

Discovering an affair can cause deep and intense emotional pain. This triggers **deep emotions in both the partner being cheated on and the in the spouse involved in the affair**. Infidelity is defined “the act or fact of having a romantic sexual relationship with someone other than one’s husband or wife”

Main goal

Explore the persistent unresolved underlying problems that have remained unaddressed

History of living distance due to career can trigger infidelity as an option to save the relationship. (Lived in Nairobi and wife at the rural home this could have contributed to emotional distance between the two)

Lack of a boy child and wanting to marry to get a boy child. (Find out the cultural beliefs behind children gender, doe the husband feel respected as a father of girls and no boy)

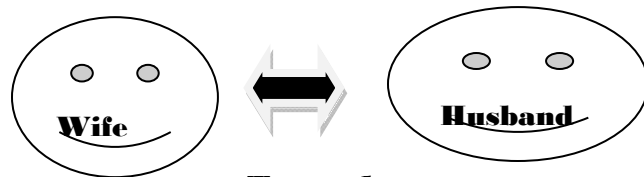
Relationship changed after the birth of the third girl. The father really wanted a boy. He began talking about marrying a second wife. (Efforts not fruitful despite having several relationships)...could this has caused frustration in the man?

Key questions

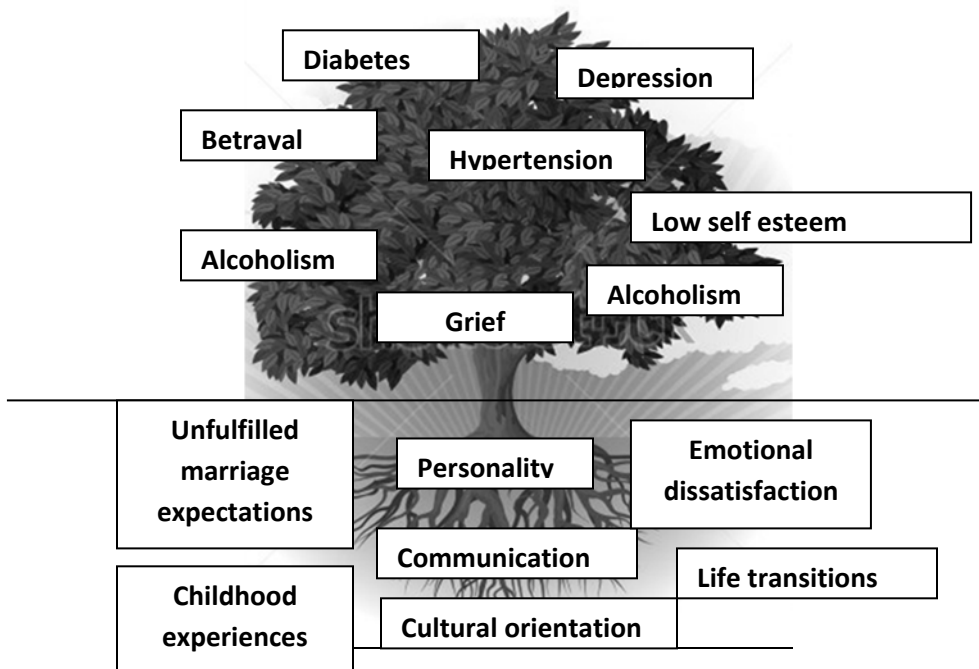
What is **lacking in the relationship** (marriage) that one partner want from outside the relationship?

What were **the expectations of the marriage** that are not being met? Reflect on the foundation without blaming either of the spouses.

Betrayal can be **unconscious way of avoiding relationship problems** (that occurred due to betrayal, sickness or others). (The husband could be suffering guilt, depression and fight `this away by taking alcohol and seeking intimacy with others who may not have issues with him) when betrayal happened for the first time how did the couple address it? Did they focus of the cause? How did it affect both partners? Was the offender genuinely remorseful? Did the offender take responsibility for his or her actions? Did the offended partner accept



Trace the root cause



anger or even denial? *Unresolved issues can contribute to the recurrence of infidelity.*

(Honestly start with self evaluation and self - awareness / what is my contribution in these problems/ my weaknesses and strengths then focus on the other partner)

