

How to Break Free From The Affair!

19 Live Infidelity Coaching Sessions

With Dr. Robert Huizenga – The Infidelity Coach

How Does He Flip the Intimacy Switch?

Workbook portion of audio tape with David

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

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Part 1: Summary of David's Circumstances

David describes a marriage where the emotional closeness switch was turned off years ago. He tried to look at the positive. After all, they were still having sex. David admitted he missed some of her subtle signals that all was not well. But the marriage continued.

A few months ago, through electronic snooping, David discovered his wife was having an affair. When confronted, she admitted the fact. From her perspective it was an emotional affair.

After reading Break Free From the Affair, David settled on "My Marriage Made Me Do It" as the affair that best characterized their situation.

His wife broke off the affair because it was "the right thing to do." In addition, David reports it is important for her to stay together for the sake of the children. David isn't so sure.

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. It is important to face BOLDLY all messages that we receive in a relationship of investment. Yes, we will miss some. But, when that gnawing feeling in our gut says something isn't quite right at that moment, pay attention and respond.

You CAN handle anything that will emerge. You or the relationship won't melt and disappear with a little conflict, or a lot of conflict, for that matter, if handled somewhat properly.

Approach those subtle, almost hidden messages with a conviction that says, "Yes, we can handle this. The worst case scenario is to pretend it doesn't exist."

David and his wife could work on developing this assumption.

2. Believe there is more - much, much more to explore and discover about one's self, your partner and the relationship.

A stalemate, hitting the wall of silence, attack, defense or withdrawal indicates you are missing much more in your self and the relationship. The elephant is sitting there, you sense it is there, but you fail to acknowledge it and in so doing give it more life-draining power.

Of course most of us are not taught or encouraged to "look for the more." Somehow we assume that the way things are is the way they are to be. We settle for mediocrity. We swallow and assume that is what we must do. We slowly die. The relationship slowly dies.

David and his wife experience this. Infidelity offers the opportunity to look for and experience that "something more."

3. Never accept, "I don't have feelings for you anymore." In a relationship of investment there is no such thing as not having feelings for the other person.

Now, it might be accurate for his wife to say, "I don't have the thoughts and feelings I want to have for you or think is appropriate." Go after that.

The elephant for her most likely is her underlying resentment which may mask other powerful thoughts and feelings that have more to do with her self concept as a capable, proactive, I-will-get-my-needs-

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met-appropriately, loving, desirable, sexual person.

Now that would generate hours of thought and discussion, relief and a turnaround of the negative feelings and thoughts.

4. David and his wife are like most of us.

We have not acquired the mental framework or been intentionally taught the skills which say, Relationships are given to us to explore, to learn, to evolve as people and as a couple, to face the "dark side" and transform it into our power and strength.

And so, we go no further. We know not how to go further. Out of our fear, faulty thinking, and misguided societal beliefs we stalemate...until infidelity wakes us.

5. At the end of the session with David I began engaging in messaging. I talk more about this skill in "My Marriage Made Me Do It" in Break Free From the Affair.

Messaging holds the potential for breaking through the walls and the stalemate.

Here's what I say about Messaging in [Break Free From the Affair](#):

- Messaging is a basic communication skill.
- Messaging converts what you want to say into a simple sentence or phrase that expresses the truth and intends to spark reflection and perhaps action in the other person.
- You want your message to "grab" the other person as your words pierce to the heart of the matter.
- You message when you have a point to make, when you want the other person to act and especially when time is of the essence.
- Messaging can and should be used effectively in all communication but can be especially powerful when facing the affair in your life.

- Messaging works because it bypasses the defenses of the other person.

Your spouse will find it difficult to defend herself (attack, explain or withdraw) when you message. As well, when crafted correctly, the message speaks the truth. The truth cannot be ignored.

A few of my messages to David:

- What's keeping the two of you together?
- So, you state the truth and you are fearful she would pull away. Could she pull much further away? What would be worse?
- Do you ever wonder what she is REALLY thinking about?

How much are you willing to tolerate?

And, in priming David to confront his wife in a positive way, I lead him to say to her:

- Yes, it's true I've withdrawn, but it appears you have as well.
- I want more, much more and it appears you do also.

I think you will get a much better feel for this strategy as you listen to the last 5 or so minutes of the tape.

