

# A Blueprint to Recover from an Affair

## Covenant Counseling

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Affair recovery is difficult but not impossible. If a couple can commit to the process of healing before making a decision to divorce, there is hope for marriage recovery.

### Repairing Phase:

- a. **Motivation:** Write out your reasons to pursue the recovery of the marriage. Ask yourself, “Why do I want to stay in this marriage?”
- b. **Assessment:** Ask questions such as, “What dynamics of our marriage led to this affair? What role did I play in this? How has my past and family background contributed to this behavior? What needs to change in this marriage?”
- c. **Forgiveness Procedure:**
  - i. List your offenses you have committed toward your partner.
  - ii. Ask for forgiveness for each offense: “I was wrong when I \_\_\_\_\_. I know this must have made you feel \_\_\_\_\_. I don’t deserve your forgiveness but will you forgive me?”
  - iii. The goal is to give the offended spouse freedom to be honest with the answer. The response doesn’t need to be a yes, it can be a no. If it is a no, thank your partner for the honesty. The yes or no response allows the offender to feel a termination of guilt that drains emotional energy.
  - iv. In addition, the offended partner’s communication emphasis changes from “I’m trying to get you to understand why I hurt,” to “This is what I need from you.”
  - v. Recognize that there is a difference between apologizing, “I’m sorry,” and that of asking for forgiveness. An apology is an ambiguous statement leaving the offended spouse unsure if you really understand how deeply he/she was hurt. Asking for forgiveness is a question, leaving no doubt of understanding and your purpose to take responsibility for the offense.
- d. **Practice Trust Building Behavior:**
  - i. Keep your word.
  - ii. Keep your spouse informed. Avoid catching your spouse off guard with an unexpected surprise.
  - iii. Keep no secrets and avoid guardedness.
  - iv. Spend time together.
  - v. Learn how to emotionally connect by using feeling words: “I heard you say you’re feeling...”
  - vi. Practice being attentive.