

How to Break Free From The Affair!

19 Live Infidelity Coaching Sessions

With Dr. Robert Huizenga – The Infidelity Coach

How Do I Pull the Plug When I Care So Much??

Workbook portion of audio tape with John

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

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Part 1: Summary of John's Circumstances

John's wife continues in an affair she started a year ago and he's known about for 6 months.

She lives at home with John and their 3 boys, says she wants a divorce and yet erects roadblocks to prevent that from progressing.

John has exhausted a number of strategies (being firm, being kind, therapy) to save the marriage but to no avail.

Many of her recent behaviors seem intolerable to John and he describes her as a "different person."

John describes his struggle to "let go." He believes he needs to reclaim his strength, care for his children and move toward ending this nightmare.

Part 2: Review of the Coaching Session

1. John is in the midst of the decision making process: should I stay or should I go? Should I hang in there and try or should I cut my loses and file? When will the decision be clear?

Let's take a look at this process considering John's circumstances.

First, decisions like this are never clear cut. After the decision is made, doubts will disturb one's sleep and intrude in one's focus. For example, I like to use a scale where one could evaluate their place in this process by saying: "It seems like 80% of me says stay/go, 20% of me says stay/go."

This tool relieves the decision making pressure and enables one to explore more fully the middle ground or areas between stay and/or go.

Here's a general rule of thumb I've developed after working with literally thousands of couples over the past two plus decades: the more confusion one experiences in this decision-making process, usually, greater is the chance of rebuilding the relationship.

Confusion usually means there is more investment, more connection and the time is not particularly good to fall to one side or the other. More thinking and work needs to take place.

John is leaning fairly strongly in one direction (leaving or divorce). And, specific reasons back that decision.

2. Clarity on whether to stay or go emerges when particular conditions are met.

John describes his wife as embroiled in a consistent and rigid pattern of behavior. She continued to disregard him, project blame onto him, experience difficulty nurturing her children and continue her affair.

There appeared to be little remorse. Little self-awareness. Little effort to work toward resolution. She was locked tightly into destructive patterns.

Her episodes of destructive behavior where also frequent and ongoing. She would shift radically between anger/rage and depression. She moved ahead full speed without much thought for the consequences of her actions.

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As well, John describes aspects of distorted thinking which were deeply engrained. She, in essence, was living in her own perilous world.

3. Let's take a look at John's dilemma from the perspective of the 7 kinds of affairs I outline in Break Free From the Affair.

John reports his wife coming from a long and intense history of abuse and abandonment.

A history such as this is often played out in infidelity.

Affair #6 is, ["I Want to Prove My Desirability."](#) An affair serves the purpose of seeking affirmation for one's sexuality. Relationships often recover from such an affair because the person has an awareness of the problem and history. Often dialogue and therapy create positive changes.

The "offended" spouse knows at some level the pain of his/her partner, sees an end in sight and often votes to stay in the relationship and be a helping partner.

We move to "My Marriage Made me Do It" where there is more projection and failure to assume responsibility for one's behavior. Anger is more pronounced and intense. Conversations are difficult to sustain.

As you listen to the tape, you hear "My Marriage Made Me Do It" elements.

And yet, the offending spouse often "hangs on" to the marriage. The decision to stay or go becomes more problematic, more confusing. What DO I do?

A person may attempt to emotionally run away for his/her quest for sexual affirmation and healing from a history of abuse and abandonment. S/he will not face it. Will not acknowledge it.

After years of running, thinking may become increasingly distorted and acting out behaviors begin to dominate. S/he develops his/her own inner world and patterns of acting that run from his/her fears. This inner world and destructive behavior patterns become part of one's character.

One bumps into a person who "Doesn't Want to say No." This person is usually far removed from the capacity to establish and maintain an intimate relationship.

This was John's observation. He could not do it anymore.

4. And yet John knew of her internal desert. He cared. He wanted the best for her.

But, it seemed best to divorce.

