



**How to Break Free
From The Affair!**

Infidelity Recovery

Marriage Makeover

Find the Love and Happiness
You Really Want

By Dr. Robert Huizenga LMFT, CSW

<http://www.break-free-from-the-affair.com>

Introduction

What is it with men?

I've worked intensively with hundreds of couples over the past 25 years and, of course, you will not be surprised to know that more women than men are "open" to marital therapy and talking about relationships in general.

Most men reluctantly enter the realm only if they "have to." Their marital world usually needs to be in dire straits before they give their assent.

Here are some observations about this phenomenon:

- 1. Men think they are inadequate** when it comes to expressing feelings or inner thoughts. And, they assume this is what marital therapy is all about. They perceive the woman as the expert in this realm and they assume that they will be in the "one-down" situation when it comes to working on the relationship. And, of course, no man wants to be one-down.
- 2. Men usually internalize.** That is, they work through, or think through, a situation or problem. No one may know what is happening between their ears. Men usually do not see a need to "talk out" a problem or situation. And, of course, working on a relationship is about "talking it out." At least that is what grocery store magazines and talk show hosts say.
- 3. Men are practical problem solvers.** They define the problem, look at solutions and implement the solution. And, if that didn't work, try another solution. Wooo-hooo psycho-babble is a foreign world and they don't want anything to do with it.

I'm really being a little unfair to men here. Men, don't be too upset. I sometimes make strong statements to make a point.

Some women, I find, share these traits as well. Actually it may be that more and more women share some of these characteristics.

It's Not Always Gender

I conclude that the important issue here is not one of gender, but that of being in a **polarized relationship**. By that I mean, one person internalizes more and the other person has more of a need to externalize or "talk it through."

The externalizer sees great value in self help books, perhaps therapy, and finds materials that will help him/her talk about and work on the relationship.

The other partner thinks, "Oh no, do I have to?" And, only if his/her emotional or relational equilibrium is highly threatened will he/she journey into this territory. If he/she does, it is only to the degree that the partner is appeased or he/she can find a quick and graceful way out.

No whoooo-hooo Psycho-babble

One of my quests has been to find material and content that will work for a polarized couple. This material must not be whooo-hoooo psycho-babble. It must be practical, concrete and solution oriented.

At the same time it must allow for helpful interaction, dialogue and conversation that generates warmth and intimacy, even if it's stated intent is not to necessarily do so.

Do Not "Work On The Relationship"

Another plague a couple faces in redesigning their relationship is the trap of "working on the relationship."

"Working on" the relationship sounds awful, doesn't it? And it often is. But we are told or it is implied in therapy and from others that relationships need to be worked on. It takes effort that sometimes seems to border on drudgery.

A colleague was having a terrible time with a couple in marriage therapy. This couple had gone through some very difficult times (he had been seeing another woman.) The OP (other person) was legitimately and in all ways out of the picture and they were both committed to "working on the relationship."

However, they were having a terribly frightful time making headways. My therapist colleague finally out of desperation referred them to me, hoping I could see them through the impasse.

They walked through my door, took a seat and the session began. Both told me they truly wanted a better relationship and were working hard to make it happen. It was sincere.

She described what she would do when he came home after work, trying to make him comfortable, affirmed and welcome. He explained how he tried to talk more, be present for her and meet her needs. He listed 3-4 ways in which he was trying to make her feel more desirable and loved. Each was hanging on the other's words.

In addition to a rather large aura of tension that surrounded them, the couple exuded a deep sense of weariness and tiredness. They were exhausted. Emotionally they were spent. There was little life in each of them and in the relationship.

They looked at me as if, "OK, the last therapist tried her bag of tricks to make us better. And we worked diligently on every one of them. What do you suggest we do to make this better?"

So, I said, "For one week, from the moment you leave this office to the moment you walk through that door next week, I do NOT want you to work on the relationship. I don't want you to think about your relationship or marriage, or the other person. Just drop it!"

They walked through the door the following week smiling, light, like a breath of fresh clean air sweeping through my office.

She, especially, thanked me profusely for giving her permission not to "work" on the relationship. They both were given the emotional bandwidth to declare themselves and in that, found an immeasurable sense of relief and freedom.

This wider bandwidth paradoxically cemented the relationship and replaced the fear and tension with joy.

I saw them for 3-4 more sessions and they were happily on their way.

