

How to Break Free From The Affair!

19 Live Infidelity Coaching Sessions

With Dr. Robert Huizenga – The Infidelity Coach

Revenge or Rage Affair? Why it is CRUCIAL to Know the Difference - Especially when a Child is Involved

Workbook portion of audio tape with Christine

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Part 1: Summary of Christine's Circumstances

Last year in July my partner of 13 years, with whom I have a daughter, had an affair and after I had found out about it, broke up with me.

We were originally from South Africa and we (our daughter and my two daughter from a previous marriage) moved to Berlin with him because he found work there (2000). This company collapsed and we both found work and moved to England and when he lost that job (2003), he found work in Germany. We both didn't quite like it but went on with it mainly not wanting to change our daughter's country and language once more and to create better financial security. So we visited each other regularly and we were both waiting for the right moment to change things. Because our daughter was with me, my life was naturally filled with my responsibilities (as normal) however after three years there seemed a growing distance and I think he became lonely and started looking around. He met a colleague and fell in love. I found out later that he had had other infidelities, but this was "serious". Until I found romantic sms's, I had asked him on several occasions why he felt so distant, but he denied having any other involvement. I was shattered and broke. I could sustain these three years apart because of the absolute trust I had in him, our love and our relationship. This last year has been devastating. The betrayal of the trust, of what I felt we were engaged with in our lives together has almost been worse than the girlfriend, but that too is very very painful. His girlfriend broke up with him after a few months but he was heartbroken and somehow blames me for this break up. He proceeded to reduce the money he sent me to support our home in England to such an extent that I could no longer continue my job there. He also turned very hard and cold and has proceeded to try and break me down. I could no longer sustain my job as teacher of children, both because I was struggling emotionally, I have no family in England and also financially. I resigned and moved back to Berlin (in Feb this year) (my two older daughters remained in Berlin) and I am looking for work. He continues to try and control my life, has reduced the money he sends me once more, and he slanders and undermines me at every opportunity. So his life appears stable, stable job, friends and colleagues after 3 years, whilst mine and our daughters has been the opposite - loss of job, of financial stability, change of country and so on. Because of the language issue, even finding work has been problematic.

I have tried various techniques from Dr Huizenga's book which I purchased and I have failed often to sustain for instance "charge neutral". I have wanted to try and renew our relationship because I know the love we are capable of and because our daughter is very unhappy with our separation. Perhaps my marriage made me do and I just love being in love and I can't say no, couldn't quite decide which was the most appropriate

In perspective, he has been a marijuana smoker of years, but because he has been able to sustain an electrical engineering job, does not see it has negative impact. My biggest problem in our relationship was the mood swings - so either just normal, gentle as a lamb, emotionally absent, or violent (verbal and physical on a couple of occasions) outbursts once of anger. He has an addictive nature and looks for "highs" in life so I assumed at the time that this "being in love" was a new high.

However, although his relationship came to an end (ended by her), he has shown no interest or openness to considering returning to his family. Rather the opposite, it gets colder and he becomes harder. Because of our daughter, I try to maintain civil contact, but he very quickly uses every opportunity to take control using money to threaten me. I will be seeing a lawyer because of this.

Firstly, my question to Dr Huizenga is whether there is anything further I can do to attract him back after such a long time and with what has happened in the intervening months. He seems to have decided that it is over for ever. Despite our problems, my perspective of our potential together is different to his and I have been through one divorce and know how awful it is for the children, as well as being a single parent, struggling to find work and earn enough. He seems not to care what becomes of me. I am 13 years older than he is (I am 54 and he 41). I also believe in the idea of "renewal" whereas he thinks along these lines "too much water under the bridge".

David and his wife now exist in a sexless emotionally distant marriage.

David wonders strongly if separation and divorce may be next.

Part 2: Review of the Coaching Session

1. Letting go - even after 3 years of separation, him living with another woman and him uttering consistently, "it's over!" - is NOT easy. And there are reasons for this.