5. John was moving in the direction of leaving for these reasons:

- His integrity was at stake. John had to do what was right to protect himself.
- Remaining in the relationship would probably enable her to continue her self destructive path. And, John cared about her enough, not to want to enable her pain.
- The health and modeling for his 3 boys were also a consideration.
- Divorcing was probably the only way to save and heal the marriage. A jolt was needed (if indeed she could feel it) to move her back to a healthy track.

Part 3: Comments from Peers – If John's situation is/was similar to yours, list 2 things you said or did that were helpful.

▶ My gosh...there is so much similar in terms of feelings that this tape made me feel nauseous. I too, am going back and forth between trying to complete filing for divorce and simultaneously using whatever I can glean from your materials to save my 30 year marriage. My husband, like John's wife, goes and comes back. It never is over, and it never ends. I have confusion over whether to proceed or not, and I actually started the filing process because I believed my husband needed me to help him do what he could not himself. To protect him as he spirals towards destruction, and to protect me and my grown children from further hurt. My husband's actions and selfish, teenage-like behavior have destroyed our family to the point where my daughter says that we are "pretending to be a happy family". But, someone has to be the adult. John has been. I am learning, and this is a problem for me, because I have had difficulty growing up myself...just like his wife. Two things I have done that have seemed helpful: 1. Agreed to file for divorce together...on the premise that this would actually cause my husband to rethink what it was he was actually doing. His need for "freedom" and his acting out of a high-school like romance speaks of his unfulfilled emotional needs. His father divorced his mother when he was about 18, and he cared for his mother until we married. We started to file online together....I started crying, and so did he, and we have yet to complete the process begun almost 3 weeks ago now. 2. Wait. And while doing so, I began to focus on activities with my children. Doing things with them, and being here for them has given us stability. I realized that I was the lucky one...where before I felt only the painful feelings of rejection. I feel lucky because I have been here to experience wonderful times with my children. My husband has missed alot as he runs around the days he is gone from the house. I, like John, wish to save my marriage. And I, like John, am watching my spouse spiral through episodes that have caused me and my children great pain. But, the longer I wait, the more time it gives my husband to realize that I am not controlling him. He is doing these things to himself, and he has suffered the loss of his children in terms of respect. He is slowly coming to realize that he has a great problem.

▶ Why are you doing it? Is it going to help you physically or emotionally? Where did I let you down? (These questions are to

for her to know her present situation and analyze herself vis a vis a family)

- ▶ I also filed for separation hoping that physical separation will shake him up. My says he will sign the agreement but puts road blocks. leaving me only one option_ divorce based on adultery.
- ▶ This is a difficult one, because it is difficult to know. I've said or done things that I felt were right at the time and later appear to have "backfired", for example "It seems like you're absorbed in what you're doing right now (the affair with the OP), will you think about what the long-term consequences could be ,for all of us?" My husband appeared to think but it made no difference. Seeking counseling for me has been helpful, working towards shifting the focus of my life away from him is helpful 'tho' I find it very hard after nearly 30 years.
- ▶ My situation is very similar... and I am not sure I have done anything of help to our marriage. But, as time goes along, I see there is little I can do to convince my H of anything. He will do what he does (it seems). I do love him (20 years and 2 kids), but he is an airline pilot with a life separate from kids and I now.. a life living with another women. He has placed blame upon me for so much. He seems the victim of life, as if 9/11 and the ills of his life are all exemplified in me. Even the way our teen age boys are now, is all my doing. I hear in this tape, ... the solution for this man, as if true for me... LET GO... let them go as they will. Take care of the kids and self... and this lunatic abuse of the aviation industry, compounded by childhood/family of origin, can be worked out, or not, by our beloved.
- ▶ The affair was different. But the position on which john is similar to mine - part of me wants to help my husband and another part of me wants to say to him that i want to move on and I'm done. I love my husband so much, i know there is a part of him deep down and he is just so lost in all this.
- ▶ First establishing and speaking from his own feelings of unconditional love, from the committed love that defend their marriage from the beginning. Commitment is just that commitment. And in spite of the betrayal is significant and key. (She MAY not realize the significance of it, right now but 6 months from separation or a week or so it will become evident to her) Hardly likely she will recognize how significant if he allows

