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Recovery from your partner having an Affair

Discovering that your partner is having an affair is one of the most painful discoveries a person can make. The pain is often increased if your partner had the affair with someone you are close to or who you know. You are forced to make decisions you don't want to make; you have to deal with your own feelings and you have to deal with what this means for your relationship. Everyone manages this differently and there are no blanket rules which apply to everyone. Two areas to consider after an affair are your own personal recovery and the possible recovery of your relationship.

For your personal recovery it may be helpful to:

- ◆ Talk. It is important that you find supportive people who you can share your feelings and thoughts with. It is important that this takes priority over your partner's shame about their secret getting out. Share your feelings, your thoughts about your partner's behaviour, how you will get through the next days and weeks and what plans you are thinking of making for the future.
- ◆ You have been lied to and betrayed and you deserve to know the truth. If you want to know details about the affair then it is your right to know.
- ◆ Give yourself plenty of time to heal. There is no way to short cut the process of experiencing your feelings.
- ◆ Try to find out more about affairs and the complex reasons for people having affairs. While you may develop a new understanding of difficulties your partner was experiencing in your relationship, always remember that they chose to have an affair and that it is not your fault.

If you want to continue your relationship it may be helpful to consider:

- ◆ You need to be able to clearly share your feelings about your partner's behavior with your partner. You need to discover together how you can both clearly talk about strong feelings without being hurtful or abusive.

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- ◆ Your partner needs to answer all your questions about the affair. This includes discussing how they met the person, how they went about deceiving you, what measures were taken to protect against Sexually Transmitted Infections and whatever questions run through your mind.
- ◆ Your partner needs to sever all contact with person they had the affair with.
- ◆ You and your partner need to develop an understanding of how the affair happened and take practical steps to avoid it ever happening again. This may involve making practical lifestyle changes or considering what aspects of your relationship need strengthening.
- ◆ Your partner needs to deal productively with your understandable suspicions in the future.
- ◆ You and your partner need to accept that it will take a long time for you to trust them again.

Please feel free to contact Life Supports on 1300 735 030 if you would like to discuss your situation with a professional counsellor. You can find more information about Life Supports services by visiting www.lifesupports.com.au.