He says he's gone yet is very emotionally reactive to Christine. He sees her through his filters that give her inordinate power. He obviously "cares" about her responses to him. He utters the words "good-bye" but emotionally there is a tether that keeps his juices stirred.

Christine holds out hope. She persistently returns to the possibility of warm loving relationship, sometime. To a degree, her role with him is still intact. She had an investment in him at some level and that investment continues active. What is it about Christine that keeps her hanging in there, expecting, hoping, and trying?

2. Their daughter is a key player. She appears to be the lightning rod for the couple's unresolved tension. Resentment rears its ugly head when decisions and judgments for her care are needed. Christine reports that the daughter is finding life increasingly difficult. Perhaps she becomes the repository for some of that unresolved tension.

One of my first concerns with Christine was to help move her toward finding ways to remove their daughter as a lightning rod.

3. The story of Christine and her husband poignantly points to the power of the roles we assume and become wrapped around. It is indeed often difficult to extricate ourselves from those roles and "move on." We carry along with us themes and patterns that have outlived their usefulness but nonetheless become powerful magnets that often unconsciously rule our thinking, acting and decision making.

Christine's husband assumed a very reactive role to Christine and probably to all women. It appears he consistently assumed a passive-aggressive and sometimes aggressive role in fending off the needs and requests of what he perceived to be the powerful women in his life. Perhaps his new relationship with a 20 year old was an unconscious attempt to break those limiting and destructive patterns with women in his life.

Christine seemingly assumed a nurturing, protective, and encouraging role with him. Christine received affirmation and good feelings from assuming such a role. She was the glue that held his life together and moved him along; at least as far as he could go before his reactivity emerged.

4. Perhaps we are looking at a form of Affair #5 in my E-book, [Break Free From the Affair: "I Want to get Back at Him / Her."](#)

The him/her in this case may refer to a generalized view of women. In the "I Want to Get Back at Him/Her" affair I make a distinction between a revenge affair, marked by resentment and a rage affair characterized by a more intense rage.

Perhaps we observe Christine's husband in a resentment mode and at times escalating into a more direct rage. The distinctions between resentment and rage are important to discern if this affair faces you. Resentment is much easier to deal with and holds hope for the relationship. Much less so for revenge when it takes on the rage component.

This is what I say in Break Free From the Affair: A revenge affair may be the result of long-standing and unresolved anger or rage toward the opposite sex. There is a persistent pattern of the person pushing others away with rage or anger. There also is a great deal of projection, or this person blaming others for his/her situation. Here are some characteristics of the person I outline in the ebook:

- Usually is rather unpredictable and erratic in his behavior.
- Has a hard time making decisions.
- Is often impatient and irritable when things don't go his way.
- Some of the resentment seems to "seep out" along the edges, maybe when you least expect it.
- Engages in teasing.
- Can be stubborn and unyielding.
- May often take oppositional view and pride himself on being contrary or taking an unpopular stance.

- Can have moments of impulsive behavior and be labeled high-strung or tightly wired.
- Has an underlying worldview that is pessimistic. Glass is half empty.
- Has a tendency to whine or complain.
- May have moments of sullenness and dejection.
- Women may respond very intensely during their menstrual cycle. Men may appear very moody at certain times of the month.
- Manipulates others with unpredictability and demandingness.
- Family of origin often marked by factions and sibling rivalry.
- Has difficulty with intimacy since his behavior patterns push people away.

The rage emerges from a desire to hurt rather than from the frustration of needs not being met. This person exhibits little concern, as well, for the other person. Whereas someone more frustrated because they want their needs met, is usually more considerate of the other person.

If rage is a predominant factor, Christine must take care to protect herself. Fortunately the relational distance is a protector at this point.

5. As a coach I acknowledged Christine's role and how difficult it is for her to say "good-bye." She wants to hang onto hope. She wants him to acknowledge her in some manner. She needs interaction to feel whole and significant at a deep level. I respect Christine's need.