her to stay in the same household and not face what true separation from him and boys means to her. Second of all discuss boundaries they had set up at the beginning of their marriage and point out he has not wavered from that. He can let her go but she must go with the knowledge that he will hold her to their marriage vows forever with or without a divorce. The only way he would see withdrawing his claim to be committed to her is if she were to marry another man. Be prepared to live by this declaration. She has forced the breach in the marriage and family because of her selfishness, her deceit to you and the boys, families and friends she can no longer expect to live in the same home environment. You do expect with in 1 week she move out and don't make those arrangements for her. Imperative for the boys well being. Set up visiting rights. While you do not want to move in divorce action at this time, you do want to set up acceptable boundaries for the boys and yourself.

- ▶ This situation is very similar to mine but at the same time it is also a little different. Different in that my wife says she wants to repair the marriage but won't take the necessary steps to repair it. I too have tried everything John has, and to this day nothing has worked.
- ▶ It's veeery similar. I have the same doubts. Nothing is helpful, she is the only one who can change the situation.
- ▶ I went on the web and found a site called psychopaths and I found out about personality disorders. The information confirmed all of my questions. I found out what disorders I was dealing with and found out what it would do to my kids for them to be raised around this kind of person. I gave up the hope for medication or counseling for this disorder. U can no sooner change this person or their behavior than U can change a serial rapist or a serial murder. 2nd I decided that I could not subject my children to a dysfunctional father and a father that was self destructive. I at that time started my plan to protect my children. I got a loan on our home for \$30,000 and went to the best criminal attorney I could find and I gave him every penny of that money and I told him that I wanted full custody of my children, I wanted everything including the house furniture, half of his pension, child support and alimony. He looked at that money and said he could do it. My ex got Sat & Sun visitation and he had to pay me for 25 yrs (which was how long we were married). I made up that \$30,000 in less than 1 year.

- ▶ Seem the nicer you are to them the more they are mean to us. Guess not be so nice to them let them have it when try to blame us, That's one thing I tell mine He & his girlfriend did it all I did nothing.
- ▶ Unconditional love with frank discussions. Belief in his ability to change.
- ▶ This is almost exactly my situation. It was sometimes helpful to treat her kindly even in the face of her bad behavior to me. I avoided discussion of areas where disagreement was assured. Alcohol abuse also became a problem that she blamed on me. I now refuse to drink with her or in her presence.
- ▶ I thought about my situation and Johns. Nobody deserves that kind of pain and pressure. It was helpful to hear John admit defeat. I have felt it many times.
- ▶ Two things: 1. Accepting that I could not rescue him - I thought I could have helped him, but he didn't want that. His problems are much more deep seated and go back to an emotionally destructive mother with whom he had severed any contact and had (I realize now) not resolved issues when she died in 2005 . He is 8 years older than me and the OP is 2 years older than him - and apparently even looks a bit like his mother at that age and in my judgment is also very manipulative and "needy". I had to realize that I was not only dealing with him but her as well, and that she would be unlikely to let him go so the chances of reconciliation were extremely slim. 2. Getting early advice on our fairly complex financial situation should we split - fortunately I discovered I have separate property so that I will not be dependent on him.
- ▶ I admire John for still wanting to help his wife with her issues. My husband, as I have felt for years, has some issues too, which he wouldn't address and, similarly, used the therapy to justify his affair, but only started to work on his problems after I found out about the other woman. So, what I found helpful was stopping to offer to help him in any way, letting him "cook in his own juices" of ambivalence and doubt and inability to tell the truth to the one person who has been by his side for so many years. I also told him that, if this person is so precious to him (she is), than he shouldn't risk to lose her forever without giving

it a chance and to go to her if he wants. Then he stopped to consider and a few weeks later sent her a "goodbye" e-mail.

