


How to Recover from Marital Infidelity and Move Forward

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It's something you didn't think could ever happen in your marriage — infidelity. But, here you are, after the fact, and it's hard to fully process it. There are a dizzying number of serious questions, and none appear yet to have clear enough answers. Why did this happen? What happens now? What to do? Leave? Stay married? Through the shock and emotional pain, it can be too difficult even to think clearly enough to make daily decisions, much less these life-changing ones. Here are some general recommendations about how to deal with infidelity in marriage, to help you as you embark on the healing process.

Steps to Regain Your Balance and Happiness

How can you regain your balance? How can you decide what you should do, when you're not even sure what you want anymore? Yes, the questions continue. One thing does become clear though: you're going to have to give yourself some time to figure it all out and decide how you really want to move forward with your life. So, take things slowly for a little while.

You're currently coping with the trauma of becoming aware that your spouse has been unfaithful. That experience is jolting. All your assumptions about your marriage, your family's future, and your life have been destabilized. It's too difficult to know what's even real now. Here's a very general explanation of the necessary steps forward:

Give Yourself Time To Get Some Perspective

This is the first important decision you can confidently make, in the wake of marital infidelity. Take the time you need in order to process the events and the new reality generated from them. Allow yourself some space to think, to put a little distance of days or weeks between you and the immediate circumstance, and just use the time to develop a bit of perspective.

The reasons people cheat on their spouses tend to be complicated, which is what can make getting past it and moving forward so fraught with unexpected challenges.

Take Care of Yourself

There's nothing selfish about recognizing the real need to focus on yourself initially, after receiving such a blow as finding out your beliefs about your marriage have been undermined. In fact, the healthiest way to begin the process of recovering yourself from the damaging choice your spouse has made is by concentrating on yourself first.

Of course, this is not to suggest dismissing your parental or other serious responsibilities. It just means struggling less to figure everything out right now, and just take care of yourself during the first days after learning about your spouse's infidelity. Eat well, sleep, exercise. After you've had some time to work through the traumatic experience, you'll be better able to make decisions about your future.

Accept Reality

Denial is one of the normal initial human reactions to discovering something has occurred that is very bad and personally impactful. It's a natural protective response that enables you to process limited amounts of stressful inputs while at the same time grappling with maintaining your normal life as much as possible, all without becoming cognitively and emotionally overwhelmed.

Of course, denial is not helpful over the long term. It can become a barrier to moving forward with your life. Progressing beyond denial means you're advancing through the natural process of grieving the loss of the way things appeared before you became aware of the different reality. You've found out that your spouse has been unfaithful. When you are able to accept this difficult truth, that is a healthy indicator that you are ready to begin overcoming the trauma.

Let Yourself Feel & Express Your Emotions

In the aftermath of discovering marital infidelity, you may experience shifting emotions across the spectrum from anger, to fear, to sadness, among others. Recognizing that you are going through a grieving process as part of the larger circumstance of dealing with your new situation can help you manage your way through it and express your feelings in a healthy way.

Internalizing your feelings can allow the sense of betrayal to dominate your emotions. It can also lead to involuntary eruptions of emotions at inappropriate times. Allowing yourself to express your feelings to a trusted listener can help you feel more centered and

in better control of your emotional healing process.

Reclaim Your Power Over Your Happiness

Your spouse's choice to be unfaithful is certainly entirely his or her fault. No percentage of the fault for that behavior can belong to you. But, if you allow yourself to continue long-term in the psychological and emotional mode of a victim, then you can begin to feel less and less personal power to adapt and change, in order to move on with your life. You can find yourself stuck in the years to come with the pain you're experiencing now, still waiting for your spouse to do enough, somehow, to alleviate your misery.

Though it's very difficult, you'll need to find your way to recognize that you are strong and you can get through this, recover fully, and move forward with your life. Whether that will be with or without your spouse, you will no longer live as a victim, but as a personally empowered individual.

Forgive

Forgiveness is not at all the same thing as condoning your spouse's cheating. Forgiveness, in the case of marital infidelity, means freeing yourself from being stuck unable to get past the kind of anger and resentment that can keep you feeling miserable for many years.

Forgiving is for the purpose of not allowing your spouse's, or the individual's he or she had the affair with or even any regrettable behavior of your own to keep you feeling stuck in the situation. It's about saving yourself from living mired in the matter of infidelity long-term.

Forgiving does not mean trying to force yourself to forgive. It's about recognizing the time when you're ready to let yourself be free from the largest part of the emotional burden you're left with by the affair.

Forgiving liberates you to move beyond the darkest period of dealing with your spouse's unfaithfulness, to seeing your way toward life beyond this difficult time. It enables you to learn from the experience and apply lessons from it to your new vision of your future — either with your spouse or not.

Seek to Understand the Cause(s) of Infidelity

Choosing to learn from what has happened, instead of dismissing your spouse's infidelity as something inexplicable, can benefit you with growth from the experience. The majority of cases of marital infidelity are due to psychological, emotional, sexual, or communications issues, either in the unfaithful individual or between the marital partners.

Exploring the causes of infidelity, and looking back at [infidelity signs](#) you may have missed in the past, can help you understand what, if any, role you may have had in the problematic dynamic. Being enlightened from this knowledge empowers you to choose how you'll grow from the experience.

STEPS TO RECOVER FROM MARITAL INFIDELITY AND MOVE FORWARD



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ACCEPT REALITY



LET YOURSELF FEEL &





Forming a Vision for Moving On With Your Life

Moving past infidelity first requires dealing with the trauma of it, to benefit yourself with a clear perspective in choosing a direction for your future. So, whether you want to work with your spouse to heal the marriage, or choose to work toward making a new life without him or her, first take time to process the trauma from the betrayal.

Focus on making your way through the recovery process, to prepare yourself better for making the major decisions ahead. After you've progressed through all the challenging work of the necessary steps discussed above, the efforts you've put into your journey of personal healing will start to pay off. You will find yourself feeling more hopeful for the future and thinking more about what you want your conception of moving on with your life to include.

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Utah Attorney David Pedrazas has been helping people through matters of family law for over 20 years. He is committed to offering his clients the real help they need to move forward with their lives after divorce. He helps people thoroughly understand all their legal options and resources, so they can make the best-informed choices possible for themselves and their families' future.

David Pedrazas is well-reputed as the best divorce lawyer in Utah. He has been recognized as one of Salt Lake City's best divorce attorneys by the American Institute of Family Law, the National Academy of Family Law Association, and the American Academy of Trial Attorneys.

To discuss your situation with an experienced Utah divorce attorney, call The Law Office of David Pedrazas, PLLC, Salt Lake City, UT at (801) 263-7078, to schedule a free consultation, or contact us online.