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

► I let my husband know recently that I found in myself that I am looking to other men for intimacy. If our relationship doesn't change, then I will find it with someone and he will lose me with me lying right next to him in our bed.

► Nothing I said was really helpful for me. It was a horrific discovery. He said he didn't think what he was doing was hurting me. Imagine. I think I helped by making him communicate, but it took a long time to get him to be honest with himself.

► Insist on absolute honesty and nothing less. Have the courage to confront the situation head-on. Accessed information via the Net, books, etc., to fully understand the subject and the nature of emotional affairs.

► I've only found out very recently and I'm still in shock. From what I'm reading and hearing I've probably done more harm than good.

► David's situation is similar to mine, but, his actions seem to be too self-centered, too selfish, too sexualized. He needs to separate the hormones from the mind. He does not realize that sex and communication are beyond intellectualization and emotionalism.

► I very calmly said to my husband: "I know you really want to be with her, so I'm filing for divorce to set you free" He suddenly did an about face and said he didn't want to have to start over. He slowly let go of the affair, but no intimacy happened between us. A few years later, I had an emotional affair and found my husband very attentive toward me. It seemed to be the only thing that attracted him to me.

► Sexy loving and intimate text messages that let her know that despite the problems, I still find her incredibly sexy. Opened up the gates to more discussion and intimacy.

► My wife and I have really opened up and been brutally honest with each other. Even though this hurts sometimes, I believe it has helped. I've tried to see things from her perspective--it helps

take away some of my anger and helps me understand why she had the affair.

► I have always loved you And we are both at fault for taken our marriage for granted.

► I have been honest with my spouse and said i think our relationship has value and i don't want the emotional distance between us to continue even though he's moved out and is still involved in his affair.

► WAS,,,real touch she had,,,,1st think I did was purchase ebook from you,,a blessing,,,,,2nd was to teach her the tools of communication thru a marriage counselor,,she had lack of that skill and help resentment over many small items.

► Being willing to take a risk. If both people going "so far and no further" is what led her to look around in her mind, then she has to see that you are willing to do more than before. If not, then the best you can hope for is back the way things were... which didn't work very well.

► David's situation is almost exactly like mine...so far I don't think I have done anything helpful.

► Since it is easy to start looking at the negatives of the situation, I constantly refocus my attention to taking care of myself. I also find times in which I let him know what I am feeling. In the past, I internalized what I was feeling many times and this increased the emotional distance between us.

► I was a #1-kind of wife who had a long affair. My husband is/was a brilliant, extremely competent person who demonstrated a lot of generosity with others. I was "too emotional" and, as a grown-up, was supposed to do without much of his company; he was very busy building his career and proving his competence to the rest of the world. After about 18 years of my begging, weeping, fighting, appeasing, railing, enduring quietly, and finally rejecting his behavior as hateful and cold, which he said was the reason we were not intimate, he conducted his own affair to get what he wanted: admiration, devotion, sex, a computer-science girl who might make a lot of money. We went to counseling and eventually he re-dedicated himself to the marriage. After that he was around, helped in the

house and with our child, and never argued. He was still not intimate. When someone showed up for me who seemed to have everything I had been missing, I left, after 8 months of agonizing over it. I never went back or wanted to. Now we're not together, but in many ways good partners as parents and otherwise. Helpful things: 1. I began to speak up to him and stop him from framing his wants and needs as "logical" and mine as "immature" and "indulgent." I pointed this out clearly with each incident. He began to regain my respect as he paid attention. 2. He devoted new energy, as he took better care of himself (working out, etc.) to speaking more considerately and listening to me, to valuing my contributions to his past and his life as a whole, and he was not sarcastic or superior anymore. I have told him how much I respect, admire, and even love him now, and honest to God, I want him to be very, very happy. He's become a fine man. If he had done some of this much earlier, instead of after 23 years of marriage, we might be together.

► I began to focus on myself and my physical, mental and emotional health. I also read a ton of books and began to think about if the relationship had actually been meeting MY needs. I engaged in some of the most authentic conversation I had had with my spouse in years. In listening to his responses, I could tell he was extremely reluctant to do the hard work necessary to transform our relationship. That was a devastating blow. But I feel relieved to know the truth so I can now freely move on and find someone who is willing to commit to me 100%. As well as to shepherd my own growth so I can better understand my role in relationship, my strengths and deficiencies as well as a conscious way to approach conflict so as to better maintain harmony and genuine intimacy in a long term relationship.