- ▶ Yes, it is hard to let go of somebody you love. We are keeping some distance. I actually told my husband to try sometime by himself but he would not do it.
- ▶ My situation was somewhat like John's. My husband was not having an affair at the time I found out about his past affairs, however, I felt his behaviors were not that of a remorseful, changed man. I told him I wanted divorced. Which got his attention. Then, we also told our three children that we were divorcing. He held no punches back that he had been unfaithful to me and had an affair, and did their mother terribly wrong.... they were of course hurt, but we did not want others in the community to "tell" the kids, or surprise them by the information. This also, was a huge step in letting my husband know we truly were in trouble and not only did his behaviors affect us, but our family as well.
- ▶ Telling my husband i could not help him...and saying to him I was not going to go down with him.
- ▶ Not argue with my spouse. Arguing validated his misperceptions of my behavior. Staying nice, and charge neutral repaired the communication and enhanced mutual respect. It's probably why I still have a marriage (in limbo).
- ▶ I left him alone did not communicate with him and let him have his space like as if I did not care what he did. Not sure at this point if it will work a second time but it did the first time 5 mon after he walked out.he is on 14 mon gone I have not been served D papers yet and he has talked D one time in the last 6 mon. claims he filed but has not asked to negotiate or talk settlement. He currently is ignoring I exist. I hope he is thinking about his actions.
- ▶ My husband was upset when I kicked him out of the house. I asked him, "What did you expect to happen?"
- ▶ One thing I have decided to do is stop talking about our relationship. He is living with his girlfriend and I do not have the emotional space any longer to keep being pulled in every direction. The second thing is I wrote a letter to him, that

document each thing that continues to close doors that were once open. It states all the things he continues to do that give me no choice but to end the relationship. I give the responsibility to him though; HIS CONTINUED CHOICES are what is ending the relationship. This letter will not necessarily be sent to him, but clears my mind or helps me see more clearly.

- 👉 This is very similar. Told my husband to go to counseling w/ me to at least get the communications aspect going, he thought I was trying to rectify marriage. He only went to one session, I am still going and my therapist is awesome. John has said he was getting tired of dealing with this, which is at the same point I am at. Though John's knowledge is 6 months, mine is 4 months.... but the affair has hit its 1 year anniversary this month, though the girl is still living in Japan. They correspond via email for now, my husband worked there for 4 years, and I had traveled back and forth 2x per year with the exception of last year.... lots of family things going on in the states.

Part 4: Comments from Peers - From your personal experience and what you have learned about infidelity, what 2 suggestions would you give to John?

- ▶ If you truly wish to save the marriage, then it is not weakness to suffer for the sake of it. I learned to not care what anyone else thinks about how I choose to wait and deal with my husband's problem. Suffering, though certainly greatly difficult, is required of us sometimes, in order to grow emotionally. 2. It can be much more difficult to set up and keep boundaries in fact, than it is to think or talk about them. I think boundaries can be set with time limits...what I am suggesting here, is that one boundary may be put in place to protect against current circumstances, and then retired and exchanged for a new boundary as the need arises. Attempting to save a marriage, and dealing with the myriad of feelings as the attempt fails or stalls is difficult. I admire John for his compassion for his wife, for his desire to protect his children, and yet...he still has the capacity to love his wife. This is mature love, of a kind she needs, and does not understand. My husband is very much like her. I find that he pushes love away just as readily as he accepts it. Set boundaries, but also love with compassion. You will never regret having done everything to get the result you wish. If it still does not work out in the end, you will yet have "taken the high road", and it will be better for you and a better model for your children.
- ▶ Ignore her totally and let her realize and give a cutoff date. (Maybe she is in a dilemma and is wary of OP) Children are important in a decision (Is she still sticking because of them).
- ▶ Do not sacrifice yourself for the sake of the marriage. It destroys the relationship; it does not work. Do not let anybody to exploit your kindness.
- ▶ Don't feel guilty you've done your best. From now on: Act in the best interests of your children and yourself you cannot rescue someone who won't be rescued, leave her to sink or swim.
- ▶ I've got no suggestions; in fact I'm impressed with how clearly he sees his situation. Maybe his legal training has made him good at issue spotting.
- ▶ John, be the best YOU... caring, loving, nurturing of the kids. Of self... and wife, well, if he really wants her back... let her go. Maybe forever. Maybe not. John, take care of your mental

health, and know that it is most likely your wife's defection from family/marriage, is something deep in her. Something that if you dwell upon, might make you certifiable, because for now, little may make sense.

