

How to Break Free From The Affair!

19 Live Infidelity Coaching Sessions

With Dr. Robert Huizenga – The Infidelity Coach

I Want to be Wanted: Infidelity and Breast Cancer

Workbook portion of audio tape with Martha

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Content

Part 1: Summary of Martha's Circumstances

Part 2: Review of the Coaching Session

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

Part 1: Summary of Martha's Circumstances

My situation is that on February 23, 2007, I discovered that my husband was cheating on me with a co-worker. He started the affair in September 2006 while I was undergoing chemotherapy for metastatic breast cancer. At the moment, I am in remission and stopped chemotherapy in December. We have been together for 18 years and married for 14 years. This is the first time he has cheated on me. I am absolutely devastated and want to save this marriage. However, I am struggling with feelings of anger, mistrust, and hurt. I often wake up at night to grill or yell at my husband about the affair, which I fear is driving him further away from me. He says he stopped the affair as soon I found out and that he wants to stay with me. Unfortunately, he vacillates about how he feels about me. That is: he loves me; he wants to love me again; he's not sure how he feels about me. I am on an emotional roller coaster.

My goal is to be happy again and not feel all these negative and destructive feelings. I want our marriage to be good again and for our deep love and connection to return.

Part 2: Review of the Coaching Session

1. Not only does Martha face her husband's affair, she also is recovering and rebuilding her physical and emotional strength after major breast cancer and surgery. Talk about a double whammy!

2. On the audio you hear the strength of Martha in her voice.

Her voice is clear and focused. She obviously has discovered and called forth her internal resources to manage, care for herself and make crucial decisions during this trying time of her life.

It seems as if her husband handled the trauma differently.

Was the affair a form of avoidance? Was it his attempt to emotionally remove himself from Martha's pain and his own? Did he hit some sort of emotional wall with the affair being a misguided attempt, on one level, to cope?

We don't know, since Martha reports that he discloses little about his journey through her illness.

We do know that once Martha discovered the affair, he stopped cold turkey, stated he loved her and committed to the relationship.

3. The audio session with Martha occurs during a shift in their relationship.

Martha describes a recent history of anger, reactivity and fighting. Martha experienced flashbacks regarding the affair which often lead to accusations and anger pointed at him.

Those episodes have subsided.

Martha describes attempts to meet his needs. She tries to make life easier and better for him. She REALLY wants the marriage to work.

The relationship is also marked by Martha pursuing her husband, attempting to elicit affirmation from him.

Specifically, Martha needs to feel deep within her that she is wanted, emotionally, sexually, as a woman. She wants to feel and think of herself as beautiful.

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One can certainly understand this need. Meeting this need is crucial to Martha rebuilding her inner life.

Her husband is there, somewhat. When Martha pursues, asks questions, initiates intimacy or seeks affirmation from him, he typically backs away or withdraws.

His most telling statement: "I'm fearful of losing you, and cannot come too close." (Paraphrase)

There IS a tremendous risk in truly loving someone, because at some point you WILL lose that person. Truly loving someone is the most courageous act of your lifetime.

4. So, how do Martha and her husband recover from the affair, the removal of both breasts and build a life of deeper intimacy on all levels? How do they overcome the fear, confusion and pain?

Pursuing and distancing does not work.

Martha and I focus in the last few minutes of the session to focus on safer, perhaps more productive ways for her to approach her husband.

I teach Martha a way to state (by meta-commenting) what she really wants to say in a way that will be safe for both of them and invite his participation.

It would seem both want to collaboratively experience healing, but, at this point, aren't sure how to accomplish that.

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

- 👉 I liked Dr. Bob's suggestions of how Martha could approach a conversation with her husband. If one only speaks for themselves and gets no reply it is hard to have a conversation. I thought it was a good focus to try to gain more perspective on your partner's feelings, which is hard when a person is feeling stressed, afraid, and very wrapped up in their own problems and perspective.