help the couple to:
  - Focus on what is helpful.
  - Keep realistic expectations.
  - Practice self-care.
  - Show self-compassion.



# Infidelity and Forgiveness

## Stage 2 - Attunement

- Help the couple to...
  - Build positive, new experiences
  - Remember what was good about your relationship.
  - Commitment to meet one another's needs.



# Infidelity and Forgiveness

## Stage 2 – Attunement, Forgiveness

Matthew 6:14-15 "For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins."



# Infidelity and Forgiveness

## Stage 2 – Attunement, Forgiveness

- Forgiveness is...
  - A choice to overcome pain that was inflicted by another person.
  - Letting go of anger, resentment, shame, and other emotions associated with an injustice, even though they are reasonable feelings.

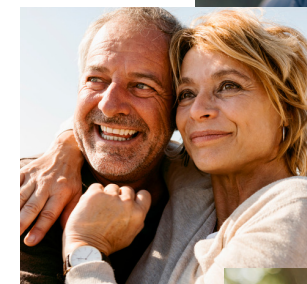


# Infidelity and Forgiveness

## Stage 2 – Attunement, Forgiveness

- Forgiveness is...
  - Treating one another with compassion, even though they are not entitled to it.





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# Infidelity and Forgiveness

## Stage 2 - Attunement

- Forgiveness is not..
  - Reconciling or returning to the relationship.
  - Forgetting the injustice.
  - Condoning or excusing the behavior.



# Infidelity and Forgiveness

## Stage 2 - Attunement

- Forgiveness is not..
  - “Letting go” but wishing for revenge.



# Infidelity and Forgiveness

## Stage 2 – Attunement, Phases of Forgiveness

- The Uncovering Phase – understand what was done to you.
- The Decision Phase – learn more about the decision to forgive.
- The Work Phase – work to understand to other person in a new way to allow more compassion.



# Infidelity and Forgiveness

## Stage 2 – Attunement, Phases of Forgiveness

- The Deepening Phase. During the final phase of forgiveness, you will reflect on how it would feel to forgive, how it may create growth and resilience.



# Infidelity and Forgiveness

## Stage 2 – Attunement, Rebuilding Trust

- You can trust someone when you feel your needs are understood, felt, and cared for.
- You can trust someone when you feel their motive is for you, not just for themselves.
- You can trust someone when you feel they have the needed knowledge and ability to change.



# Infidelity and Forgiveness

## Stage 2 – Attunement, Rebuilding Trust

- You can trust someone who has the values and morals needed to change.
- You can trust someone who has a track record of living up to their promises.



# Infidelity and Forgiveness

## Stage 3 - Attachment

- Attachment
  - They learn skills of intimate conversation.
  - They increase the investment and mutual dependency in the relationship.
  - They set up a high cost for subsequent betrayals.
  - The couple creates personal sex and intimate trust.



# Infidelity and Forgiveness

## Protecting the Relationship

- Continue to maintain the strength of the relationship.
- Understanding that attraction is normal.
- Implementing boundaries, friends are friends of the relationship.



# Infidelity and Forgiveness

## Protecting the Relationship

- Continue to hold the boundary of no contact with the other partner.
- Avoiding risky situations and managing thoughts.
- You agree on what commitment and exclusivity mean.



# Infidelity and Forgiveness

## Protecting the Relationship

- There is recognition and openness to talk about possible issues.
- You show understanding for each other in everyday interactions.
- Your relationship is a priority that comes before everything and everyone else.



# Infidelity and Forgiveness Tools

- Handout
  - Links to resources, podcast info helpful articles
- After Affair Assessment
- Emotional Affair Questionnaire
- Forgiveness Letter Instructions
- Shirley Glass' Infidelity Protections



# Resources

- [Caretochange.org/podcasts/](https://www.caretochange.org/podcasts/)  
(What to do When Your Partner Has Betrayed You, 10/9/22, Season 5, episode 28)
- [Caretochange.org/resources/](https://www.caretochange.org/resources/)
- [AffairRecovery.com](https://www.affairrecovery.com)
- [Not Just Friends](#) by Shirley Glass
- [What Makes Love Last: How to Build Trust and Avoid Betrayal](#) by John Gottman
- [Forgiving What You Can't Forget](#) by Lysa TerKeurst



# Q & A



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# SEND US YOUR QUESTIONS!



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Counseling to help you move forward.