- ▶ The person having the affair always think that they should be the one to be understood, they bargain, they have the ball, they should be the one given time all sweet time, the decision is theirs about how to run the future of the family. John, that power should be taken away from them (and if only i can just do that this simply, there's so much care in me and I bank on the thought that I know my husband is just lost and empty). (2) Affairs cause the unfaithful spouse to make bad judgments which they are not even aware of, they live for the moment but does not think of long term consequences to our relationship, our children, our life, our future.
- ▶ Stop making life simple for her. Be upfront and calm. Be strong for the boys (they're going to be watching and learning how you treat their Mother) Show them what unconditional love is and how fragile love can be. Let her know that you are doing this for your love for her and for the boy's whom she gave NO consideration for with this affair. She is your wife and the boy's Mother first and there was no third party included in her decision to marry you and to have the boy's and there's no room for a third party now. Tell her you will be going to a counselor for yourself and for the boy's and if she wants to join any sessions she's welcome. She may see herself as someone else, but you two have history of love shared and commitment and if she doesn't want to honor and stand for those any more you can't compete with the fantasy worlds of hollow love offered by this guy and you won't, period. She knows where you and the boy's live. She'll be welcome home when or if she should recognizes the real world and what's important to her.
- ▶ First, if she is saying that she wants the divorce, then give her the divorce (you know the old saying, "you don't realize what you have until it's gone"). Second, just be there for the kids. This is just as tough if not tougher then it is for you.
- ▶ U should care more about the children and their mental health and happiness than about her. She is an adult and she has destroyed you and your children of her own free will and refuses to stop. There a consequences for our actions and hers needs to

be dealt with. Just as U would not throw UR children into a pit with a tiger, U don't put them in a home with a person with a disorder. Children mirror their parents. Do U want to teach UR children that it is right to sleep with other people when U R married? I have begged my 2nd husband who has had an anger management problem all his life to get help. He finally assaulted me in front of my 10 yr old and could have been killed for doing so or arrested for trying to protect me before I knew I had to have him arrested. He still blames me even though I had 3 broken ribs and a broken toe and he admitted to the attack and pled guilty. He says I was using the law to get my way. U can't deal with sick people like U can with normal people. It will be a long time before I get over Don. I have BWS and PTSS and miss him every day morning noon and night. It will definitely take intense therapy to get him out of my head. When U stay in that kind of a relationship too long (and that is more than 2 dates) U develop Traumatic Bonding. (or Stockholm Syndrome) I've got it all. To commit adultery is premeditated, it was a thought out decision. It takes a cruel person to do that to the person who loves and trusts them.

- ▶ Don't take the blame . Tell them they made the choice.
- ▶ Don't blame yourself, understand there are deeper reasons why people make the choices they do. You can only help those who truly desire it. Letting her go will cause her some re-evaluation.
- ▶ The wife does not seem to be able to be trusted. Walk away and give her room to work herself out. Secondly, John should get the boys and take them on a nice holiday. He's earned a break!
- ▶ I cannot offer a hint here. My wife will sometimes "rub it in my face" by flirting with guys in front of me, or "parading" her boyfriend around even though we're still married. We live in a small town where many people know us as a married couple. She claims that "all men are pigs" and she wouldn't trust anyone again, but seems to have a new "bad boy" boyfriend every few weeks. Note that our problems began with MY infidelity (short lived and long ago over) a number of years ago, but became significant with the introduction of alcohol.
- ▶ Wife has no respect for you. You're on the right track. Dump her. Deal with the pain. There are no real-life heroes. Don't try to be.

