

How to Break Free From The Affair!

19 Live Infidelity Coaching Sessions

With Dr. Robert Huizenga – The Infidelity Coach

Rebuilding Trust with a Husband Who Needs “Juice”

Workbook portion of audio tape with Terri

<http://www.break-free-from-the-affair.com>
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Part 1: Summary of Terri's Circumstances

Can trust and honesty ever be the cornerstone for a marriage, especially when he is starved for attention?

Terri and he are comfortable around each other and enjoy most of their time together. They can talk about the affair. They discuss with frequency the extent of the contact (he still talks to the OP) and what they would like to see happen in the marriage.

His affair pointed to powerful personal need for attention that "juices" his life. What is he going to do with that, now and in the future, when things "quiet down?"

How can Terri be certain that he has truly ended his relationship with the OP and is committed to a marriage with her based on integrity and trust?

Part 2: Dr. Huizenga's Review of the Coaching Session

1. Rebuilding trust in a marriage tarnished by infidelity often does not flow smoothly. In a herky-jerky fashion the couple attempts to first regain some equilibrium, declare expectations and move from there.

I inferred from Terri's comments that her husband was, for the most part, engaged in the "I Fell out of love...and just love being in love" affair and also touches of "I Can't Say No."

These two affair types intersect at his personal need system. She describes him as "high maintenance" or a very needy person. He needed consistent stroking and attention, of course, from the opposite sex.

His inability to manage his need system mirrors his inability to manage his relationships with the two women in his life. He therefore had a difficult time stopping the affair with the OP. Her aggressiveness in pursuing him fit nicely into his need for attention and flattery (even though she was sleeping with other men while seeing him).

So, he lacked the strength and internal fiber to cut off that relationship. It persisted off and on.

How could Terri trust him?

2. Terri was doing a masterful job of being consistent. You could TRUST that Terri meant what she said. Yes, she reacted and spewed a few times, but predictability and consistency was a hallmark of Terri.

She let him know in no uncertain terms that she would not share him.

She let him know that in no uncertain terms that the relationship with the OP had to stop.

Once she discovered he was continuing contact with the OP, she ushered him out the door. 6 weeks later he was back, pledging his allegiance.

But, Terri thought, "Would that last?"

3. This tape with Terri points to the power of personal needs.

Our personal needs are most powerful and destructive when they exist just beyond our awareness.

Terri's husband had a high personal need for attention. When he attempted to meet that need he received (or thought he received) the excitement, affirmation or the "juice" in his life.

Now the personal need for attention is not bad in and of itself. We all have personal needs that sometimes are front and center in our lives.

Most of us are not aware of the personal need that is driving our behavior, sometimes into territory that will demean, degrade or embarrass.

Such lack of awareness puts the personal need in the driver seat. It controls. We give our energy and hopes to the urge that pushes us to meet that need. Results, if not destructive, can be less than satisfactory.

Awareness of that personal need and willingness to embrace it and create constructive ways to meet it reduces it's power. WE are now in control of that need.

And, once we are in control of that need, feed it in positive, life-enhancing ways, it's power diminishes. We are then free to pursue who we really are, beneath our needs, and what we are truly here to create.

Terri's husband's capacity to address his personal need system will be instrumental in the trust building process.

4. Building trust means for Terri a shift away from a concern for what they (her husband and the OP) are doing or not doing. She begins to shift her focal point.

At this point, for Terri, references to that relationship are a dead end. He knows her position. He also knows that she will not tolerate that relationship. Terri instinctively knows when he is lying and cheating. I assessed that references to that relationship would only keep her stuck in "is he or is he not?"

The next move for Terri is to focus on her and her husband and to initiate new twists and turns that would get them thinking and talking about themselves and therefore the relationship.

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This would be the next step in creating new patterns for them.

5. Rebuilding trust means becoming more and more specific. It means discovery. It means digging. It means embracing the complexity. It means going into the unknown fearlessly. (Well, OK without some fear!)

