

How to Break Free From The Affair!

19 Live Infidelity Coaching Sessions

With Dr. Robert Huizenga – The Infidelity Coach

**How Learn How "Meeting
His/Her Needs" Won't Work with
a Narcissist and How You can
Effectively Rattle His/Her Cage
to Save Your Sanity and
Perhaps the Marriage?**

Workbook portion of audio tape with Becky

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Part 1: Summary of Becky's Circumstances

Becky's life is turned upside down.

She feels the deep pain and the heaviness of the possibility of losing her family, her beautiful house, her financial security and a peaceful life for her daughter.

Her husband admits to the affair that started over the internet and is laced with in-your-face sexuality.

Becky has worked hard to meet his needs, avoid conflict and placate him with the hope she could win him back. Confronting him with the "truth" elicited strong anger and criticism of her.

Becky believed she was facing the "I fell out of love and just love being in love" type of affair described in [Break Free From the Affair](#)

Part 2: Review of the Coaching Session

1. "Meeting the needs" of a narcissist doesn't work. You are asking for trouble. "Meeting his/her needs only fans the narcissism. The underlying message is, "Yes, you (the narcissist) really are entitled to receive everything. You are the center of the universe. Whatever you want is yours. You deserve it." The narcissist expects more. And more. And more.

A couple other dynamics play themselves out. First, seldom does the narcissist reciprocate the need meeting process. It's not intentional. S/he just never thinks about it. After all, others are to serve him/her.

Second, the narcissist will come to resent you when you placate and serve him/her. S/he will not acknowledge you as a person with opinions, needs and desires at best. And at worst s/he will come to despise you as a person s/he perceives to be weak.

2. With that said, I don't believe Rich, Becky's husband, is a full blown narcissist. I judge his narcissistic behaviors to be situational and not an engrained part of his personality or what he consistently displays as a coping pattern in his life.

Rich is not a philander I describe in Break Free From the Affair. Becky does not report a string of affairs or other women or sexual conquests. Rich has an affair with one woman for the past year and a half.

There is something more to Rich.

His anger, bordering on rage at times, and his blaming Becky for all his ills point to some characteristics of "My Marriage Made Me Do It."

Her reporting of his internet activity as well as porn "addiction" as she calls it, might indicate elements of addictive tendencies in "I Can't Say No." And his inability to manage chunks of his life and perhaps the graphic sexual nature of his affair may indicate "I Need to Prove My Desirability."

Although there is no clear cut pattern for Rich, I start with "I Don't Want to Say No" since it appears his narcissistic behavior stands front and center, often with a vengeance.

3. Becky also reports a value crisis. She, and perhaps he, thought they had it all - beautiful home, healthy daughter, great neighborhood and financial security. It appears it is crumbling around them.

A value base is crucial for Becky. She attempts to live by her values (as in keeping a marriage together.) And she has worked hard to order her life and family around her value base. Now, she is losing it all, and she can't fix it.

Becky reports that Rich might also be questioning what they had and what they really want. Is Rich struggling with success? Is he concerned about "making it?" What has been Rich's struggle to manage the change in their lives? Is he able to "get it up and keep it up" especially in an intimate relationship with his wife? (Sex is often the window to our soul!)

4. Becky's husband is sending mixed messages, a clear indication he doesn't have a clue of what he really wants. Does he merely want the excitement and titillation of sex? Does he want the stability of a marriage with Becky? Does he want to run away? stay?

He says he wants a divorce, but it's been a 18 months and he hasn't filed. What gives? Without accurate input and feedback from her husband, Becky is left in a vacuum and to her own devices in forging her future.

5. Becky's strategy of trying to win him back by meeting his needs and avoiding conflict hasn't worked. It probably has enabled the deterioration of the relationship.

Becky does elicit a very strong response from him when she pushes toward the truth. When she begins using some of my one-liners, targeting the future consequences which WILL emerge he goes a little ballistic. Hit a nerve! But, rather than continuing this strategy while charging neutral, she backs away.

This is understandable. Dramatically changing strategies in mid-stream without a backdrop of support and encouragement is extremely difficult to maintain.