- ▶ Be strong (people kept telling me I was!) and work things out for yourself - by all means take advice - but only you can know when the time is right to do something. Don't berate yourself for the decisions you make. Keep reading Dr H books etc - I have found them most useful. I found them after I suggested my husband move out so have not been able to practice most of the things, but it has given me much more understanding of the whys - and helped me to understand myself more too. 2. It takes two to heal the marriage and if the other person is not prepared to (despite the contrary signals and roadblocks) let go and "reinvent" yourself. It may not be what you thought your life was going to be (all those shattered dreams) but use it as an opportunity. Don't get frustrated by the roadblocks and make yourself ill - accept that things will get resolved, but maybe at a slower rate than you'd like. (But don't do nothing and expect things to resolve themselves either - someone said to me "time heals", but only if you are actively involved in helping it to).
- ▶ First it was not right what she did but learning her past made me feel she really has to deal with clearing up her feelings of her past and understanding them before she can move on with anyone or deal with her own life. She needs a lot of counseling.
- ▶ John is very strong and caring. I'd love to meet such a man and learn from him. I think he should seriously explain to her that HE needs to move on and that he can't stay stuck with an indecisive and immature person. Also, I think he should let her know that she isn't allowed to manipulate him by asking him to feel sorry for her when she needs it. He shouldn't let her abuse his love and understanding, but she is likely to go on like that for a very long time.
- ▶ My first thing I will say, is because you are tremendously hurt and devastated... do NOT make hasty decisions. When emotions are high that is not the time to make a life changing decision. Give it time. Work out problems, communicate, see a counselor... don't take back that you may not divorce... you may.. but also let the spouse know you are serious about change by counseling and the affair has to stop. Thru counseling you can decide with time if the life changing event will be divorce with peaceful reconciliation or in my case with some time... hopefully, changes in our marriage, with some purpose for fulfillment.

- ▶ That as hard as it is to get thru your head ..it is not YOU>>>>i heard that over and over and did not believe it....and then one day i did....there is something very exciting and sinister that makes the affair attractive to your spouse especially if you are the more mature one...do what i heard you to on the recording taking care of yourself and you finally put a limit on things...another thing nothing changes iif nothing changes.....it seems like you are changing and taking charge of your life...the thing is this is another hard one...you have no control over your wife and what she does....you do have control of you....good luck John.
- ▶ I still care for my husband, and marriage. EVEN THOUGH IT'S VERY HARD TO STAY IN A LOVELESS MARRIAGE, delay legal proceedings if the pain is not too great if John still wants his marriage. I applaud John for being a friend and respectful. Even if the marriage doesn't work out, doing everything with dignity and for the betterment of the marriage may make him feel better about things. Even if it isn't meant to me, he'll probably respect himself more, and sets a good example to his sons. I will pray.
- ▶ The more you ask or talk about the OP the more they go to that person. Being understanding and listen and watch for signs that they are trying to make contact with you.
- ▶ To continue being there for himself and his kids. To drive home the fact that as long as she continues that relationship, she has no business being with John.
- ▶ Know that your final decision or goal is what you are working towards and will happen, eventually. Keep it in mind no matter what. You will have good days that move forward and bad ones that keep you on what feels like a never ending nightmare. The time between feeling bad and getting a good feeling again will get shorter. 2) Let go of trying to make the other person feel responsible for their actions. I am in this place too! Know that you cannot make their perception and the blame they put on you-change! And know that it may never change. I think I will always be at fault in my husband's head but I am responsible for me and my son, not him and his ideas.
- ▶ You cannot change what does not what you want to have changed..... Also, you can change yourself in a positive manner;

the other person cannot change until they realize to put at least half the blame onto themselves.

Part 5: Comments from Peers - List a couple benefits you received from listening to this tape.

- ▶ Hearing John's struggle to know what to do and think makes me realize that emotional survival can be achieved through strategy...I do not only need to be reactive to everything my husband says and does b. I am encouraged to learn that John's work with his relationship with his children is similar to the focus that I have taken...and I feel like I am in many ways "the winner" in this awful mess, where before, I thought I certainly had lost everything...I had been thinking more positive thoughts about my stronger relationship with my own children as our family, as we know it, has faded....John's level-headed discussion of this issue confirms that my focus was correct.
- ▶ Be firm, continue to do what is right, not what's easy. Do not enable your spouse to continue his/her destructive behavior.
- ▶ The realization that someone else is in/has been in the similar situation. the behavior John describes is "uncannily" like my husband's behavior. I can identify so strongly with John's feedings.
- ▶ I've realized that at some point I might have to make the hard decision, too; that the right thing to do might be the hardest thing to do.
- ▶ For me... there is in this tape a sense of "wow... him too". As he lets go... so do I. It is where I am now. 20 years... willing to let it fly free. I love my husband, and do not want the divorce he demands. Same with this man. Yet, as he is recognizing... this is not kind to self. Perhaps not kind to his spouse. Certainly, this is not the way to live a life. His wife.. my husband... they can "fly" free, with whomever, whenever, and where. We shall be true to self... and this is something I had lost until very recently. The truth to self!
- ▶ The fact that I am 'listening' to a real life experience, the thoughts and emotions of a person that undergoes the same pain gives me great relief as opposed to 'reading'. It is like a person talking to you.
- ▶ Just a reminder of how desperate one can feel at first discovery of their spouse's affair. How I constantly thought the other

