

Affair
Recovery
Center

Affair Recovery Times

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The Founder's Corner

"Steady, It Could Be God"

David was once again on the run with his mighty men. He had just received a message stating "that the hearts of the men of Israel are with Absalom." His son was leading a national rebellion against him. David moved quickly, afraid that Absalom would overtake him in Jerusalem and kill those in the city, so he organized a hasty retreat. History records that just to ride with David a man had to have personally killed 700 men in a single battle. So these men riding with David were proud warriors. The thought of tucking tail and running must have been distasteful, as these were men who lived to fight. It's against this backdrop that David's heart is revealed.

Shemei, a relative of the late King Saul confronted David as he rode in retreat with his band of warriors. As they rode, he threw rocks at David and his special guard, cursing the king and shouting that he was getting what he deserved. The troops seethed, wondering how this insolent dog could dare curse the king. David's men waited in anticipation. "Just give us the nod," they thought, "and we'll rid the world of this blight."

It had already been a very bad day and finally here was an object on which they could unleash their rage and frustration. How dare Shemei curse the man to whom they had sworn allegiance and for whom

they would die! But instead of a nod they got an unusual response from their leader. "Steady men, steady. It could be God. It could be God."

The impact of betrayal in a marriage is not dissimilar to the situation in which David found himself: betrayed by family, a home under threat, and accusations coming from within and without. These are seemingly hopeless situations. How do you respond? If you judge the situation from the world's perspective, and look to you own ability and resources, if you see this situation as the source of your misery, then hope will be hard to find. That perspective links your peace and happiness to the outcome of the crisis.

In that mindset, the only way you will find resolution is if things turn out the way that you have judged as appropriate. If things turn out any way other than the "right way," then you lose your peace and joy, and in a sense the situation or your mate's betrayal becomes bigger than God.

If on the other hand we choose to see God in this seemingly impossible situation, then new possibilities appear. It could be God. What is the Almighty up to? How is He going to use this in your life as

well as in the life of your spouse to bring about his good purposes? God isn't the cause of your situation, but He did permit it and He will use it as a way to draw us near to him.

As a boy I loved Captain Kangaroo and one of my favorite parts of the show was the artist. Captain Kangaroo would draw an ugly scribble on the board as a challenge to him. The talented artist would study the scribble and begin to draw around the seemingly meaningless mark. To the artist, something was revealed by that doodling and he would incorporate it into a magnificent drawing.

The once-ugly mark was now impossible to distinguish from the beautiful whole.

I believe that is exactly how God operates in our lives when those ugly marks appear. He takes the evil that has invaded our lives and works it into His will and works it into His plan. I really don't know what's good or bad, only God does, and as long as I can remember that, things are never out of control. As I keep God as my focus rather than my mate or the situation in our marriage, then I can still experience peace even in the darkest hour. Let's try to see Him in everything. Steady, it could be God!

The story of Absalom and David can be found in 2 Samuel 15



Founder Rick Reynolds

Harboring Hope

In our last installment of this feature, we heard the story of Kay, who described in detail the course of her husband's betrayal, and the couple's painful yet growth-producing road to recovery. In this month's installment, we feature the response of Kay's husband, Andrew, who in a letter shares his feelings about his wife and the journey to recovery.

Dearest Kay,

Two years ago today, I shattered your world to pieces, leaving you devastated and forever changing the way you look at everything in your life now.

I don't know if February 4th is a day that should be celebrated or reviled. I guess it needs to be recognized for what it was...the beginning of healing for me, but the beginning of hurting for you.

Isn't that ironic! For me to begin to get my life back, you had to take on the pain and hurt of my indiscretions. Sounds an awful lot like what Jesus did for us on the cross!

Thank you for showing me Jesus through your life in the last 2 years. God continues to bless our family for

what you have done and what you continue to do every day. I am so humbled at the thought of all the marriages that have ended because of the same things I've done, yet God has chosen ours to continue. It seems to continue not only to show our kids what God's love is truly about, but possibly to show that love to other hurting couples going through the same mess. What a wonderful thing! So, February 4th was a "defining" moment in both of our lives. Were we going to shrivel up and fall to the wayside of casualties or were we going to stand up, move up, and move on with God?

