

[Checklist] Affair Stethoscope: Gauge the Pulse of His/Her Affair-

Is It Dead or Alive and Thriving? Measure the Odds of Saving Your Marriage

Your Biggest Decision to Stay or Go

Soon after you discover your spouse's affair you should not make any big decisions regarding your relationship. I will repeat that. Do NOT make any hasty decisions involving your long-term future relating to your relationship.

Ultimately to stay or leave your marriage is the most important decision for you to make as it affects the rest of your life (not just your relationship). To decide to stay could feel good in the moment because it keeps you in familiar territory with a person and a lifestyle you've grown accustomed to.

However, you could experience re-occurring feelings of insecurity, wondering whether your spouse will cheat again and then, of course, it could end up happening. Then you'd live with regret and anger for giving them a second chance.

On the other hand, the most rewarding outcome could occur in which the both of you resolve the underlying issues that placed the marriage in an unstable situation to begin with. Thus, you end up rebuilding trust and strengthening the mutual bond between you two. In other words, you could end up having the best marriage that you've ever had before.

In essence your decision comes down to two options: **1)** Do you stop the bleeding, start fresh and reroute your life? or **2)** Do you take the chance to mend the wounds, restore your love and avoid having to face the unknown of starting over?

The Challenges You Will Face When Deciding What to Do Next

I bet we had all thought about the possibilities of our spouses cheating before it happened. We thought it would be so easy to decide what to do. Most of us, probably all of us, thought we could easily just throw them out. “I will never stay with the cheater!”, you proudly proclaimed.

And of course, we all discovered once the actual nightmare happened, that the decision to leave is not so simple.

Challenges come up, worries infiltrate our minds and we feel like we must pluck together a thousand different puzzle pieces in which none seem to fit.

We go through the “if this then that scenario”, play out the chess game to figure out all the best moves and they all seem to lead to pain.

There is no obvious “win-win solution” at best it's a “win-lose situation” in which you win a little bit but you definitely lose something else.

Some of those challenges are as follows:

- How would leaving change your lifestyle?
- How would the kids feel if they knew about the affair, found out or could sense something was majorly wrong?
- How would the kids feel about being part of a household where the two parents no longer loved each other?
- How would they feel if the parents split?
- Will you forgive just to avoid the pain of facing an unknown life alone?
- How much confidence do you have in yourself to live alone and take care of yourself?
- How will you feel about yourself to stay in an in relationship if your spouse does not cooperate to rebuild trust?
- How much power do you feel you have or did you lose all your confidence?
- Must you consider health issues? Do you take care of each other? Do you take care of other family members with health challenges?
- Do you feel safe and comfortable engaging in sexual activity again with your spouse?

- Will he/she cooperate to get a sexually transmitted disease test?

This list could be practically endless and on top of that, your situation could bring about an additional list of this one.

So how I can help you?

First of all, please know that I am not a professional therapist, counselor, psychologist, psychiatrist. I am not a professional anything by any means. However, I do have some invaluable experience from both sides of an affair.

And I have run this blog since February 2014 and have read a good amount of material on the subject as well as received numerous emails from my viewers and subscribers who share their feelings and stories via email. (Those stories stay private between us.)

My desire is to provide or recommend help to couples who can save their relationships and also guide the people who leave or left their marriages to a brighter and safe new life alone.

If you would ever like to speak with someone outside of the situation then click here to fill out the contact information. I have responded to every single one of my emails I have ever received usually within 3 to 4 hours but no more than 24-48 hours.

My Experience with Affairs

The Other Side of Cheating (Time to Confess My Short-comings)

I never thought growing up that I would ever be involved in affairs. I always saw myself as a person with good intentions. But even with good intentions when you ignore personal and intimate boundaries you risk getting your emotions involved and losing control.

There is absolutely nothing whatsoever healthy about getting involved with someone committed in a relationship or breaking your own relationship's VOWS.