Future coaching with Becky would focus on honing and implementing what I call in Break Free From the Affair, problemizing.

Again, from [Break Free From the Affair](#), the chapter on "I Don't Want to Say No" are some guidelines for healthy confrontation:

- Point out the consequences you see occurring already or the consequences he doesn't see or isn't taking very seriously.
- Help him see the upcoming costs and how this is threatening his quality of life with that which might be more important to him today (you and his family).
- If he doesn't seem to hear you, point out stories of others who have gone down the same path as he.
- Try to stick with him in the conversation when he dismisses, argues, charms, minimizes, denies, smirks, defends, attacks or otherwise does the thing he typically does to keep others away from the reality of his life.

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

- ▶ Becky's situation is very similar to mine. One suggestion is to make this situation public. Right now he is focused on creating this bubble fantasy world where his needs are the most important thing in life, and he can control her because she is desperate to save the marriage and has an unhealthy commitment to making this marriage work. I would tell his family, her family, and a set of mutual friends that are very close to both. I would also eliminate the comments that make him feel justified in leaving. Example would include the comment about raising the daughter. Right now his mind is fogged and it will only serve to push him away. She needs to appear strong and use facts whenever possible. If he claims to be a Christian, then she needs to involve their pastor or elders at their church to show him how ungodly he is being, and that God will turn his back on him.
- ▶ Although difficult, I think it is necessary to remind the spouse that you expect something to be "given" to you. In other words, Becky, like me is/was very supportive and giving. It is time for him to give back to Becky without, again without being prompted.
- ▶ I picked myself back up and told him to leave, I wanted no part of this, I deserve better!! I think I shocked him, he broke off the affair, wanted to go to a therapist, My statement slammed him right in the gut!
- ▶ Similar to mine. Narcissism is like BI-POLARISM I lived with a bi-polar for two years. Narcissists always like to be in control indirectly like a mosquito. I wrote a song called "Mind's Eye" on this very subtle approach of this type of individual, the one in control but takes from the other one little bit at a time. Then, the irritation when she pulls out. Read my blog on Myspace, ID is Discernercomputers.
<http://www.myspace.com/discernercomputers> and read my song called MINDS EYE.
- ▶ I filed for divorce which shocked him. He cried and said it wasn't supposed to happen this way. I went to counseling, read many books, started a small group for women who are in the same situation. We get together for socializing, helping and listening to

each other. My counselor even recommended one of the girls to our group. I have met great new friends and still have my married friends who have been wonderfully supportive.

- ▶ I sought out therapy which was helpful for myself. I decided what I wanted to do for my life and myself to improve my happiness.
- ▶ My husband is a narcissist to the T!! 2 things that were helpful to me were... 1) The I can't say no behavior or affair. I need to reread that chapter. 2) And the reaction from Rich when Becky said he will have more stress in the future. I find my H has the same angry reaction when I show any assertiveness.
- ▶ Choose, and take the consequences. This is NOT my fault, you had MANY other options available to you other than an affair, you went out and brought this woman into our family and my life. YOU live with the consequences and YOU accept the consequences on us as YOUR actions! I want her out, either you end the relationship completely and we then see who we are and re-commit to the marriage or we divorce. You don't end this relationship and it's divorce, you are not serious unless you end the relationship or file and I refuse to have an uncommitted run on my life and resources.
- ▶ It's been very important to unravel the complex role I've contributed to the affair. He's using terrible choices, & affair, to solve his problems--really they are/were OUR problems and we did not solve them....we lived with an elephant and guess thought we always could.... 2. Use Bob's resources to a) understand the type(s) of affairs to unique ways to address them. Dig deeper to identify the "total lay of the land"--facts & feelings to understand more of the whole dynamics; not blame.
- ▶ Actually it was on the advice of Dr. James Dobson from Focus on the Family (I hadn't heard about you yet, Dr. Bob) that I said to my ex he had a choice to be in our relationship and that he wasn't going to be forced into it. That comment really surprised him. I also told him I would be filing for separation instead of waiting for him. I think that sent him the message that I was no longer going to sit and play "victim" to his whims. While it was painful and difficult for me to do it was good for my sense of worth.