It would be easy to say, "Forget it! It's over! Move on!" but that would be doing Christine an injustice. She needs to take her time, learn about herself and her roles and on her own, decide the steps she will take in resolving the relationship. She WILL do that. Christine will build her bridge from where she is now to where she really wants to go. Christine is intelligent, persistent and articulate. She will make it!

6. So, what Christine has left is shared parenting and legal issues related to the divorce of the relationship. This is her point of contact with her husband. This is where she can focus in intentional ways to "break free" from her roles and the destructive components of the marriage.

This is where she can strategize, intervene, evaluate, learn, grow and begin to design her new life and new family relationships. Future coaching with Christine would move in that direction.

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

- ▶ stop talking about our relationship with him until he brings up the subject. 2. try to resolve the resentment for the sake of the children.
- ▶ Stopped talking about us as a couple. Stopped taking some of his phone calls, and when I do talk to him, don't ask him anything about what's going on with his life.
- ▶ Very familiar alanon meetings for me aa meetings for him stop bringing up any possible reconciliation with him focus on your daughter....you did not cause, you can not control it and you cannot cure it.
- ▶ My ex- husband has bullied me in a similar way. He is a control freak and projects a lot of his issues on to me claiming that I have the problems and not him. I am learning over time, to have very few expectations from him and to just keep our exchanges on the issue at hand.
- ▶ After one more hurtful exchange - where my husband made outrageous accusations against me -- I got very angry, as usual. And then suddenly I laughed - I could finally see how outlandish he was, and how silly it was to let him push my buttons. Typically, I would respond and lash out in self defense, but I did not. I did not make any effort to contact him, or respond for several months. This purposeful "disconnect" started the real healing process for me. 2. I forgave him -- which means I will not hold him in judgment. That is God's role, not mine, and letting go of it allows me to have peace. If I don't forgive, I only fill myself with bitterness and ugliness. It doesn't bring instant peace, but it gives me a chance to get there.
- ▶ Continue seeing or talking to a professional or using material such as the Dr.'to help you to keep the issue of children separate. 2. Do not let his anger manipulate you into decisions.
- ▶ I told my husband things that I was doing for myself.
- ▶ I did not argue for the relationship, but listened and put up with pain and his rage and disparagement. It was a bad time, but it also gave him nothing to fight against; I never became the Bad

Guy. Now, thinking back, I see I was collecting data about how an angry, abusive man behaves, and learning what hurts too much about that to keep it up. 2. I found the physical distance he kept to be a form of safety. He was too angry at life for a woman to be safe with him. This is how I figured out why his quiet 2nd wife left him and never stopped screaming at him after that--once she was safe, she showed her rage and pain at how it had been for her to be with him.

- ▶ To just stick with working out the relationship with the daughter and father and see where the rest goes from there. Don't let him see you "waiting" for him because that adds to his anger and makes the relationship harder.
- ▶ I finally began to live my life and didn't worry about him and his girlfriend anymore. She became irrelevant to me. I stopped letting her haunt me, but it took 2 years for that to happen and it took constant self talk to make it happen.
- ▶ Concentrate on your job seeking, skill acquisition and self esteem are part of this. Write down all your feelings as you feel them. After reading them once file them. Check back one month later and see the incremental progress you have made even if it's small and some things remain your perspective will have shifted.

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

- He is try to avoid solving problems, wants a clean slate. 2. He has trouble communication with you and so he gets angry.
- Keep communicating with your daughter how this is not her fault, how her father still loves her and wants to be with her. Go out with her, do fun things together, things she wants to do, places she wants to go to. Smile, act happy even if you don't feel it. Her actions are mirrors of yours.
- Stop thinking he is coming back don't care if he comes back make things okay for your daughter...that will intrigue him more than anything else...narcissistic people need to feel wanted, don't want him, want for your daughter, be very clear.... alanon, narcotics anonymous
- I would suggest that she focused on finding love elsewhere and she stopped giving hope and attention to him. I bet when she does that, he will be more likely to come back. It seems like game-playing, which is not fun but it sounds as though she has exhausted all possible options anyway. She may meet a better man anyway!
- I've learned that some people just give up. And when they do, they will make up their story, and believe it -- even if it's irrational -- to justify their decision, and to assuage their guilt. It makes you crazy, if you buy into it. 2. If loyalty and trust are your values, it takes a looong time to let go -- even when the other person is the one who broke those bonds. You have to let go of the person - who is no longer there -- but it's much harder to let go of the hope -- and all the dreams and plans you had together.
- Christine must hope for a better man than he. To bridge their differences now is not possible; for her span over the river, as it were, is higher than his and is more than likely to link up with a man of more maturity approaching hers. Her husband has so much personal growth to experience, if he wants it, that time will simply pass him by as Christine continues to grow herself at a higher level.