I CHANGE MYSELF IT IS EASY TO CHANGE MY PARTNER

Betrayal in marriage can be a result of **emotional dissatisfaction**. This can be due to major life changes (arrival of children (how did affect the intimacy), distance due to career demands, childhood background (loss of mother in childhood, polygamous family, cultural issues (attitude toward children gender). What things the spouses were not happy with in their relationship that were either ignored or needed attention? (Emotional dissatisfaction can lead to betrayal and alcoholism)

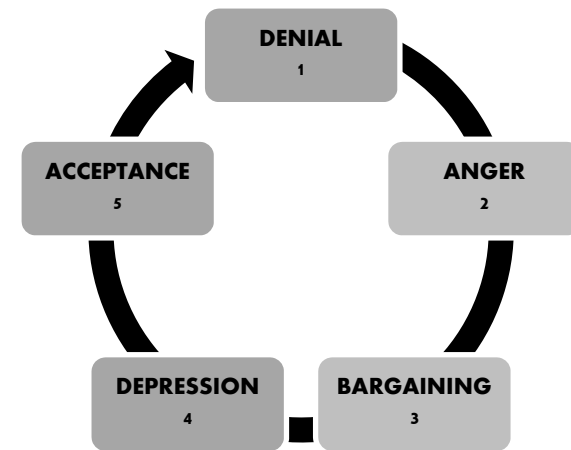
Are there things that make each partner unhappy in marriage? How well do you cope with life transitions? What has been your emotional distance past and present? How do you meet emotional needs of each other?

Couple may have affairs to boost their self- esteem or have pleasure, excitement or get social recognition. (Do the spouses feel appreciated in the family?)

Infidelity and betrayal leads to

- **Lack of trust**
- **Feeling upset / bitter / angry**
- **Grief:** the natural response to loss. It is the emotional suffering you feel when something or someone you love is taken away. The more significant the loss the more intense the grief. Any loss in life can cause grief (loss of trust that

existed at the start of marriage, loss of treasured friendship or intimacy, loss of “perfect relationship”, loss of marriage expectations, loss of health)While experiencing loss is inevitable part of life, there are ways to help cope with the pain, come to terms with grief and eventually find away to pick up the pieces and move on with life. Grieving is highly personal and healing takes place gradually.



1. What cannot be happening to me?
2. Why is this happening/ who is to blame?
3. Make this not happen, and in return I will?
4. I'm too sad to do anything
5. I'm at peace with what happened

Symptoms of grief

- i. **Shock and disbelief:** difficult to accept the loss. One may even deny the truth.
- ii. **Sadness:** One may feel emptiness, despair, yearning or deep loneliness. One may cry a lot or feel emotionally unstable.
- iii. **Guilt:** Feelings of regret or guilt about things you did or did not say or do.
- iv. **Anger:** Even if the loss was not own fault. Anger may be directed toward self, God, others related.
- v. **Fear:** Significant loss can trigger a host of worries and fears. One may feel anxious, helpless or insecurity or panic
- vi. **Physical symptoms:** Grief involves physical problems like fatigue, lowered immunity, weight loss or weight gain, aches and pains and insomnia.

(Honestly reflect on losses experienced in the marriage relationship / past and present that are causing grief)

Questioning self and the relationship especially trust issues

The betrayed partner

Key questions

Why me? Can I trust further? Should I leave the relationship?

Why do I feel so hurt? Was there something wrong with our relationship?

(Honestly reflect on the personal questions related to the challenges of the relationship)

The partner who betrayed the relationship

Feels guilty, distressed and confused (can lead to alcohol abuse as a coping mechanism)

Key questions

Will the lost trust be regained? How can the relationship be restored? It sound stupid...I don't know why I committed the betrayal? How can I get through this?

(Have you heard your partner ask certain questions about your relationship....note them down)

Flight or fight

Do you feel like you want to run away from the relationship?