Solving one problem to create another is a destructive, pointless strategy with long-term, negative implications causing a domino effect of havoc on other people's lives.

I entered a marriage I should not have, but also should not have cheated to help me exit it. Nor should I have gotten involved with someone else in a similar situation who was married and wanted out. You start feeling sorry for each other for the struggles you go through in your respective homes and want to help one another. This creates platonic love between you two, an emotional affair begins and then the "emotional fire" spreads and you cannot put it out.

We won't discuss the scope of divorce or my views of leaving a marriage, but I will say that no matter how difficult the situation or how disrespectful your spouse gets revenge cheating is not the answer.

Feeling sorry for another person in a difficult situation is understandable, but that conversation should never even start to begin with. A married person should not share their relationship challenges with someone who they could potentially find attractive and start an affair with.

Once the affair begins, so does the justification of a cheater's actions. Cheaters selfishly fulfill their needs and look for a reasonable excuse to protect their reputation.

So while I do not particularly enjoy admitting my downfalls I can still help you because I can probably read your spouse's mind better than you can.

I'd be honored to help if you allowed me to.

And unless they can see the destructive path themselves that lies in front of them, unless they can introspectively search their soul and foresee the unfulfilling future that awaits them your marriage could be in jeopardy.

Why?

Because they are stuck in a fantasy world. They cannot make long-term healthy, wholesome decisions. They experienced a euphoric emotional drug and want more of it.

Then I Got Cheated On...

Miraculously I somehow finally woke up and realized I wanted no part of cheating. The damage was done, but I can stop the bleeding and help myself to make decisions that I could be proud of not want to hide from.

Later the blog naturally provided me a way to provide insight for others to help them overcome the challenges that affairs cause.

I thought I had learned enough from my tumultuous first marriage and done enough soul-searching to understand how to love in a healthy way by giving unconditionally to other person. I thought this could prevent any future partners from considering cheating.

I was wrong.

Again, even people with good intentions put themselves in risky situations.

And that's what my second wife did.

Then she ended up abandoning me.

With my second wife I thought I had met my soulmate. Personality-wise we were a better match I felt then between me and my first wife. I had already entered my late 30s and began to feel the pressure of growing older alone.

So finding someone who I thought was my savior angel made me think that my life had finally turned around for the better.

I won't go into the details now, but [you can read the story here.](#)

What I will say is that staying in a toxic, dead-end relationship with no future only wastes time and hurts you more.

From experience I can tell you that rerouting your life alone feels much better than staying with a person with a lost soul.

So how CAN I help?

Because I know when it makes sense to stay in a marriage and when it doesn't. I have ended up alone and learned to survive and find a new purpose in life. I have been to that scary place that you fear going to- the unknown life alone that lies ahead if you leave your marriage.

I have practically been in every situation involved in this affair and will not hold back giving my insight.

If you want the straight truth, because you fear making a poor decision, then you have come to the right place.

I do not believe all marriages can be saved and it does not make sense to stay in one that will only lead you to more misery.

HOWEVER... if your marriage has a chance than you must give it a chance. Do not live with the regret that you did not give your spouse a legitimate opportunity to rebuild trust. There is no guarantee of finding someone else later, although I promise you that when you're ready, and if you keep your eyes open, you will find them.

But why not fix something that is fixable and avoid the unknown?

I WANT to Help You

I have poured out my soul to you. One of the traits of surviving an affair that you will find in many resources and guides is the ability to discuss uncomfortable feelings and details.

This has certainly proven true for me. And I have no issues digging deep into feelings.

Even as a young boy I dreamed of falling in love and finding my soulmate. There was just something soothing about connecting with a female that I could not get with guy friends.

I guess my expectations were a little misguided. I thought I could be the prince on the white horse and would find my princess trapped in a high tower in the middle of a forest and save her.

That's how I viewed my second wife.