I hear often these trust building practices and strategies (spoken or unspoken):

- Let's date. Let's go out and enjoy each other. Let's see if we can have fun together.
- I'm trying to be very nice. I'm trying to accommodate him/her. I won't raise my voice or be obnoxious.
- I promise to meet his/her need. What s/he wants will be the focal point of my life. Hopefully all will be better when we meet each other's needs.
- Couples talk, but they talk in generalities. Conversations go only so far before they fade.

They may work for a while. And, they are good starts. However they usually fall short. The underlying question "Can I really be safe, valued and who I REALLY AM in this relationship?" is not addressed. An underlying tension grates at the health of the relationship.

Terri and I discuss moving into the specifics of the relationship.

First, is he aware of his personal needs system? Can Terri help him in this awareness? Can the two of them discuss what he will do when it rears it's head? Can they run deeper, peeling off the layers of the onion until it feels like closure?

It is important that Terri not assume she knows what her husband is thinking or the content of his need system? She needs to be curious, open and willing to move down each layer. Each awareness or insight leads to another.

And once you get there, you will know it and concern over trust will be no more.

6. Terri and I talk about an assignment. I suggest she spend the next month or two exploring her own needs for trust and integrity? Where do these come from? How have they been woven through her life?

What are the memories and images they hold for her?

What image does she have being in a relationship tightly and warmly bound by an agreement of trust and integrity? What will that look like? Specifically? What will she do? How will she feel? What are the pictures that come to her mind?

Once she immerses herself in these thoughts she can disclose her findings to her husband. This is her powerful statement of who she is.

Two things might happen (probably more): She will know by his response his capacity and desire to enter into such a relationship and her self-disclosure may trigger more self disclosure from him regarding his vision for the relationship.

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

- ▶ Insist on stopping all contact.
- ▶ I don't know if I can be of assistance in this one. Because personally I haven't found or truly believe he is remorseful or trusting yet in my relationship. He says so, and I do see signs that he is doing actions that show those things. But I'm not sure if it's sincere, or if it's a cover up and will change at some point. So, I suppose the only thing I can say is does he seem to be doing actions that seem that he cares for you, and is supportive of your needs? Does he seems sincere for change?
- ▶ Terri's situation is quite similar although my husband who is still with the other woman is not quite sure if he would like to be back with me and our children. He keeps saying that every day he is a step closer to coming home but I'm not sure how long that might take, and also if I really want him back if this is going to go on and on. He spends alot of his time with us and I keep thinking 'you have moved out and have more or less choosen her - why do you still want to spend so much time with us?' But there are 3 kids involved and I do know he loves them very much. And he does not want me to let go of our relationship because he cannot make up his mind - he is very much like Terri's partner, very needy and also very much a thinker always analysing everything.
- ▶ I told him he needed to make a choice as she did not like the situation any better than I did, you hopping from her bed to ours and she does not want to share you anymore than I do. I also told him to leave since he had somewhere else to go and I did not, he said it was his home also and he was not going. Now he says it's over after 2 1/2 plus years and he is sorry it took him so long to find out and it should have never happened in the first place. I said nothing, what's to say most marriages don't last as long as his affair did.
- ▶ I stated to him that I would not tolerate his relationship with another woman. If he wanted her than he needed to leave and go be with her. If there was going to be another person in our marriage, it would be the Lord. He started to come home and be the man he should be and then he would lie and cheat again. Even though I had stood up for what I believed and drew the