Here are some difficulties typically experienced when a couple commits to "working on the relationship:"

1. "Working on the relationship" often implies that each "should or must" act, feel and think particular ways to make their efforts successful. A "should" sets one up for failure and disappointment, for

no one ever fully acts, thinks or feels as they "should." An atmosphere of effort and grinding it out permeates the couple. And, each holds his/her breath, as they both believe that failure follows the next interaction. Talk about pressure! I assume you want a different environment created in your relationship.

2. "Working on the relationship" for a huge percentage of the couples I encounter means being "nice," accommodating the other and being on your best behavior. Conflict is seen as a catastrophe. Such a strategy, in essence, obscures and clouds the truth. The truth, which sets a couple free, is relegated to the background and buried under the surface.

3. "Working on the Relationship" often means trying to find a "middle ground." There must be "something in common" that the couple has that will hold them together and make it better. Well, maybe there isn't any "common ground!" And, just maybe that is good. Perhaps the differences, the extremes, give the couple fire and passion and create, together, that which each, at one level, is looking for.

4. "Working on the relationship" often means working hard to meet the needs of the other. I "sacrifice" my needs, or at least put them on the back burner, and intentionally go about "making my partner happy" by attending to his/her needs. This may work for a period of time but resentment at some point emerges since one or both believe that the need meeting is not being reciprocated to the degree he/she would like.

5. "Working on the relationship" often is thwarted because there is not enough depth. Individual differences are not pursued with a curiosity and intensity that allows for maximum growth of the individual and therefore couple. "Issues" are not torn apart, looked at, marveled at, appreciated and seen as a resource for further self exploration and self disclosure.

6. "Working on the relationship" often comes up short because a couple easily reverts to old patterns. They begin to "swirl" in the old communication patterns and ways of thinking, feeling and acting. When lacking adequate exploration of differences and avoiding conflict the couple easily slides back into that which was familiar, not pleasant or comfortable, but certainly known territory.

I'm assuming you don't merely want to "work on" the relationship, but you want a total overhaul. After all, the infidelity crisis does provide a

great opportunity to recreate and redesign the relationship, now that you are wiser. I sometimes use the phrase, "Gold is refined through intense heat."

The Makeover

I'm reminded of the makeover craze on television.

A team of people go into a house, tear it apart, room by room, design and create a new breathtaking interior. The owners are lead into the house with their eyes closed. The host tells them to open their eyes, and of course they are stunned by their new house.

You have this makeover opportunity. Don't let it pass by.

Your marriage house has been damaged. It's been deeply wounded and torn apart. It's in need of repair, perhaps of remodeling.

Don't merely throw some new paint and carpeting in your marriage house. Don't merely mend your marriage. Go deeper. Go further.

Tear it apart. Take out the old furniture, the wall hangings, and the electrical outlets. Take your hammer and crowbar and start bashing away at the drywall. Continue until all you have left are the studs. And, if you want, remove a couple of the walls, if they seem to be in the way or superfluous.

Then each of you begin using the information I'm presenting here to build a new house individually and for your marriage.

Start at the foundation. Start at the basics. Begin creating that firm foundation. And, from there build it slowly, covering all the essentials that will result in the house you truly desire for yourself and for each other.

Start with the Foundation

The program that follows will help you in this process. This program begins with the basics of life and relationship formation.

The program has been used effectively by thousands of individuals to become more effective humans in how they live their lives.

The program is not specifically oriented toward a couple. It focuses on vital issues that all of us address in one way or another as we move and grow through life. It was created with the individual in mind.

Get at "Crucial Issues"

Here are some of the "issues" that are thoroughly addressed in this program:

- How to stop putting up with things
- Examine and simplify your lifestyle
- Learn what you need to say and do to resolve the past
- Create healthy energizing habits
- Learn how to live by what is right for you
- Move beyond neediness once and for all
- Deal with money
- Support your need to care for your body and physical health
- Learn how to say no and stick with it, without pushing others away
- Create and live by higher standards
- Make sure you have enough of everything
- Learn how to focus on now
- What to do with family and friends
- Provide safety for self, marriage and family
- Examine your lifes work
- Learn how to stick by your values
- Learn how to face and eradicate problems

As you look over this list you will notice that all of these areas have an impact upon a relationship. If one person has one way of approaching an issue and the partner a radically different way, and if the couple begins to "swirl" when trying to address these differences, the couple has big problems.

I believe that great marriages and relationships are built when each person in the relationship has a firm foundation. If that foundation is not there, the relationship will flounder.

I believe it is vitally important, crucial to the nth degree, for each of you in a marriage in crisis, transition and change to focus on your selves, not the "marriage" or "relationship." Begin, individually, to look at and address the above issues.

