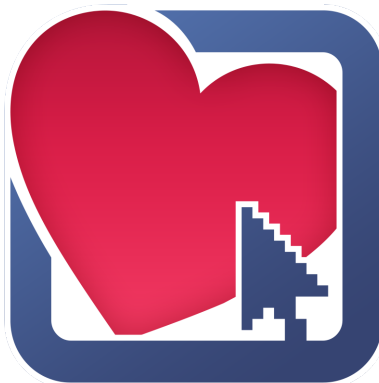


Surviving The Affair

A Digital Romance Special Report

By Claire Casey



Website: <http://www.DigitalRomanceInc.com>
Email: support@digitalromanceinc.com

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Surviving The Affair

CLAIRE CASEY: Hi everybody, this is Claire Casey, and today I am talking with Dr. Bob Huizenga, who is a marriage and family therapist and author of *Break Free From The Affair*. And he will tell you himself that no number of professional degrees or years of experience or letters after your name—and he has plenty of those—means that your marriage or relationship is immune from trouble. He's had it, just like every committed relationship has [had] it. He understands the pain and the confusion and fears around this topic that we're going to talk about today. His program, *Break Free From The Affair* teaches people about the seven different kinds of affairs, and this is what kind of wowed me, how you can accurately predict your future and the future of the affair by pinpointing and understanding the dynamics of the one you're dealing with. He has a neat course called *How to Save Your Marriage* at saveamarriageforever.com and he does plenty of live coaching sessions and has just helped thousands of women and men understand, work through, and heal their relationships. So, welcome to you, Dr. Huizenga!

DR. HUIZENGA: Thank you Claire, glad I'm here.

CLAIRE CASEY: He's here to talk to us today about cheating. Big topic, important topic, something he knows a lot about from dealing with so many different couples around the world. He's going to share with us the one indicator that will let you know if your man is cheating. He will also show us how we can predict the odds of his cheating, and he'll answer three enormous questions. And those are: Is it true that once a cheater, always a cheater? You guys have heard that said before. Also, number two: How can you prevent him from cheating? And finally: What's the first step you take if you discover your man cheating? But before we begin, Dr. Huizenga, maybe you can help us just by giving us a handle on what cheating is. Can you define it so that we're all talking about the same thing? And also tell us if it applies to committed but unmarried couples.

DR. HUIZENGA: Sure thing. Cheating applies in any relationship of what I call emotional investment: so if you have a relationship of emotional investment, be it that you're married or dating with someone with the intent of having a committed

relationship. Cheating is involved when primarily there are secrets. In all my work with people, I've had some 25,000 hours in direct face-to-face talking with people about their marriage, about relationships, the thing that pops out to me, that sticks out to me when people enter into the realm of cheating, is that cheating involves secrets. And the spouse who is cheated upon often says, "I've been betrayed. I've been cheated. I didn't know this was happening. He's lied to me." And the lies are almost worse than the fact that he may be sexually acting out with someone else. Secrets are powerful. Secrets kill relationships, I believe. So that whole area of secrets, betrayal, I think, defines the power and the pain of cheating or infidelity.

CLAIRE CASEY: You know, sorry for interrupting you, I just gotta say it's funny you should say the thing about secrecy, because it's what gets me so frustrated. I was watching episodes of *Downton Abbey*, sort of the hot TV show I guess, and I had downloaded it and I thought, "You know, these people would not be having this problem if they would just tell each other." You know? If they wouldn't keep the secret, which I know people are laughing at me now and saying, "But that's what drove the whole plot!" And I hate that.

DR. HUIZENGA: That's the drama of it too, you know? And many of us are addicted to drama. We see it on TV, so we think life should be like that.

CLAIRE CASEY: And that just feeds the cheating.

DR. HUIZENGA: Oh yeah, sure.

CLAIRE CASEY: Oh, that's a shame. Okay, let me go back and clarify something. You said that you defined [cheating] by any time there's an emotional investment, and even in unmarried couples with people who had the intent to commit. In other words, people who weren't exclusive yet, but who were talking about being exclusive? Say more about that.

