

To Survive an Affair and Save your Marriage Do Not Do This! From Cary, Crystal Lake and Huntley, IL

When trying to get your spouse back do not say, I have changed! That's right. In an attempt to persuade your spouse to stop an affair or mend your relationship, you may want to use the following ploy: I am not the person I used to be. I have changed and I am different. Well, it may be true in the sense that your behavior may really be different, these days at least a lot of the time. After all, you may find yourself attempting to accommodate your spouse in ways you never tried before or you may be altering your behavior to fit what he or she wants you to do. However, the following are real holes in this strategy: Are you sure it is really true? Have you really changed or are you merely in a reactive mode, responding in a knee-jerk way? People do often react to painful situations by trying on different behaviors. This approach can be commendable because it can take a lot of energy and thought to drastically change some aspect of your behavior. If you practice your new changes they may gradually take and become a real part of you. However, these types of changes usually lack staying power because they are really a sudden knee-jerk reaction to the crisis in your relationship. Ultimately, you know it and so does your spouse. You are likely to return to your old patterns, as the heat on your relationship diminishes. Most likely, your spouse will know this and think that the changes will never last and are only a ploy to get him or her back once again. These changes are often viewed by spouses as merely desperate attempts to manipulate the situation. Your partner's initial reaction will be to resent these changes, even though they are what he/she has been requesting for a very long time. If she or he had been disappointed by false promises before, the resulting resentful feelings may even be greater now and more distance may actually emerge. In this kind of situation, you are likely to lose credibility because your partner will find believing you too difficult; he or she will simply be too exhausted to know what to believe. In most affairs and episodes of infidelity, confusion is the first feeling to rise to the top. Since your spouse is likely to be very confused about what he/she wants, you are only adding to that confusion by faking or trying on these new behaviors. The message your spouse is getting will be muddled. He or she may even begin losing respect for you. Bottom line: relationship partners usually do not want their spouses, or others for that matter, to bend over backwards to please or placate them. That kind of strategy is usually not respected because it suffers from a lack of backbone which spouses want their mates to have. It can appear to your partner that you are void of a core self and lack the strong identity necessary to take a firm stand. That is unattractive and is not what most spouses want in a partner. What is the most common sentiment I hear expressed in counseling? How can you change so easily now, when you fought me tooth and nail when I wanted you to change years ago? Well, your partner may feel that it is just too late now. He or she may even experience some sadness or resentment as he/she encounters your new behavior, thinking about what could have been, but is no longer seen as possible. Does any of this ring a bell? Well, the truth is: If your partner is engaged in infidelity and blames it on you and the bad marriage, do not fall for it! It is just a simplistic cop-out. The answer to saving a marriage wracked by infidelity is not to blame one's partner, but to participate in joint counseling which gets to the bottom of things. Counseling provides each of you with a forum to accept your own responsibility for each part of the problem, to evaluate alternatives and to commit to meaningful solutions.

About the Author

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