February 4th was a beginning-- a beginning to truly seek and see God's purpose for our lives. Isn't God so good in how He works through our tragedies? You have helped so many people already through this and I know there are many more to come. It's exciting to watch God work through you. I know it's not exactly what you would have wished for your life, and I cannot just excuse away all the things I have done in the past. I am still so sorry for what I have done. I know I have been forgiven (undeservedly) by

both of you.

I wish I could have another shot at my life and our marriage from the beginning, so I could choose to do things with integrity. I continue to seek God to release me 100% from this struggle. I praise Him for the miracle He has already done in my life. I thank Him for a wife like you-- one who continues to stick by me. Besides all the wonderful

qualities that make you unique, it is this that I am most grateful for, and that makes you stand out the most. Your willingness to stay and fight the good fight, day in and day out, allowing God to work through you--that is unique! There are so many people watching that know this about you

now, but no one more than I! I love you, honey. I love our life together. "If there hadn't been you, all my dreams would still be dreams."

Thank God for February 4th, 2002!

Your husband always,

Andrew

Compiled by Leslie Hardie



Marriage Builders

How long has it been since you and your wife have had a real date? I'm not talking about a quick meal out, a couple's gathering at church, or catching a movie on the fly with the family. I'm talking about a real date-- the kind you used to set up in high school where you really put some thought behind it.

In our busy lives, taking real time to celebrate the relationship with our spouses sometimes gets put on the back burner, or gets squeezed off the plate altogether. For many couples, watching the late movie on television or reading together in bed becomes their best effort at quality time. And often, when couples do take the time for a real night on the town, it seems like a novelty.

We suggest making a regular date time a priority in your relationship, and that it should be part of your weekly calendar with the same importance given to it as the kids' ballgames, functions at church, or your favorite team playing on Monday Night Football. You might even consider making one night of the week date night, and protecting it at all costs.

That said, a real date does not have to be a real drain on your pocketbook. While seeing a touring Broadway show can be nice, there are lots of cheaper dates that can

be just as rewarding. You can have sacred and protected time with your spouse by taking a late night walk through the park after sharing an ice cream downtown, or you can drive out to the country late to watch a meteor shower over a bottle of your favorite wine. Use your imagination!

We also recommend that husband and wife take turns in planning your date time to keep both

people involved, and to add an element of fun in your planning. See how many new ways you can think of to show your spouse how special they are!

You might even consider making one night of the week date night and protecting it at all costs.

The Parent's Place

Give them Shelter?

While listening to sports radio yesterday, I heard a parent call in who had been at Dodger Stadium with his young son enjoying a baseball game. Unfortunately, he was sitting in the section where a fan threw a bottle at a player, who in turn charged into the stands and screamed challenges for the person who threw it, to fight him then and there. The "F" word was being thrown around liberally by player and fans alike in front of this child, and this nationally televised incident made the parent wonder if it was safe to take his boy to a ballgame anymore? He bemoaned that life was never like that when his own father had taken him to games.

Scenes like this are becoming increasingly common, and not just at sporting events. While waiting for a ride at Disneyland with my daughter, I saw a group of loud and profanity-spewing teenagers close to us in line passing around and licking a postage stamp, a common way to store and ingest hallucinogenic drugs. There was no security in sight, and I became frustrated and angered that even a place as innocent as Disneyland seemed unable to completely provide a safe atmosphere for children anymore. So what is a parent to do when even the once-

sacred spaces of childhood are prone to violence, drugs, and profanity? Do we give up and move the family to a cave?

The reality is that living requires being in this world (if not of this world), with all of its flaws and imperfections, and hard as we try, we will never be able to completely keep our kids insulated from sin. Indeed, while we as parents need to make prayerful choices about where we will take our kids, we are doing them no favors if we adopt a shelter mentality in which we completely try to shield them from the world. Instead, we are better served by teaching our children to make godly choices, and to face the challenges of living prayerfully in daily life. While we don't ever want to put our children in harm's way, sheltering them too much will deprive kids of the chance to develop skills for facing evil in the world before they leave home. Think of it this way, a child who has never had a common cold is much more likely to be

prone to serious illness because they never had the chance to build their natural defenses. Spiritual health is no different, and helping children to learn to react positively to the bad things around them can actually build their soul defenses.

Make no mistake, that doesn't mean that a parent should intentionally expose their kids to unhealthy situations (like adult movies or dangerous people), but rather that they should help them deal with situations as they naturally arise in day-to-day life.