- ▶ My husband also has a sense of entitlement. He also has a narcissistic personality.
- ▶ I have surrounded myself with all kind of supporters (incl. counselor, lawyer, friends) and focused on search of who I am and my own interests, which is not easy after 20 years of marriage. My h. has very strong narcissistic traits and they became obvious under the stress. 2. He is truly insatiable in his needs at this point. I just cut off all contacts except through the lawyer.
- ▶ Our situations are similar! I have told my husband I no longer want to be part of his threesome. Also it is ok for him to be angry with me; I am going to be okay.
- ▶ My reaction was similar to Becky's in that I could not believe that after being the envy of the town, we were the gossip of the town and it was moral demise on my part because of my values. I cried, tried to make him get counseling, used our newborn kids, put the other person down with anger etc but when I acted like I didn't care anymore and that I was not hurt by his divorce threats did he start coming back but in anycase we are not together nor are we divorced. This affair really broke our marriage and I don't know if he is with anyone else.
- ▶ My husband thinks the world revolves around him, too, and I told him I didn't want to hear anything critical about me come out of his mouth. I told him what I wanted and needed from a husband.
- ▶ I, too am dealing with a situational narcissist. After I caught my husband, he spent at least six months blaming ME for HIS affair. I wasn't until I REALLY realized and internalized that it wasn't my fault, that in fact the affair had nothing to do with me, that my attitude began to change and I began to prepare for a life without him. And I was completely honest with him about that.
- ▶ My husband asked me, 'don't you want to know why I've done this?'. I told him, "no, because any reason he had was not an excuse for infidelity." He also said, that his affair was due to stress of not making me happy. I replied that I had never heard of using an affair as a bandaid for a troubled marriage. Both of these comments left him speechless, and pondering.

- ▶ I started communicating by writing him notes, it was the best way I could find to be able to "charge neutral" I also just act very happy.
- ▶ Started to do my "own thing" going out with friends, taking up hobbies.
- ▶ The two things that were and are still helpful is to listen to what he has to say without lashing out at him. Another was to use particular phrases and it did made him think about what he really was doing.
- ▶ My situation is simular in that my husband works, makes good money, and feels that ALL should revolve around him. I am a christian and try to avoid the blowups. when they do happen, is scary and i get a sense of "losing ground".

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

- ▶ I think it is very important to determine the type of person you are dealing with. I have become very co-dependent on my wife who is clearly a borderline personality disorder case. The thought of being alone and losing this marriage is more scary than actually losing her. Plus I have this feeling that I am responsible to make her happy. Her husband sounds like a narcissistic person; she needs to understand if he perhaps has BPD or NPD. This will help her learn that this isn't about her and what needs she hasn't met, it may be the case that she cannot ever meet his needs. She needs to preserve her self-esteem and self respect. I fell so low I couldn't believe what I had become. I would also suggest that she take time to examine her needs and if they were being met. Has she become co-dependent? Has she sacrificed things that were important to her, isolated from her family and friends, etc...
- ▶ I believe that anyone is capable of infidelity..and that it serves as an escape from certain situational realities. Anyone can perform sexual acts about where are we without deep heartfelt, soulful caring.
- ▶ It's not your fault, You are not the one with the problem. Keep up with yourself, go to a gym, or for a walk, stop dwelling on the affair!! Keep yourself busy!!
- ▶ I wrote the following letter inspired from Becky's audio to my ex-wife Carla.... ----- Carla, There were many ways you used to reject me. There were weapons you used in dealing with me as you continually waged relationship separateness. You thrived off of the relationship that you could manipulate through rejecting me as your partner. You used a variety of ways to reject me with. Typically there were non-verbal abuse techniques such as ignoring, passive aggressive tactics, and inciting me, so that I lost that comfortable footing we should have had in our relationship. In most relationships it is ok to argue and have differing opinions with your mate, I kept in mind this was not the case with you personality-wise. You must always felt that you should be in control. Even when I talked to or was to be with members of the opposite sex. You were given YOUR liberty. The one method you used to reject me was one number one that hurt me the most. And that was not being upfront and