Dr. Huizenga: Okay. I think when you're in a relationship, when a person's in a relationship and they see it as exclusive, in other words I believe... I expect that at some point in this relationship, and maybe right now, I will be the only person that you are emotionally connected with to the degree... to an intense degree.

CLAIRE CASEY: Okay, and you have to have this explicitly agreed upon, right? That's what I would guess, 'cause otherwise, 'cause like most women will say, "Well, I'm committed to him," and yet they have explicitly agreed with the guy, and the guy's like, "Well, I didn't say I was committed. I'm playing the field."

DR. HUIZENGA: Exactly. That's an issue, sure.

CLAIRE CASEY: So, okay, so anyway...

DR. HUIZENGA: She sees it as cheating and he doesn't.

CLAIRE CASEY: Right. Right. So it might be important just to say you guys, all of you who are in relationships and you don't know whether you're in a committed relationship or you think that you are and don't know if he is, then you may not be in a committed relationship. So find out. Have the conversation.

DR. HUIZENGA: Yeah, let's take that a step further then, and say what's important for you is to talk about your expectations regarding the relationship and listen to him as he explains his expectations, and also talk about boundaries in the relationship. What are the boundaries? What kind of expectations do we have about where lines are going to be drawn?

CLAIRE CASEY: Yes.

DR. HUIZENGA: That might be difficult to talk about, especially in the beginning stages of a relationship, but at some point I think that has to be in the back of your mind if you are concerned about trust.

CLAIRE CASEY: Right, okay good. Thanks for taking some time on that. So now we're still looking at a definition of cheating, where you have this kind of emotional commitment within a committed relationship.

DR. HUIZENGA: With a relationship with intense emotional involvement.

CLAIRE CASEY: Okay. Excellent. And this applies definitely to not just married couples, but couples who have said very clearly, "This is what our relationship looks like." Can you include or maybe segue for a second into internet cheating?

DR. HUIZENGA: Okay, sure.

CLAIRE CASEY: And just talk to us about what that looks like, how that...

DR. HUIZENGA: Yeah that's a great segue, because my experience with internet cheating—and it happens a tremendous amount—is that men see it much differently than women. For men, men who are involved in internet cheating, let's be fine with that maybe, okay? Internet cheating may be involvement in chat rooms, it may be may have dating sites that they are members of, may be pornography. I know a number of men...I've talked to a number of men who have a list of women that they contact via the internet and all different sorts of relationships. So for men, and they often say, "That's no big deal. It's just a game." And often, they see it as a game. Whereas a woman, I believe—and I don't always like using stereotypes—but it's more an issue of trust and again, breaking some...breaking down some expectations and boundaries that she thought were in the relationship. So I think there's a huge difference in how the genders approach internet relationships, let's call them, internet relationships of different varieties.

CLAIRE CASEY: So, what's the key to figuring out how to navigate with that? Is it still just what you were saying before, being real clear about your expectations and your boundaries?

DR. HUIZENGA: Right, and I think also, talk about—if you can, at some point in your relationship—what the fantasies are. What the sexual fantasies are. Pay attention to the degree and growth of intimacy in a marriage or in a relationship. Because often, internet cheating is a way for someone to play out their fantasies or their illusions about relationships. It's a way for them sometimes to explore their own sexual identity. So if those issues can be talked about without having to go to the internet and act out, or play them out in some kind of fantasy, that would be ideal in a relationship. Yeah, okay, I think I've said enough on that, I think.

CLAIRE CASEY: No, I think that's very to the point and very helpful to all of us and everyone listening. So okay, to shift back to when you and I first spoke about this, you said that there was one indicator that will let you know if a man is cheating. What is that indicator?

DR. HUIZENGA: Your internal response to that person will tell you. It's very, very accurate. I would 90% of the time...

CLAIRE CASEY: Wow.