She literally would cry in the early stages of our marriage when discussing how sweet I treated her. I felt so important and needed by such an adorable display of affection. And in the beginning, she returned the treatment.

So, I'd bet that you could understand that when she abandoned me and left for good behind my back how that made me question my views towards love.

I could finally see that viewing love in a fantasy way could set me up for disaster. I chose to look at things more realistically and practically from there on out.

The thought of someone else going through the pain that I caused my first wife and the pain that I lived through myself with my second bothers me like you have no idea.

I want to help guide you in any way I can to whatever option makes the most sense for you and your family despite not being a professional counselor.

I believe my experience can help, *but do you accept my help?*

Credit Deserved

Certainly first-hand experience and inner strength have kept me sane and steered me away from depression, but I must give credit where credit is due.

Some of my views and way of thinking have evolved from the works of such people as Dr. John Gottman, Dr. Bob Huizinga, Dr. Frank Gunzburg, licensed marriage and family therapist Rona Subotnick, Dr. Gloria Harris, Peggy Vaughn and numerous other resources online and books I've read.

And Now the Checklist...

[Green Alert Signs]

If these factors exist or actions take place then your marriage has a much better chance of surviving and becoming a happy, fulfilling relationship again.

These are the actions that your spouse must take to repair the damage.

Your Spouse Must WANT to Give Up His/Her Lover

He/she proactively takes action to convince you that the relationship with their lover has completely ended.

Your Spouse Fears Losing You and Wants You To Wholeheartedly Trust Them.

They are *WILLING* to answer any question you have.

Shows Empathy

Your spouse compassionately shows their concern towards your pain and you can even see it and their facial expressions and body language. It's hard to fake.

Takes Responsibility for Their Choice to Cheat

Someone who feels sorry for causing pain and fears losing someone they love because of a choice they made fesses up to their own actions

Willing to Prove to You That They Cut Off All Communication with Their Lover

Their relationship can be over, but your spouse can still try to be friends with their now ex-lover. This of course could end up turning right back into an affair. Therefore, they should openly show you emails, texts and other forms of communication.

Understands that Repairing Damage Takes Time

Patiently listens to you and does not push you to forget what happened

Concerned That You Will Panic and Hurt Again When Something Doesn't Look Right

Avoids suspicious behavior and proactively communicates to prevent worries.

Understands His or Her Limitations of Rebuilding Trust and Seeks Help

This could your spouse proactively seeking counseling or happily accepting your offer to get couples or and/or individual professional help.

[Yellow Alert Signs]

These signs do not indicate a guarantee of being able to save the relationship or that it is doomed. Rather, they indicate a reason to remain cautious because the they could be disguised as green or red alert signs.

Your Spouse Does Not Soul-Search to Determine What Motivated Him/Her To Cheat

Not everyone is emotionally built to tap into their own mind to sort their feelings out. This truly would be a well- welcomed, surprise bonus, but does not mean that they either do not feel remorse for what they did nor that they do.

Not Able to Engage in Conversations Relating To Your Deep Emotional Concerns

It certainly would make it more difficult, but it doesn't mean that they lack empathy at what to rebuild trust and repair the damage. However, I would imagine that this could prolong and draw out this survival process.

Gets Angry When You Bring Up Your Pain About The Affair

This does not necessarily mean that they don't feel sorrow for your pain, rather that perhaps they have truly ended the affair or feel sorry for participating in a fling, but don't have the capacity to act patiently with you. At the same time it could mean that they are hiding the truth and feel lucky that you didn't find out all the details.

He/She Depends On You Financially

This could mean that they only stayed because they fear their inability of taking care of themselves or losing a higher quality of life. But of course at the same time it is not a guaranteed indication that they truly don't feel remorse and want to fix the damage they caused.

His/Her Social Status Relies on Clean, Wholesome Reputation

No, it doesn't necessarily mean that they care more about their reputation than the stability of their marriage with you. However, it could.