committed adultery without my permission and announced to me beforehand. The tools in dealing with your methods were similar to what you used on me. When you choose to ignore me, I walked away, I would then open up to you and I would talk to you when I felt like it. I did this to not buy into your abusive technique of controlling the conversation. I would simply just walk away, go to the computer, leave, and do not engage you again until you wanted to talk. With my body language I would be saying something like, 'You see I do not want to talk, I respect your choice and I will talk to you when I was ready.' Since I was not engaging in your dance you felt you were in control and would will break down and talk to me again and be open and upfront and honest. The key was to wait it out. When you tried to engage me in an argument, of which you known the inevitable outcome will be to reject me and my opinion, is simply not to voice an opinion. I told you that I appreciated your idea, and left it at that. I did not engage in further conversation regarding what you wanted to argue about. I simply said you are probably right, and left it at that. You were validated, and I haven't agreed with you. The key here was I was using self control. I had to remember at times you were acting like a spoiled child that was about to have a tantrum to which I do not engage. Another technique I used, and I used sparingly was to rage, I mean RAGE. When you yelled, I yelled more. I could not use this tactic very often; I used it only in cases of emergency. I would go nuts, whatever you did towards me, I did it back at you. You were afraid, very afraid of being rejected to your core. When I raged this triggered this feeling. You were a difficult individual to be in relationship with. You were my mate, my lover, and even some of my children still to this day call you 'Mother'. Unfortunately you looked like another person on the outside, but I had to remember you were different. I cannot engage further in a relationship with someone who suffers from bi-polarism without changing my ground rules. You are unlike other people, I could not use the same rules that I could use with a normal relationship. I learned now I would have to use different rules. This will not make my relationship with you any easier or even improve it, but it may make my time with you more bearable.

- ▶ She needs to focus on herself and her child exclusively. He is not focused on their wants and needs only his own self-centered desires. I am very concerned that he visits his child so infrequently. It's all about him. I thought my spouse was in a

situational affair (mid life) however I did wonder about possible affairs during our marriage. My gut was right he did have other affairs. Sorry I wasted so many years trying to bolster the emotions and feelings of a narcissistic person. It's a no win situation. The devotion we have for the other spouse trying to understand/being responsible for their happiness is physically, emotionally and mentally draining. Be strong, life will get better!

- ▶ Move on with your personal life and do what you want to do for yourself.
- ▶ Becky, I feel for you and I am in a similar situation regarding finances and my H still having the affair. We have 2 young children together. I may lose the house along with all else my children I have lost. I suggest to Becky to continue her positive attitude for securing a future for herself and her daughter. I suggest that she not get down on herself in regard to her work and antidepressants. Everything has a reason. Becky, you have done nothing wrong. Know that.
- ▶ Be tender with yourself, you can't "make him" come back, IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT, don't accept his definitions of you. Begin a practice of meditation or quietude, walks, something that is about being with what is RIGHT with you. You have SO much "incoming" flak about what is supposed to be 'bad' about you, let it ping off you as much as you can. What YOU think of you is most important, THAT's what will transfer to your daughter.
- ▶ Invest in self care within partnership with another person. The person will keep you going; they don't have to know all of your reasons. I decided to do pre-season conditioning with my son. It is good sharing time, I couldn't afford a personal trainer, and of course, I focus on us/the future vs my unhappy situation with my cheating spouse. Please trust there is a power that comes from self care, and it is far more beneficial than I expected. I feel stronger, carry myself differently--spouse has noticed, seems surprised and even a bit pleased. #2. I decided to respect my own viewpoint and to no longer view myself from his perspective. He defines me as a "needy, second tier" person. Not his equal or a respected, cherished partner. So, I now think, "Why should I let him color my whole world anymore? keep me in a subordinate place? Feel hopeless & worthless?" I decided to intentionally think: "I respect myself more than I respect him, and it's me who I need to start living for/answering to." I'm a

Christian, doing all I can to get us back on track and, Becky; these two things might help you with a situation similar to mine. No matter what, I'm staying true to my Christian convictions about commitment, forgiveness, and integrity.