Then you are experiencing flight or fight syndrome. This is also called **hyperarousal** or acute stress response. It is a psychological reaction that occurs in response to a perceived harmful event, attack or threat to survival

The reaction triggers a neural response in the hypothalamus. The initial reaction is followed by activation of the pituitary gland and secretion of the hormone (ACTH) The adrenal gland is activated almost simultaneously and releases the hormone epinephrine. The release of chemical messengers results in the production of the hormone **cortisol** which increases **blood pressure, blood sugar** and **suppresses the immune system.**

(This could be related to the health challenges experienced ulcers, hypertension, diabetes and depression)

Low self - esteem

The degree to which one feels confident, consider self valuable and respect self. It is associated with

- a) Practice gratitude: If you feel consumed by betrayal and despair, take a moment to focus on appreciation. Think about everything Self doubt
- b) Self criticism

- c) Social isolation
- d) Suppressed anger
- e) Suppressed shame
- f) Powerlessness
- g) Physical, emotional or sexual abuse
- h) Perfectionism
- i) Loss of an intimate relationship
- j) Unrealistic life expectations and goals
- k) Mid life crisis

Low self esteem is a symptom of several mental health conditions such as anxiety and depression.

Signs

- Negative self talk
 - Perpetual feeling of failure or lack of accomplishment
 - Constantly comparing self with others
 - Unrealistic self appraisal
- (Honestly reflect on all negative thoughts and beliefs in your relationship and life / challenge them positively / are they realistic / creative positive thoughts and beliefs)**

Way forward

- Accept the betrayal and move on focus on rebuilding instead of blame game
- Explore the root cause of the persistent problem (honestly)
- Cultivate forgiveness
- Deal with negative feelings of guilt, fear and anger
- Deal with low self esteem
- Build strong bond
 - Focus on the positive
 - Forgive the negatives
- Rebuild trust
- Improve communication patterns

Suggestions to consider on how to restore the relationship

- a. **You appreciate about your mate.**
(Focusing on your spouse positively will notice changes inside you)
- b. **Fully face your feelings:** When you are hurt, you may tend to blame, run, fight judge or explain. Do not ignore how you are feeling always learn express emotions positively.
(Honestly say how you are feeling, accept the feeling , Share them and get relieved)
- c. **Clarify your purpose:** when hurt you may tend to think about the problem. Recycling the problem can escalate the pain.
(Make efforts to focus on solutions you are working on)
- d. **Develop a deeper level of emotional intimacy in the relationship:** infidelity is almost never about sex. Rather it is about intimacy and unmet needs. To begin the process of surviving infidelity, you must learn how to become more emotionally intimate. ***This emotional intimacy comes from spending time together, communicating and sharing your lives together.***
- e. **Do things together:** Couples that spend time together and have shared interest recover from infidelity much more quickly and effectively.
(Discover and rediscover things that you can do together that you both enjoy.)
- f. **Form a vision of the past and the future:** One of the ways that couples can heal from infidelity is to think back to when they first met and got married. How did you fall in love? Why did you get married? What did the relationship look like back then? Now think about the future you wanted together..... Enjoying your golden years of retirement, playing with grand children, enjoying family activities.
(Reflect on the good you saw of your partner, reflect the good moments.... Desire to restore the good moment together)
- g. **Immunize yourself:** As a couple, use the infidelity to immunize yourselves against repeat episodes. Looking back at what happened.

Identify and write a list of each step down the path to its occurrence. Then write out what each of you wishes you had done differently at each step, so that you will stay safe in similar future circumstances.

- h. **Launch a better than ever relationship:** Learn about relationship and start identifying the weak areas in your relationship and then strengthen them for future happiness together.
- i. **Take turns listening even when it hurts:** Learn to just listen to each other. Listen both to the words and feelings.
- j. **Tell the truth as completely as you can:**
- k. **Grieve together:** This will help you give up your past dreams and make room for your future.
- l. **Recommit yourself to the relationship:** healing together is difficult, if not impossible when one person has their foot out the door. If you want to stay together, act like you mean it.
- m. **Seek professional help from a counseling psychologist.**
- n. **Build trust:** You can do this by having your actions match your words.
- o. **Get out of denial:** The person who committed infidelity has to openly admit their wrong doings. Be truthful, honest and willing to cooperate with everything your partner request.
- p. **Start fresh:** Pray together. Forgive one another and allow each other's time to heal as individuals. Let go of old thoughts, behaviours and anything that triggers a thirst for infidelity.

REPORT AND PROGRESS AFTER THE TWO SESSIONS