DR. HUIZENGA: Is letting a person know that the other person is cheating. Here's what happens often: I've dealt with a lot of people who discover that their spouse is cheating or their partner is cheating and they have a tremendous desire to know what happened. They want the details. They want to go back and they want to know when did you first meet, you know, when did you first have sex? What was it like? What exactly do you see in this other person? And there's often a tremendous, tremendous need to know and the reason why the betrayed spouse needs to know so many details is that she—let's say she for example—is working on the capacity to trust her own intuition, because way back when, when he was beginning to cheat, she knew it. Her gut said, "Something's not quite right here." But she didn't say anything, okay? Because you know, it's really hard to bring stuff up like that 'cause most of us don't want to even face that fact. So she says, "I need to know what happened on July 9, because on July 9, I remember just feeling miserable all day. You came home and something within me went kinda crazy and I need to know what that was." So our intuition is very, very powerful. Knowing the truth of the more subtle aspects of what's happening around us. And if you can learn to trust your intuition or your gut, you will know.

CLAIRE CASEY: Is that true for guys, too?

DR. HUIZENGA: Yes.

CLAIRE CASEY: Do they have gut instinct over it?

DR. HUIZENGA: Of course. Men are no different than women in many ways.

CLAIRE CASEY: Because I think of women as being much more tuned into the subtle flow of emotion and the unspoken stuff that's going on. I think of guys as being much more...

DR. HUIZENGA: Guys are just as intuitive and emotional as women.

CLAIRE CASEY: Really? Wow.

DR. HUIZENGA: They just show it differently. They cope differently with it, let's put it that way. Men, when they discover... most men, when they discover that their partner's having an affair, they become basket cases. I mean it is totally, totally devastating, and feelings are all over the place. Men have strong feelings.

CLAIRE CASEY: Well I know they have strong feelings, I didn't mean to, yeah, say they didn't. But yeah, I was curious about their intuition, and you're saying yes, in fact they have the ability, just like we always brag about how women have it, guys have it too. They sense it even if they can't or don't maybe express it in the same way we do.

DR. HUIZENGA: Yeah. I think that's true Claire, sure.

CLAIRE CASEY: Well are there... so if the one indicator is your gut, are there other signs as well?

DR. HUIZENGA: Sure. There are a lot of signs. Usually it depends upon your partner. I think another key is if you begin to notice different behaviors. Patterns change. It's more sex or it's less sex or it's different kinds of sex. A frequent utterance is if the cheating spouse or cheating partner does indeed give you a hint, the phrase is often, "I'm not quite sure I'm in love with you anymore." That's often an indication that there may be someone else in that person's life. Again, there are a lot of different clues that you can pick up on, but the big ones are, "My intuition tells me something is really off, something's changing," and then you begin to notice changes in behaviors. And it's usually a person who takes... makes a shift in almost 180 degrees. For example, someone who was maybe more withdrawn maybe becomes even more withdrawn or becomes more involved in certain ways. Someone who gets more angry. The anger is used to push you away. So there are a lot of different behaviors, but the bottom line is the behavior is different than what you're normally accustomed to.

CLAIRE CASEY: Now you said something just a minute ago, the phrase, "I'm not sure I'm in love with you anymore," do even established still associate... like the more mature and advanced kind of love, do they still call that being in love? Because I really strongly associate being in love with that crazy out-of-control stuff. Which definitely happens when you're having an affair, I know that's the case. But it's not really so much what I look at when I look at mature, established, committed relationships.

DR. HUIZENGA: Well, when mature, [an] established relationship probably won't have an affair in it. Someone who appears to be mature and becomes involved in an affair, the maturity's out the window. I mean that type of behavior no longer is there, so you come up with crazy ways, crazy phrases like you know, "I'm not quite sure I'm in love with you anymore. I love you, but I'm not in love with you."

CLAIRE CASEY: So that person is saying, "Yeah I had that in love. . . we had that in love thing, and now I'm having it again, so I don't know, you know? What does that do to my original relationship?"

DR. HUIZENGA: Well, that phrase is often used to begin to put a wedge between himself and his partner.

CLAIRE CASEY: Lot of pain in that, huh?