In a long term relationship it is difficult and painful to establish a new life, give yourself time. 2. Understand you have no control over him and cannot change him. You need to focus on yourself and where you are going because that is where the control is.

- Move on.
- He is the one to decide, ultimately, whether he wants to try again, but you can regain some of his respect by politely and decisively moving ahead with things, especially things that don't involve or concern him. 2. Try to temper your natural tendency to be dominant. It attracts and repels him at the same time. You probably don't want a renewed relationship with him based on a power game. A softer, less intense you, with no agenda except to move on to get yourself a happy life, will pique his curiosity even if it makes him mad.
- Guilt is not a motivator...As the OP we can put guilt on them without even realizing it and not even intending to do it...they feel guilty so anything can bring that feeling to the surface. Guilt is what is making him angry and he doesn't like that. Get on with your life...even if you want him back and would be willing to work on it for now keep that to yourself. Work with him and your daughter and if he doesn't feel that guilt maybe he won't react with such anger...without the anger there maybe he can start to feel what he is missing by not being with you.
- Give up, you are in denial.
- Why can't you let go of your ex? Maybe your ex would really prefer not having contact with you (were it not for your child) He has moved on to a new relationship and your continuing presence creates a triangle that is not healthy for his new relationship.
- As hard as it is, the contact should be kept to situations concerning the child. He is not ready to discuss their relationship, so it should not be addressed.
- Never live apart for long periods. Changing and growing in different ways provide the thin end of the wedge for infidelity. Do not see yourself through the mirror he presents to you. Surround yourself with people who value your obvious strengths

and virtues. See yourself as you are. Concentrate purely on your daughter's needs in your interactions with him.

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

- He sees me with all the power even though I don't feel that powerful. 2. There is still a strong connection between us not only the children but with us.
- Go out with friends, go to a gym and exercise, take some fun classes. Stop making him the center of your life; make YOU the center of yours. Realize this is his weakness not yours. Live for each day and look at life as the half full glass, not the half empty one.
- Be independent of controlling people, ALL controlling people in your life, observe how people try to manipulate and control you and how you let them, and when you don't let them, notice where you draw the line...then change the line...we do teach others how to treat us.
- I don't think that you addressed the question that she kept asking, which was whether their relationship can be salvaged or not. If it can't can you give some explanation as to what the problem is and how to resolve it rather than just saying that he will remain in control and she has to wait on him until he is ready, if ever!!
- If I may say to you, there is another person in my life helping me to break free from my wife's infidelity and that is God, in the person of Jesus Christ, whose grace has been a tremendous asset others have simply not afforded themselves.
- Try to remember his problems started a long time ago and it is his responsibility to fix them not yours.
- You're very strong and I admire you. The pain of the younger woman thing is awful and it doesn't let up easily.
- I first wondered if Christine was in a version of #7 affair (i want to be close but cannot stand intimacy); then I wondered whether I may have some unresolved rage issues because I behave a lot like Christine's husband (I push my x-away even though I am still attached to him).

- ▶ Christine's husband has to want the relationship and he has to be the one to make changes to his own behavior. As much as we want to force the changes or make them happen, we cannot do that. Sadly, it does not seem he wants to change.
- ▶ Competent communicative articulate women have a very unfair time of it when their partners feel less adequate with themselves. This inadequacy is not the fault of the women and they should not blame themselves.