line, I was not ready for it emotionally, even though I thought that I was. I am very trusting and so I believed his lies. He did every thing possible to "see if he could fall in love with me again". He wanted more excitement and he too was very "needy" and extremely "high maintenance"... his way or the high way. Eventually, I got fed up with the lies and after trying everything again to follow the Dr's advice..... I stepped "over nothing" and drew the line again. This time I was ready and packed his bags and told him to make a decision. He could unpack his bags and stay and be the husband, friend and lover with me that he should be..... or he could leave and go "find himself"..... or third choice go and be with her..... I did not care anymore. I had responsibilities to our daughter and to myself. It was no longer his way. He did not control my life and I would not share him ever again. He left..... sometimes that is the best thing to do..... Now after 8 months he is testing the water with me..... he wants to know if I still care about him and talks like he wants to come back in the future..... I told him that I would know when he was serious because he would not be with her anymore..... and he would be on his own..... then "maybe" we would talk..... right now we do not have that kind of relationship and the divorce is in progress. I had to draw the line for me..... I had to be sure that I knew exactly what it was that "I" wanted so that he knew exactly what to expect. I told him before I packed his stuff that the game was over. I would not play at being married and I would not be walked on.

- ▶ I accepted and had to verbally assure my spouse that I understood that letting go of a relationship with the OP would be a hard habit to break. - I haven't given up either. I still have a hope for a possible future.
- ▶ Yes, it is similar. The only thing that was helpful for me was to clearly and firmly stand up for my needs in front of my boyfriend. This was not easy at all, as he has a way to turn things on to his own needs and not mine and I suddenly found myself talking about what he wants or needs or even the other person feelings, and not my trust concerns. We reach a dead end whenever he does it, and I have learned that the only thing for me to do then is to stick to my own convictions and decisions and not give in to his neediness or attacks. I have been through long periods of separation and I even thought I had lost him, but in the end he came back and it has been the only way he understood that to be to be with me he has to be loyal to me.

- ▶ Situation very similar For a year- contacts with her still going on. Lives very far- so no meeting for the moment Unfortunately, I havent yet told him I know that he still contacts her, but planning soon
- ▶ She said the same things I have been saying that 1. that we will have no interact as long as he still seeing the other person except for the exchange of kids during parent time. That I can trust not him anymore.

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

- ▶ Stay the course on "no tolerance" of contact with OP.
- ▶ Continue to hold him accountable. 2. Be available to him when he needs some attention. But let him know that he may need a male mentor or some other activities without you or another female so he can be responsible.
- ▶ Open, honest communication is key.
- ▶ That I do not believe that love in a relationship is enough... there has to be more to make it work. There has to be communication and devotion to a relationship to make it work.. Commitment.
- ▶ Terri understands that her husband is high maintenance, but I never did hear anything from her about a desire to fill in some gaps for him....to take the place of the needs the 20 yr. old is filling. She is focused on "integrity". And, rightfully so. But, in the integrity search, there needs to be a discovery of how to start anew with "what is left" as she put it. He needs to find ways to deal with urges to get "juice". Terri can help him find ways as they talk all of this through. They can both bring in ideas and then work on them together. He can agree to let her know he feels a need for juice and she will agree to give him some in whatever form fills his needs.
- ▶ Know what you want in and from life and from your partner only then can you really rebuild your relationship - because you will be true to yourself.
- ▶ Trust is broken, emotional feelings destroyed, intimacy is nil, conversation is just general, he cannot be honest, lies so well, degrading comments and foul mouth, anger, arrogance and defiance is predominant in his way of talking to me I feel it is a control thing with him as he is afraid that if he talks to me honestly he does not know what to expect, feels no guilt or remorse if he does it does not show nor does he talk about it, of course it was all my fault. I also asked why didn't you just go and his answer was why do you think, I told him I had no idea. I think he wanted me to say something like you love me. I think he was surprised at my answer. For Terri, I think she is a lady

who wants what we all want a honest loving man and she is willing to work at it but it takes two and if she can't have that like us all we are better off cutting the ties and pressing on with our own lives and I think she can do this as we all can with time. It's her game now and the ball is in her park. Trying to talk to someone even though they talk they really don't say anything (the cheater) they are in their own little world of fantasy, the melt down of mid life crisis for a male can be devastating, I'm getting older don't know what I want, blah. They know what they have done and if they cannot come to terms with it and make it better as no contact with the other person and if he is it's time she rethinks her position. The cake and eat it to, the red sports car syndrome, they can't have it both ways it does not work. I know from what happened here it's to much on them all the way around they cannot emotionally handle it and neither can we. His health is now catching up with him he is reaping the benefits of his relationship/affair and it is not good.