No matter where we send our kids, there will be sin—that is unavoidable, even when we make the best decisions we can as parents. I have worked with some seriously disturbed teenagers who attended Christian schools (where other parents sent their kids specifically to avoid such troubled youth), Earth is not heaven, and never will be, but that doesn't mean that we have to run from life with our kids while we are here.

By Dr. John Mark Haney

So what is a parent to do when even the once-sacred spaces of childhood are prone to violence, drugs, and profanity?

Rick's Reality Check

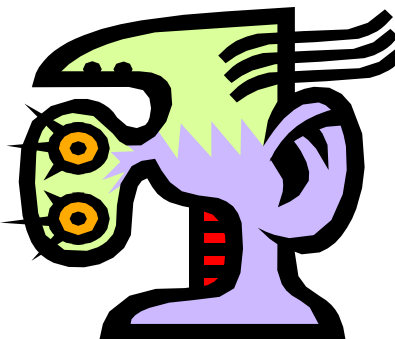
In this series, Rick Reynolds exposes some of the myths, faulty rationales, and excuses people make for engaging in affairs.

Reality Check #3: Emotional Decisions are never our best decisions.

If you don't believe that this is true, consider the times you've made an emotional buying decision. How many of those decisions have been your best? If you're like me, the majority of those choices have been serious mistakes. When lost in emotions, we lose the ability to be rational, and who can deny the power of the emotions involved in an affair or sexual addiction? I have seen sane, grown men whose wisdom I greatly respect do things that are totally insane. In fact, in our society, we actually make excuses for those

who are "in love" and label their insane behavior as "romantic," when in reality, family and fortune are being sacrificed for "true love."

Interestingly enough, we laugh pityingly at people caught in the snare of greed who fall prey to the wiles of a con artist. We commit to never allowing ourselves to be so duped as to lose large sums of money on obvious scams; however, the same emotional forces that seduce those vulnerable individuals are the very ones that ensnare those involved in affairs and addictions.



In the midst of an affair, sane, logical individuals begin to experience feelings that far exceed normal emotional states. The problem is, in such states, we make radical and irrational decisions about the future; decisions that affect not only our lives, but also radically affect the lives of those who are connected to us. It's frightening to have to live with the consequences of the decisions made in a state of virtual insanity.

For a full copy of the e-book from which this article came, visit affairrecovery.com.



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**AFFAIR RECOVERY
CENTER**

*A Community of Hope and
Healing*

We're on the Web

www.affairrecovery.com



Affair Recovery Center is a community of counseling professionals and couples. Our professional counselors are dedicated to the restoration of marriages crippled by infidelity. Our organization includes numerous couples who have experienced the abundant blessings of reconciliation and renewal.

Our mission is to offer hope, support, and recovery for couples and individuals who have suffered the pain resulting from infidelity, betrayal, or sexual addiction.

From the Editor's Desk

We are in the midst of exciting times at the Affair Recovery Center as we adjust to our ongoing growing pains and mature as an organization. As our community continues to grow, so does our desire to find new ways to reach out to those who have been affected by infidelity and sexual addiction. My desire is that this newsletter will be a source of hope, information, and healing to those who are making the recovery journey and will also speak to those who simply want to build a healthier marriage and family lifestyle.

As such, I welcome any comments you have about the newsletter, as well as any suggestions for what you would like to see covered in its pages. The Affair Recovery Center serves many different people who may be dealing with very different issues, and we want to provide the most useful information that we can.

Also, if you have your own story that you would like to

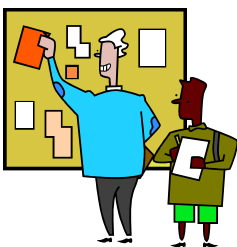


Dr. John Mark Haney

share, please do not hesitate to contact us at the Center. We would love to hear from you.

One of the great truths about healing from infidelity or sexual addiction is to keep yourself from becoming isolated. Many people have been where you are now, and connecting with others who can empathize with your situation is a tremendous step forward in the healing process. Best wishes, and God bless...

The Bulletin Board



We are proud to offer new therapeutic web courses on a variety of topics. Log on at www.affairrecovery.com for a list of offerings.

A hard copy version of the Affair Recovery Times is available for subscription. Please contact us for rates and information.

The professionals at the Affair Recovery Center offer numerous seminars for groups and organizations. Call us or visit us online for a list of lengths and topics. We can also tailor a seminar or retreat to your needs.