person was so magically captivating to my husband because she could seduce him into believing she was what he wanted. Tormenting myself for unrealistic reasons. He knows his wife better than anyone else. If he wants her back he'll have to give her the freedom she so desires, but it doesn't mean he has to give away his integrity, his love for her, his honor as husband and father. Be prepared to live by what you say. Don't run out and establish any friendships with women you'll have to give up once she has had some time to really think about the affair she probably doesn't want in the first place because she's confused. Also.. don't keep sympathizing with her child hood memories...THERE IS NEVER A REASON TO HAVE AFFAIRS when you are all ready married, PERIOD. This is what marriage is, it's a contract between two people who knew full well what marriage meant. It means commitment, because you loved each other. People DO NOT fall out of love for sane reasons (UNLESS there's been physical violence). It took communication to make the commitment between you two. Try communicating your needs and the boy's needs period and if she wants to be a part of the family then great, but she can take her selfish, negative and disruptive self to whatever fantasy world she feels is going to make her happier because that's what you all want, is for MOM to be happy. Suggest some reading material to her that you yourself might be reading. Starting with the good Dr's "How to Break Free From An Affair" also "Not Just Friends" by Shirley P. Glass, "After the Affair" by Janis Abrahms Spring "Surviving Infidelity" by Rona Sbotnik & Gloria Harris and "The Seven Priciples for Making Marriage Work" by John M. Gottman. Also online she can look up and read at her discretion for free..."Marriage Builder's" marriagebuilders.com.

- ▶ Well, I'm still a little lost, because unlike John's situation, my wife says she wants to repair the marriage. I have tried most everything John has and nothing has worked. I'm really not sure where to go from here.
- ▶ Finding out that there are other people in similar situations, and that I'm not alone. Realizing that it's not my fault that my marriage is not improving, there needs to be some change in my spouse for the situation to change.
- ▶ I am not alone in my pain or doubt or my hope. We all hope they will come to their senses but they won't. Some people are cruel and some parents are cruel. Some people do not deserve to be

parents if they won't be an honorable one. If they were sitting there doing crack in front of the children would that be ok? No and she is breaking most of the 10 commandments and I am not a bible thumper. It is as easy as right or wrong and I have a duty to make good decisions for myself and my children. My kids were embarrassed about the arrest on a Sat in front of our neighbors and friends. I did have the right to protect them from that happening again. I am not wrong.

- ▶ It reminds me that this is a universal problem. I am not the only one who got caught up in such a situation. There is life and healing. Rational and thought out decisions bringing step by step change is the path to resolution.
- ▶ Impressed by John's example of clarity of thought whilst under pressure. Bob's Rogerian approach worked well in this case, as John had the nous to work it all out for himself.
- ▶ That I am not the only one that has this problem. That I'm not crazy, and she probably does have some deep seated issues. It gives me a small sliver of hope that I may be able to reach her if she'll hook up with a very astute counselor.
- ▶ Feeling like I'm not alone.
- ▶ Very helpful to hear someone in almost exactly the same situation (my husband is a pilot although I am not a flight attendant but have been involved in aviation!) My situation - 16 years of marriage; husband told me about affair but would not give her up; he refused to go to more counseling; moved out virtually immediately I suggested we spend time apart after 2 months of contact with her at least every day; Is still with her (2 years to the day)500m down the road from me (she had just split from her 2nd husband when the affair started & we had been helping her). I discovered that his first marriage had ended in almost exactly the same way, but this was not what he had originally told me and I was not the OP. He has 3 adult children from that marriage; we have no children (by choice). He has not once initiated contact since he moved out and lives as though I do not exist, except that he is still supporting me and put anonymous present in letter box last Christmas! I have tried to talk to him but it goes nowhere - the last conversation was in February when he promised (again)to get required valuation of his superannuation, which still has not happened. He suggested