- ▶ My ex was and remains today very self absorbed ...a narcissist in a lot of ways. He is an attorney yet he conducts himself as though he is above the law. Surprised? We are 6 months past the divorce and he is dealing with 2 different judges on 2 separate charges. One for domestic violence and the other for contempt of court in following the judgment of divorce. Does that speak to his character? The two suggestions I would give to Becky is first of all, love herself enough to expect better treatment from a spouse. Secondly, for her to realize she has the strength already inside of her to make it without Rich. From the sound of it, she was the one holding down the fort and taking care of her daughter while he was "working". She will be more efficient when she isn't weighted down by worrying over his pathetic needs. (sorry I had to say it.)
- ▶ You can't change him, but you can change how to response to him that will take you in a different pass. Do not what is easy, but what is right, listen to your intuition.
- ▶ Exercise your SELF. Learn as much as you can how to be your own best friend. 2. Focus first on your personal goals, long, short and intermediate term based on your own needs. I sort it as follows: a) survival needs (food, rest and shelter), b) personal growth and c) pleasures that are not so much NEEDS but rather WANTS.
- ▶ Please focus on yourself and your needs. No one else can take of you like you can.
- ▶ Infidelity is in most part not your fault. To Becky I would say not to be afraid. She is strong, smart, and loving. She is very responsible and so if her husband is ever going to be happy with her or someone else, he will realize who he is actually walking away from two beautiful people one he brought to this world and wants to walk away from and the other someone he chose to be with and I think he will feel very stupid to do that... and really his sex addiction will make him even feel emptier and the poor woman who has no respect for herself will really be used and thrown away!!!!

- ▶ I would suggest that she continue to say things like "If you behave as if you don't want to be with me exclusively, you are giving me the message that this marriage is over and I will choose to be with someone who loves and adores me." I would also say, "you are free to make your choices and I will make mine."
- ▶ Consult with a lawyer NOW and go ahead and file for divorce yourself. I think it's very suspicious that he is still threatening divorce but he hasn't done it. It sounds manipulative to me. 2) Buck up! Divorce isn't the end of the world and you aren't the one who caused it in the first place. No doubt it seems scary, but it seems like staying where you are is just guaranteeing your own misery.
- ▶ Don't let him see you sweat! He's relishing the fact that your miserable. By allowing him to see that, he is feeling empowered and you are the one suffering. DON'T GIVE HIM THAT MUCH POWER
- ▶ Act happy even if you have to pretend. Don't bend over backwards to try and please him.
- ▶ It is very hurtful and deceitful; it makes people do things they never would do otherwise. Live for yourself and your daughter, stop being there for him.
- ▶ My two suggestions to Becky are, one..that even though thru out the book it does say "it is not your fault"..You will realize this and know for a fact that it really is not your fault and nothing you could have done to deserve this. Second, I would say that my husband's affair was the lowest point in our marriage and she probably feels that way, but she will soon realize that with using the tools provided she will come out ahead and way way stronger..With him or without him.
- ▶ Protect yourself and your child.
- ▶ That your self esteem is hit very badly. That counseling is necessary (for her, if not) for both of them. I suggest that she reads spiritual books on marriage and do A LOT of praying. See a lawyer for alimony and child support began to do some kind of physical exertion to let off some steam and continue to PRAY!!!!

👉 Focus on your own needs not his.

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

- ▶ I think it is important to know that we are not alone in going through these times. I picked this tape to listen to because of my situation and it is very similar to hers. My wife has stopped contact, but only after I burst her bubble of fantasy, became strong, and started focusing on myself. It may end up that Becky ends her marriage, but it sounds like it may be a good opportunity for her.
- ▶ I loved the neutral line: "My intent is to speak the truth." I also appreciated Bob's affirmation that being neutral is very difficult when you are fearful.
- ▶ I liked the I wish you luck part!! They don't know how much they are going to need it!!
- ▶ Place the narcissist into their place. 1) 'I hope you two are happy together.' 2) Courage to say, 'I can find somebody else' 3) The above letter.
- ▶ I enjoy reading but listening to the tapes provides more insight into the feelings and emotions of the person. Listening to Dr.H inquiring on specifics in the relationship and hearing his advice is a win-win for all.
- ▶ Advice that I already did which was to go for therapy and separate myself emotionally from him and concentrate on myself.
- ▶ I did not know 1 out of 10 affairs last!! I do not think rich is a true narcissist. He does show empathy and sounds as if he has remorse for the affair and its affects.
- ▶ That when he gets angry I hit the target, it doesn't feel that way, it feels like I screwed up. That if he doesn't follow thru he's not clear within himself.
- ▶ To reconsider what I can learn from Bob's question, "What's this relationship likely to be in the next phase, and what do I really want?" 2. A reminder to keep trying different tactics and protect myself. I can't give up on myself. 3. Use problemize with the

"entitlement" issues and to protect myself; he could hurt both of us financially without intending to.