DR. HUIZENGA: Huge. Often it's huge. It's often a shock because again, the affair is a secret, and the betrayed spouse has no clue how long this has gone on for. No clue often, you know, on a conscious level. I mean, after a while, she may say, "Oh yeah, no, I begin to put pieces of the puzzle together," but initially it's often shock. "Where did this come from? What are you talking about? What do you mean?" You know, they get angry or go out and cry for a day.

CLAIRE CASEY: Yeah, it's crushing.

DR. HUIZENGA: It's crushing, yeah. Exact good word.

CLAIRE CASEY: So okay, I want to skip ahead now. We talked about. . . we said we would talk about how to prevent or. . . No, no, no, I want to, say, go to what's the first step? So because I'm in this place that you described about, in the examples we've described, the man may say a phrase like, "I'm not sure I'm in love with you anymore," or she just knows in her gut that something's wrong and maybe they. . . maybe it outs. . . it comes out, and what do you do now? What's the first step?

DR. HUIZENGA: Okay, the first step that I recommend is to do nothing. Absolutely nothing.

CLAIRE CASEY: Wow.

DR. HUIZENGA: Because what typically happens is a person who is in shock and discovers the infidelity out of her own pain, her own deep unwitting pain, begins to do crazy things and she makes all kinds of statements and promises that, in essence, don't work. They continue to push the other person away. She may say for example, "I really, really love you and I want us to work on the marriage," or "I want us to work on the relationship." That's not a good thing to say. Or she may say, she may get out the Bible or some kind of moral injunction or use Dr. Laura and start beating him over the head saying, "You're doing the wrong thing." You know, try to persuade him to stop. Or she may get family or friends involved, trying to find allies, and it becomes even more of a drama. She may suggest counseling, and when a person's having an affair I really strongly recommend that you don't, do not go to counseling.

CLAIRE CASEY: Really? Okay, time out, tell me why.

DR. HUIZENGA: It doesn't work. I have counseled with thousands of couples, and when there is an affair involved, therapy never works because the person who's having an affair is often dragged into counseling and often uses it as an excuse to continue the affair or to get out of the marriage. I've tried counseling and it just doesn't work. So see...and they will sabotage the therapy. Or the secret is still there. The secret does not come out, and it's like, you know, you're talking to each other and there's this elephant in the room that nobody talks about. And so you go nowhere. As a matter of fact, the couple leaves the therapy session feeling worse, because at some level, the issue is not being addressed. It just makes...it takes an exceptional, exceptional therapist to work through that, and I, as a therapist, found it extremely difficult to work through that and often did not with a couple.

CLAIRE CASEY: Alright, so if you don't want to say all those...make all those promises like, "I really, really love you, I want to work on this. I will make it better." This is the cheated on person, or getting their friends or family involved or suggesting counseling, what are some other crazy impulses that you have to ignore?

DR. HUIZENGA: Well, I think there is the polarity of either raging and throwing him or her out or crawling up into a ball in the corner of the room and doing nothing, becoming a victim. And what I suggest is that people take two weeks to first of

all, get support: go online, find somebody that you can talk to outside of family or friends, get some support, get my book *Break Free From the Affair*, learn about infidelity. Because we in our culture know very, very little about infidelity and the complexity of infidelity. And often, when someone reads my book—and you can read it in about 3 hours—there's a tremendous amount of relief, because all of a sudden they begin to see patterns. They begin to understand what's happening. So knowledge at that point is extremely, extremely powerful, and it calms a lot of the reactive type of feelings that often a person has when they first discover the infidelity.

CLAIRE CASEY: That actually makes a lot of sense now that I think about it, because we are always saying, and I know my husband and I have said this to each other a number of times over the years, when things are really crazy and it doesn't even have to have anything to do with sexuality or an affair, when things are crazy is not the time to make big decisions.

DR. HUIZENGA: Exactly.

CLAIRE CASEY: So I guess on reflection now, that makes a lot of sense. And you're saying take two weeks.