Then talk to each other about your differences, about the unique way each has in approaching a particular issue. Do this without judgment and you will be on your way to creating a rich relationship.

This program can do this for you.

How to use this Program.

The property rights on this program are important. **You may not duplicate or change this material.** You must share the material as a couple!

I paid significant money to learn and have access to this program. I am entitled to use it for that reason. However, I am not allowed to change or modify it. Therefore, you receive the program in its entirety without modification.

Step 1:

Take some time for each of you to read through the material and become familiar with it. Notice which chapters or areas or issues "grab" you and rivet your attention.

Individually decide on which chapter you would like to begin. If you are not sure, start with the "Clean Sweep" program. This program seems to work well to achieve a burst of energy and excitement as you begin to realize that you do indeed have control over your environment.

If that doesn't appeal to you, and you are still uncertain, go with the "Needless Program." My experience indicates that most couples struggling with infidelity have difficulty defining and knowing what to do with their needs.

Step 2:

As a couple agree to set up 2 regular times to meet and go over individual progress on the Program. You will use this time to share thoughts, successes, walls, and your experience with the segment of the Program you chose to address.

Here are some tight and fast rules for these meetings:

1. Decide who will begin talking about the Program. That person talks for as long as he/she is comfortable or feels like the material is covered. When done, that person says "your turn" and the other person talks. When the second person is done, the "meeting" is over. No more comments.
2. Suspend judgment. Totally!! Listen. Learn. Be curious about the other person. But, make NO judgment statements.
3. Do NOT ask for anything. Do not ask probing questions. Do not use the word "you." Very important. Keep the focus on yourself.
4. If you must make comments, use the word "I" and keep it positive. You may use statements like, "I like what I'm hearing. That seems right on. That's a tough one." Keep them to a minimum. Don't try to solve the problem. Listen. Listen.
5. Accept what is happening. Accept the other person. See this as a journey and you are beginning the journey. Give each of you a couple years to redesign your life and relationship in a totally satisfying way for both of you.
6. Develop the mind set of looking for differences. Tell yourself you are going to welcome them. The differences provide you an opportunity to learn. After all, your partner was "given" to you not to make you feel better (a common cultural trap) but to provide a "hot house" for you to plant, nurture and grow a strong life.

Couples Therapy and/or Coaching

Does this take the place of therapy or couples counseling?

No. Remember, I believe that couples counseling is basically fruitless if the third party is still in the picture. I'm assuming, at this point, the third party is history and there is a commitment to reconstruct the relationship.

Now is a great time to find a qualified and competent marital therapist to augment your work with this program.

Many "issues" will emerge as you make your way through this program. A good marriage counselor will provide a safe and productive

environment for you to address those issues in safety and without the tendency to swirl back into old ways of communicating and feeling with each other.

Or, I'm finding that telecoaching is also helpful for most couples if you prefer the convenience and absolute anonymity of teleconferencing. It does work powerfully for many couples.

For more information on telecoaching go to: [Coaching Packages](#)

What I want for you is a well-thought out, powerful life that does honor for all parties.A

A Redesigned Couple

Here's what you will begin to experience as a couple:

1. You will experience a deepening intimacy and know how to grow it.
2. You will feel more relaxed and at ease around each other.
3. You will eradicate unhealthy forms of conflict
4. You will face problems head on and address them with less fear
5. You will share a mutual pride in each other
6. You will gather around yourselves friends, family and environment that best nurtures the relationship and each person
7. You will learn how to manage the day to day chores of life more easily
8. You will parent more effortlessly and your growing relationship will have a positive ripple effect upon your children
9. You will continue to grow the sexual relationship and find points of mutual satisfaction

A Redesigned Life

And there will be ripple effect that touches you individually. Each of you:

1. Feel much more attractive and desirable. You will find and value your self to a much higher degree
2. You will lead a more balanced, full life
3. You will accomplish more, much more easily
4. You will take better care of your self and feel healthier
5. You will have much more energy
6. You will expect more of your self and others
7. You will be more confident and less fearful of life

8. You will feel safer and more in control of your life and environment.

This is what I want for you.

Go for it!

A couple comments about the content found in the link below (The Personal Foundation Program):

- Chapters 1 and 22 are omitted. They are not needed for your purpose.
- I also omitted some of the introductory material, so you can go right at it.

To access the file, go to: <http://www.break-free-from-the-affair.com/pfp.pdf>

If this link does not click through, copy the url as is, paste into your browser window's address box and click go.