They may want to “have their cake and eat it too”. For example, if someone is sexually compulsive (one of my [serial cheater traits](#)), then their addiction to sex could be out of control but at the same time they value their marriage and social status. In short, they want both.

[Red Alert Signs]

The red alert signs indicate that the likelihood is high that it will be extremely difficult to save the marriage because either your spouse has not ended the affair, ended it but still misses their lover or will likely cheat again.

Blames You for The Affair

I can certainly understand if your spouse has major concerns over your relationship. And it is their responsibility to communicate with you what they are or try to figure out what professional help they need. But they chose to cheat. And this causes an additional problem to the already unstable relationship that was taking place before.

[*ATTENTION*] Not all affairs happen because of an unstable marriage, as I have mentioned before. A person with good intentions can cross the line at the wrong time and find themselves in a situation that they cannot get out of.

Does Not Agree to Provide All the Details You Ask For

Regardless of the reason why if you ask for details, you feel that you need to know, or else the marriage will not go on happily.

He/She Gets Angry and Raises His/Her Voice to Manipulate You So That They Can End Difficult Conversations

As long as you feel pain towards the affair the only way to fix it is for your cheating spouse to give you no reason to not trust them. This does not

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necessarily mean talking through the problems, but it certainly means taking any necessary steps to rebuild trust.

Accuses You of Jealousy and Threatens You

This could be a counter-attack to avoid trouble for them and to keep hiding the truth. They may want you to feel uncomfortable pointing out suspicious activity. Their hope would be that you stop believing that they are cheating by making you feel that you are insecure- that it's you with the problem, not them.

This would allow them to continue to cheat get away with it.

Still Acts Like A Sneak And Hides Their Phone and Still Partakes In Suspicious Activity.

If you truly want to continue with your marriage then you won't keep sneaking around. This could also be an indication that they're working out an exit strategy or that they have an addiction to cheating.

Cheated Before, Promised To Never Do It Again, But Did Again With A Different Person Or With A Completely Different Circle People

Your spouse may have full intentions of keeping the marriage because they value the long-term, safe benefits that come with it, but they also cannot stop their addiction to cheating.

Physically Abuses after A Fight About The Affair

This goes beyond the purpose of this checklist. Physical abuse is a major problem that must be addressed individually between your spouse and a professional counselor.

You may seek shelter away from him/her.

Either way this is not something healthy for you to stay involved with. And ironically this could be either a physically abusive wife or husband.

Summary

While some things are pretty straightforward, for example, a serial cheating spouse who commits multiple affairs with different partners or a physically abusive spouse, the choice of staying or leaving is not so clear-cut.

You should base your decision to stay or leave on what you're willing to put up with and what you think will happen in your relationship in the near future.

If your spouse shows genuine remorse and proactively puts their heart into repairing the damage, then you should give your marriage a chance. These would go along with the green alert signs.

If your spouse does not show any major problems that you should be concerned about, but yet does not participate in any of the green alert activities, then realize you are taking a 50-50 chance.

In my book it's only worth it for me if it's close to one-hundred percent green light. But this will depend on how emotionally strong you are to rely on yourself.

Your spouse make care more about the marriage and the benefits that come with a stable marriage than caring about the pain they caused. Afterwards they still may act somewhat cold and distant, but maybe that's good enough for you to keep a marriage.

My main concern with this checklist is to protect you from the red alert signs. I would hate for you to forgive your cheating spouse and then something more serious happens later. Maybe something violent, or you or someone in your family falls into a deep depression.

Sometimes in life we must prevent things from getting worse.

Not every decision is like what we see in the movies with a happy ending.

Sometimes we must face traumatic events and the best solution is to prevent more disaster.

If you still feel unclear what to do then feel free to contact me. [Click here to fill out the contact form.](#)

But realize in the end you may need, at the minimum, individual professional counseling to guide you through this rough time.