- ▶ It reinforced for me that I did have a narcissistic spouse and all the anger I felt over the years at being ignored and taken for granted was justified to a large degree. I wasn't perfect and at times I was self absorbed in my own ways but I was never able to get his attention to work on fixing our broken relationship. I suppose it would have meant he'd have to forego some things and he wasn't about to give up his desires. My ex finally cheated on me while I underwent chemotherapy for breast cancer in 2004 (with 3 kids)...I guess it was just too much attention on me and he needed to feel special. In truth he had already started slipping before the diagnosis but I guess he used the excuse that she was "there" for him to justify his infidelity. Too bad the children weren't considered. Another benefit was hearing that Becky poured out her heart to this guy and it didn't faze him, in fact, it made him feel more significant. I did the same thing and while I cringe now in remembering how low my sense of esteem was at that point in time, I don't regret my honesty. The fact that it didn't soften him at all (even though my heart was breaking) reinforces the nature of the beast I was dealing with...self centered, childish, and incapable of being the person I wanted in my life. Thank goodness I am free.
- ▶ People who have affairs are very selfish. Loving another person unconditionally makes things worse. Playing nice only feeds the narcissist.
- ▶ Being emotional in these conversations makes you lose your power.
- ▶ With the person who trained you to read his mind caused me to doubt myself and feel guilty when I do not guess correctly what the hell he wants. This tape showed me that I am not the cause of the failure of our marriage, though I certainly participated in its demise.
- ▶ I need to take my own advice for one thing.
- ▶ This was my first time listening to a recording and I feel human again. I have put everything on the back burner and try to deal with the immediate which are my twins. My husband left us when they were 7 months old. When we needed him the most

and to listen to another mother and feel that I was there the uncertainty and not being able to make any decisions. So I am not really resolving things but for now I can only transfer to different burners when I smell smoke.

- ▶ It was affirming to hear another woman talking about how painful it is to so many good things going on in her life, in which she felt like she had the world by the tail, and to feel it come crashing down. It was also affirming to hear how difficult it is to deal with a narcissist and with someone who can't say no. My husband has many of those characteristics.
- ▶ I am going through a similar situation with my husband. He waited until my Mother and Father died within six weeks of each other, I lost my job due to having probate and my parents house to pack up out of state. Once I turned the table on him, and behaved like it was a relief to be separating (and happy), he ended the affair and started to try and win me back. We have a lot of work to do on our marriage, but, by not becoming a wreck around him, he was able to see a strong, independent woman like the one he married 14 years ago.
- ▶ It really is all about the cheater, nothing to do with you.
- ▶ GET CLOSE TO GOD, FIND SOMEONE THAT YOU CAN TRUST THAT WILL JUST LISTEN (not try to give a lot of advice) I GO TO THE ROOMS OF NA AND FIND THAT IT HELPS (for me, recovery must come first). Coach Huizenga, right now, my husband SEEMS to be on board with wanting to patch up our marriage, however, this thing he is going thru hasn't been completely admitted, "I caught him!" (b/4 that i was crazy and imagining things)i feel like a fool by staying with him but I love him, 1*he has agreed to go to counseling at our church (I also am seeking professional counseling), 2*to stop the sexship 3*I am seeing a lawyer to set up protective measures for myself 4*we are planning to(eventually)move to another town. I am not sure that I'll be needing your coaching techniques, but I cannot say that I don't either. As it stands right now I don't work (am looking) and can't afford the coaching but I will be reading what you send me.
- ▶ Fear of the unknown is keeping you stuck... may not be as scary as you imagine.