► Good for you for drawing the line and stating that you would not tolerate his cheating or the other person. You should try all of the steps that Dr. Bob has outlined. They are great guidelines and I know that they work..... But, once you draw the line be prepared for what may come next..... Sounds like the other woman is really pressing for what she wants and has no regards for marriage... she is probably like "my" situation and does not want to "give up a good thing" and will continue to try to stay in the picture until he finally makes up his mind and is the one to finally end it..... and that has to happen.... Terri will not be able to change him; he must change himself.... she needs to focus on her and what she needs..... The trust can only come once he is trustworthy.... She will know.... there won't be any more doubts... he has to build the trust by being the kind of a man that can be trusted.... it should not be about his "wantiness" and "neediness".... he needs to give too and help fulfill some of her needs and then it will help her want to return the favor so to speak.....

► I think she is managing the whole situation pretty well. I think she has to identify situations and behaviors that she wants from him and the ones that she will not accept, clearly make her point on that and be firm. I.e., she should not accept him talking about the OP's needs. Anytime he does so, she should end the conversation and walk away, and the same with the rest of

things she needs/wants to be able to trust him again. That's my opinion.

- ▶ Dont give up, but it is good that she tells him how she feel - Tell him it is unacceptable- choice to make, it is a barrier to getting back their relationship together.
- ▶ Things can seem o.k. on the surface but that some things are going that are unspoken and unmet under the surface. They are living in a fantasy world about love.

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

- ▶ Once her ideas were "out" (she spoke them to you during the session) you rephrased them in useful ways: "this is who I am and this is who you are and how can we balance the two?"
- ▶ It is very important to know each others needs.
- ▶ Well, again, I'm not sure.. as it's where I am in life right now as well. All of these things sound so familiar and along the same line of infidelity and all have the same underlying themes.
- ▶ It was helpful to me to listen to this again, as I didn't take notes. Thank-you for all your work Dr. Bob!
- ▶ That there are others out there that are going through the same ordeal and a lot of these situations are very similar. Thank you very much for this website it has helped me so much.
- ▶ How to pose a question in a different manner was the best and I will use this also how to position myself and tell him what I want to change and there are allot of things at this point. He says he wants to spend the rest of his life with me and I flat out asked him if I should even trust him or if I even could. One thing I will never get is how he just put it in a neat little box and expected me to do the same thing like it never happened and he is a great guy. Where does this mind set come from that all is well in paradise. He listens to me but he does not hear me.
- ▶ It helps me remember the skills that I have gained and to keep things focused for myself.
- ▶ Realizing I need to ask my husband what his emergency plan will be when he needs to feel "juiced" and a woman comes around when I am not... Great question, Dr. Bob.
- ▶ I feel comforted in a way. It is very sad that other people are going through such a pain, but it helps me to know that i am not alone. I also found very helpful the advice of focusing on what I want from my life and how I would picture my ideal relationship. I think it is important to be able to proudly and loudly say "this is me, this is what I want and I won't settle down for less". It is not pride, it is self esteem, and it is quite fragile when you have

been betrayed. Many times when I have been through all the pain and distress, I have really lost my direction and I have given into things that deep inside I knew were not acceptable. It never turned out right for me. Better to lose someone else than to lose your sense of self. I hope my comments can help. Sorry for my English, I am a Spanish girl. If I can make one suggestion, it would be very useful for all of us non English people to have access to a transcription of the tapes. Some things are difficult to understand. Thank you.

- ▶ I have learned that in similar situations all over I must also face him and ask him to stop all this contact with her. He is very loving to me and this is why it is difficult for me.
- ▶ That her husband likes the "juice" two women who want him. That he needs attention from other women.