DR. HUIZENGA: Two weeks, uh-huh. 'Cause often, the person who's having an affair knows that the relationship is temporary, that the affair relationship is temporary. Very seldom in an affair is an affair relationship going to work. And the cheating spouse knows that. On some level they know that. They know that on some level they're dealing with their own personal issue here that they're trying to address, although in a crazy way, but they're still trying to address it. And it's important for the betrayed spouse or the betrayed partner to know that and to say, "You're having an affair. This is stupid and it's your problem. I don't know what in the world you're trying to do here, but your life's going to go down the tubes and I think a part of you knows it, and I don't want to watch it."

CLAIRE CASEY: Wow.

DR. HUIZENGA: "I don't want any part of it. I'm healthy."

CLAIRE CASEY: That's a really powerful position.

DR. HUIZENGA: Yeah, this is crazy. I always say infidelity is an act of temporary insanity, and all maturity and all wisdom goes out the window. Infidelity or affairs are motivated either by personal needs, a person's personal need system or hormonal. . . hormones, and it's usually a personal need system that they haven't fully been aware of or come to terms with in their life. It's been haunting them forever.

CLAIRE CASEY: What kind of personal needs?

DR. HUIZENGA: Well I have a list of 200.

CLAIRE CASEY: Oh, my goodness!

DR. HUIZENGA: Let's see, okay, affair number 4 I call "I Fell Out Of Love And Just Love Being In Love." Okay, that's a type of an affair which is motivated by personal need to be special. To be adored, to be close to someone, and that need predominates them when someone says, "I just need to be in love." It's that high, it's that emotional high that a person needs to feel to believe that they have validity in life.

CLAIRE CASEY: So it sort of naturally allows a person to wander into a cheating relationship or an extramarital/extra-commitment relationship. That makes a lot of sense. So do nothing for two weeks. Not exactly do nothing, don't give in to all the impulses.

DR. HUIZENGA: That's a good point. Yeah, that's a good way of saying it right.

CLAIRE CASEY: For two weeks while. . .

DR. HUIZENGA: Give your focus to what you can learn and what you need at that particular point in time.

CLAIRE CASEY: Right. Okay. And so. . . And I want to shift backwards a little bit because I got ahead of the gun a little, and ask you some of the other things you said you could share with all of us, which is can you predict—I mean this is related—can you predict the odds that someone will cheat? That a man will cheat?

DR. HUIZENGA: Sure. I can also let you know probably how long the affair relationship's going to last.

CLAIRE CASEY: Wow. How does that work?

DR. HUIZENGA: Let me go through, quickly if I can, the seven types of affairs that I've identified in my research and my work with a lot of people. Well, the first affair I call "My Marriage Made Me Do It." And there's... this is a person who focuses externally on other people. Other people become their savior or other people become their focal point, and they're usually very angry because of that. And so they will say, "Okay, I'm having an affair because I have a lousy marriage. I'm having an affair because you are such a bitchy wife." Or somehow put the blame on something outside him or herself. And a person who continues that pattern and continues that theme in life will continue to find external sources to blame or focus on. So if a person... if the cheating spouse says eventually, "You know what? This is not working for me," he becomes banded by some realities of his behavior and finally says, "You know, I need to assume responsibility for myself and not blame other people." Then the chances of him having an affair again are mitigated. They're much, much less.

CLAIRE CASEY: That makes sense.

DR. HUIZENGA: Affair number 2 is "I Can't Say No." This person usually has an addictive personality. They are grabbed by something and it seems to have a hold on them and they give it their control and their power. So someone here is addicted to pornography or to strip clubs or dating sites or internet chat rooms, and it tends to become worse and worse and worse. That person typically will continue to have affairs until they discover that their life is out of control and say, "You know, I gotta find something else." And those affairs are usually temporary: very, very brief. Let me go back to number one, "My Marriage Made Me Do It." These affairs tend to be longer, 6-12 months, I would say in nature. Affair number 3: "I Don't Want To Say No". This is your philanderer who thinks he's entitled. Such a great guy, and women ought to adore him. The spoiled little boy that got all of mommy's attention and so he expects women are going to treat him like that and he can use women and there's nothing wrong with that. And a way to confront this affair is usually only through consequences of behavior. And this kind of person will continue to probably cheat. And if you want to use the phrase, "once a cheater, always a cheater," this probably will apply to this person unless there's a tremendous, tremendous wake up call here in terms of some reality check. Number 4: "I Fell Out Of

Love and Just Love Being Loved.” This is your emotional affair where someone’s highly emotionally entangled with someone else. They’re usually fairly short-term, especially when the betrayed spouse kind of backs away and gives time for the affair relationship to work itself out, because eventually the person who is cheating will discover that what he really wants is he wants an illusion. He’s focusing on an idealized person that he wants a relationship with, and when you wake up in the morning next to the person that made the mistake, that shoots it all to hell. [...]