► Letting her know that i am emotionally hold back letting her know that i think she is missing out on intimacy and should give it a chance

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

- ▶ Try to have some understanding of why your why has chosen to find emotional fulfillment somewhere else. Acknowledge that you have contributed and want to try to figure out how to "bridge the gap". Let her know how sorry you are that things have progressed over the last 10 yrs. as they have and that you haven't really tried to do anything to change your relationship.
- ▶ Take care of yourself. Give it as much time as you can. Get out if you can't feel good about the relationship. Don't trap yourself.
- ▶ It sounds to me as though David hasn't fully processed the reality of his wife having an emotional affair. It seems that on some level, he's in a state of denial, in that, he didn't express his feelings of hurt and anger caused by her affair. Did he go through the process of confronting her with the, "I need to know," phase? (who, where, when, why) It appears that in the long term, they have both danced around their marital issues superfluously, and not been honest with each another. Radical honesty is the key. They must establish a set of mutual round rules amenable to both of them before engaging in the long term process of opening up channels of open, honest communication. For a variety of reasons, he is remaining on the periphery, and is not fully committed to salvaging his marriage. They need your help Dr. H.! P.S. It takes two to tango.
- ▶ ▶Forgive the infidelity or it will eat you alive. An unrepentant spouse is another matter, but most want forgiveness. Put all thoughts of the "revenge affair" out of your head - it will end up costing you your own self-respect.
- ▶ David is really hurting, he is not being honest, in the phone conversation, about the deep deep, dark deep hurt he is feeling. I would tell David to let go of his pain and find some way to share it with his wife and/or let it go. They are both suffering. He doesn't acknowledge her pain over having cheated. He doesn't acknowledge his pain in his heart, or the core of his Being, his psyche. He sounds as though he is denying his pain and anger.
- ▶ Make a life for himself and don't put any pressure on her for sex and intimacy.

- No one can resist a truly positive and loving person. Try to be loving (love her the way you'd like to be loved) and try to be positive about whatever bit you can take and be happy with. Use the easy time this can create to enjoy each other, and tackle bad feelings when and if you really need to, but not till you feel strong enough in your conviction to stay together to not risk yourselves by doing it.
- Don't give up yet. If your wife wants to stay in the marriage for any reason, that's a start. You can build on that. Resist the desire to withdraw from her. This desire is what led to your problems in the first place. Do the opposite of your instinct! Confront her and talk to her.
- I would separate at this point sometimes distance makes couples realize what they are throwing away. Everyone needs space to think. And maybe she is in the thick of it and can't see
- Infidelity is destructive to all family members and the children suffer when their parents don't resolve their issues. Keep working on yourself and your goals. Keep being honest about your needs to your partner.
- David should revenge by letting GO in a sense that he shows her that he is ready to move on with or without her, dress up well, get female friends and generally stop pressing her.
- Infidelity sucks! plain and simple,,I still hurt 3.5 yrs later David I would both agree to be honest,,truthfull and communicate.
- Write down what you think went well before and what you think you may have missed before and ask her to do the same. You may be surprised at what she writes down and how it may differ from your conversations with her. Either way, use that as a baseline to say, "This is how I looked at life and that is how you looked at life. If we are going to survive, we need to see how to bring these two perspectives together."
- Take care of yourself, and try to connect with the wife on a more intimate level. Sounds like she's got a void and he needs to make her feel like she's loved.
- If it makes you feel better and it helps for you to go with the "I'm taking care of me feeling" then stick with it.

- ▶ I am still working my way through a very similar situation and what I have said to him is that I do not want to let our relationship stagnate again and that it is important to me that I feel that we are continuing to move forward and work on our relationship.
- ▶ You sound like your ego's strong enough to handle the truth. 1. Stop finding ways to make yourself FINE, healthy, even superior, all the time, offering spare, careful admissions of incorrectness here and there for balance. In some ways your great, healthy attitude is really uncaring. She's a different kind of person and you could learn a lot from her. You married her, in part, because you got that about her. Her gifts at engineering life are more subtle and complex, and could be very valuable when encouraged to grow strong. 2. Your relatively quick "healing" continues to hurt her. "I'll be fine and happy, no matter what," is poison coming from a strong personality such as yours. Something I've learned is that no one, NO ONE, wants to hear that everybody will be just fine after he or she is gone--whether it's from a job, an organization, or a relationship. We all want to hear: "Things will not be the same without you. We want your happiness, and at the same time you've been a huge part of ours. You have made a huge difference, and you will be greatly missed."
- ▶ David should listen to his gut right now. It's telling him he should get a divorce and his wife isn't saying anything convincingly otherwise. He knows he wants more than she is giving. He needs to set a timeline for his decision and if he doesn't see what he wants to see, begin separation.
- ▶ Staying positive and lead the way for his confused spouse.