we split things up (under New Zealand law it is 50/50) then refused to do anything and has just ignored everything for a year. I have just filed (it is 2 years in NZ) although we could have made a settlement before the 2 years if we could have communicated. Hence the tape very useful with the "mix" of different types of affair - the reluctance of the person having the affair to accept any responsibility and stick their head in the sand is incredible - and yet they seem by their actions to want out of the marriage. It has been very hard to accept that I cannot help my husband - he has chosen I believe to ignore his past (again) and will probably never resolve those issues. Just so helpful to find others in a similar situation and to hear the suggestions. Actually I have often wondered about sending your information to my husband in the hope it might help him, but I decided that that is something he has to do for himself (like the alcoholic who has to be the one to make the decision to quit). (Apologies for the lengthy feedback!).

- ▶ I am just glad my children were grown up. It also made me feel my problems were hard to deal with but John has children and so glad to hear he is putting them first Good Luck.
- ▶ Some things in Johns' story were familiar, like my husband's explanation to himself that he needs to change his life completely to be free to live up to his potential and manipulating through use of therapy. He insisted that he wants us to go together and that that's trying to save the marriage, but in the end it became obvious that he wanted an excuse to say "see, it didn't work out" (at that stage I didn't know about the affair and didn't want to go to therapy). Seeing Johns strength and such good knowledge of his wife, which must come from a lot of love, makes it easier for me to visualize myself stronger and more decisive and able to know when to draw the line. My husband still loves the other woman very much, compares us in his notes and looks for reasons to split, which now I won't tolerate. My life needs to go on too.
- ▶ There are other people in the same situation.
- ▶ That both couples truly need to be on the same page for working out problems. Without that, there is absolutely no hope. It also shows me that my husband seems to be working towards reconciliation at all costs and it makes me feel promising to be in my current situation.

- ▶ Everyone that i have listened to needs to be heard....and it is painful there are so many that do not realize how brutal it is to be betrayed..i just heard Jonh talking and not Dr. H saying much....so it is good to hear him get it all out...it does not make sense.... she is a sick person and you will not get anything rational from her.... as much as John cares about her.....
- ▶ Hearing how an unfaithful spouse can be so immature--I don't feel so alone, especially when my husband is ambivalent. And now the unfaithful spouse continually distorts things--It makes it easier for me to not erroneously accept the blame for things that went wrong.
- ▶ There are a lot of similarities. My husband didn't want a divorce either. He became angry when I brought it up.
- ▶ I never thought I would say that it is helpful to hear someone else in the same situation with the question: How do I let go? But, today it helps. It is such an uphill battle, doing all the healing on your own with a person who refuses to take any responsibility. Although I hate to hear someone else in so much pain similar to mine there is no one else in my life who really `gets it` . How do you let go? One day at a time, with a big conviction that it will get better and nothing happens over night. To hear John`s confusion and wanting to be helpful to his ex as well. ME TOO!!! I still cannot believe that how someone else is feeling is helping me realize that this is ok. I will be ok, and so will John...some day in the future. It was a comfort to hear him say the things that I feel. This was not helpful when this situation started last November, but is good to incorporate now. Good luck, John...One day at a time and keep the big picture clear! It is like climbing up and down some hills to the horizon as a goal, some days you can see it clearly and other days when going through a valley you can only trust that it is still there. Think about your boys on those days, like I think about mine.
- ▶ Do not know if it is a benefit.... but I am leaning towards filing paperwork as well. Going through the same things as John, though I am the wife on this end. It is a matter of saving my own self and moving ahead though my husband does not realize that his actions affect everyone. He still does not have contact with his daughters... luckily in my case, they are 19 and 23.