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

- ▶ When the spouse who has gone astray doesn't feel like opening up, then good chances are that the injured spouse feels the same way.
- ▶ This has been something I can't share with anyone so to hear someone else talk about it was good for me. It confirms that I'm totally blocking from any emotions and making a decision to move forward in any direction.
- ▶ The benefit of listening to Dr. H. parsing out the underlying real issues that need to be addressed.
- ▶ I'M NOT ALONE!! 2. Affairs don't happen overnight. The situation was building for several years. 3. How to respond to "I don't have any feelings for you any more." (Thank You!) 4. That somewhere down the road, I'll be more focused, calm, and able to think objectively. At +14 days, I'm still only learning of the extent of this betrayal.
- ▶ This couple has a deep deep bond that goes far beyond the children. Neither one of them is being honest with each other. They haven't for a long time. They MUST shed their egos for the sake of themselves.....
- ▶ You create and nourish your experience by how you act or react. Self improvement does not give you the right to be arrogant, but instead makes you more responsible to 'carry' the repairing relationship and/or 'discard' the apparent to you unenlightened behaviors of your spouse.
- ▶ For me anger was the thing I had to hold back, and I became far more understanding than ever, and listened more than talked. I actually shared.
- ▶ Keep listening to your partner and try to be a friend even when you want to yell and scream at him for all the pain and hurt they put you through. Keep your self under control no matter how hard it is.
- ▶ At times people fall out of love. We should not push them however an ultimatum works done at the right time

- ▶ Never take the marriage for granted again.
- ▶ It actually sounded like there wasn't much connection prior to her emotional affair--sounds like a loveless marriage...make her feel like she's special, you get what you give.
- ▶ David need to feel like she choose HIM again and not feel like it was the kids or her social standing that is keeping her there. There is no way from him to trust her if that is why she ended the affair because they why wouldn't she do it again when he isn't looking.
- ▶ I know no one can predict the future. I am always disheartened though, when the obvious is summarized as in this vignette, yet the key counsel is missed. What should be the acceptable reasonable next step in negotiating what to accept in the next 2 months, 6mo, 1yr in a loveless, emotionally disconnected no physical contact marriage relationship. Time table for forward progress?
- ▶ About no sex for a while: get over it. Don't use that "need" as a threat. If you suggest that you'll go elsewhere for it, you're playing a game and she'll reject you. She was still having sex with you for a while there because she's sexual, too, and she misses it even when she says Forget it. A lot of us are deeply sexual people and don't have to have it satisfied all the time. Sometimes to protect the gift of sensuality and its power we have to be alone for a while. You could give her that, at least. You are trying, and you have a lot to offer. But you're incredibly self-protective and are book-keeping about what you're doing on your end. I might love you tremendously and want to get the hell out, too.
- ▶ I thought it was fascinating how David said everything important in this dialogue. Bob didn't ADD any new information. He only guided David to state his position and his obstacles clearly. David has all the answers he needs in himself. As we all really do. It is scary to trust our instincts and decisions are hard. Divorce is incredibly painful so best to proceed with caution. But don't ignore the voice inside you telling you how love looks and doesn't look. Your partner listened to their voice before they strayed. Now you have to listen to your own. Although separation was always the plan in my situation, I have benefited

greatly from your book and subsequent emails. Somehow they always have some insight for me. You always know exactly what I'm feeling and going through! This is all a very long process to sort and evolve through. A huge growth experience and I am grateful for your insight and experience. You are doing a great thing to help people with this very complex stuff that is often not discussed in "polite society" yet tears families and individuals apart forever. Now if we could only enlighten people about how to keep marriage strong from the get-go and the irreversible damage of affairs BEFORE they ever happen, that would truly lower the divorce rate. Thank you :-)

- 👉 Somehow getting the offending spouse to feel that trust is back (even if it isn't or will ever really be)