CLAIRE CASEY: Right.

DR. HUIZENGA: That relationship, and the reality of that relationship, is exposed. Affair number 5: “I Want to Get Back at You.” And this is an affair... a revenge affair I call it, and they are very short term in nature, usually. Unless it’s a rage affair. Now, I make a distinction between resentment and frustration: “I want to get back at you because I didn’t get this because my needs weren’t met.” Those affairs are fairly temporary. If someone’s raging and having an affair because they’re raging at women, then there’s a more... there’s a likelihood that the affairs are going to be more in number.

CLAIRE CASEY: You know what’s kind of horrifying about some of the thought of some of this is being that woman with whom this man is having that affair. And receiving that kind of attention which is driven by, you know, his rage at someone else. That’s just creepy.

DR. HUIZENGA: That is creepy. That can be creepy. And that’s not healthy. In some cases it’s... I recommend people get away from the relationship if it’s a rage relationship. But I was working with a woman who was stabbed in the bathtub by her husband, and I learned then that we have to be very careful about rage relationships and do everything to protect themselves first.

CLAIRE CASEY: Wow, that’s pretty scary.

DR. HUIZENGA: Yeah. And I don’t want to scare people because, you know, I’m talking about extreme cases here. And I’m talking about categories, and let’s face it we all... we can’t put people in categories, but there are some patterns here. So I want people to be aware of patterns. Each pattern has an intensity level to it, a frequency level to it. So, if your pattern, if this happens a lot and there’s a lot of intensity to it, it’s a huge red flag.

CLAIRE CASEY: You know, and I would much rather know. . . I would much rather know these patterns, and I think everyone listening is saying, "Yeah, please, even if it takes us to kind of a creepy place sometimes, let's at least know about this."

DR. HUIZENGA: Yeah, there are creepy places, and we can learn what they are and how to avoid them and how to deal with them, sure.

CLAIRE CASEY: Okay, so that. . .

DR. HUIZENGA: Number 7: "I Want to Be Close to Somebody but Can't Stand Intimacy." This is a person who's cheating because they want to maintain a distance, a balance in their relationships, and often these affairs are long term. They can last for years, and the betrayed spouse never really knows. The cheating spouse often is very distant and aloof, maybe a very professional person who focuses on work, but they have a tremendous fear of being close, not of being close but of being intimate, as I said. So they have an affair to kind of balance that issue in their life. And these affairs may be fairly long term in nature.

CLAIRE CASEY: You said number 7, I think we skipped number 6. What was that one?

DR. HUIZENGA: Oh! "I Need to Prove My Desirability."

CLAIRE CASEY: Yes!

DR. HUIZENGA: These affairs are usually short term, and if they do indeed happen at all. . . I was coaching a woman who for some strange reason went out and had a one night affair, a one night fling. That was all she did, but the purpose of that for her was to work through some kind of sexual confusion that she had. And it worked for her. That was the only affair that she had, the only time that she did it, and after that there was some kind of resolution. I don't know exactly what happened, but many of us need to prove our desirability, especially at the sexual level, because there's so much in our culture that says we're not okay sexually. From a very early age, we learn that. So someone may be involved in an affair to get the affirmation that they indeed are desirable on a number of levels.

CLAIRE CASEY: That doesn't seem like a good way to get your needs met.

DR. HUIZENGA: Infidelity is not a good way to approach life. It's a self-defeating act.

CLAIRE CASEY: Well, clearly, because it destroys relationships as opposed to builds them.

DR. HUIZENGA: And it destroys a person. I say to people... They say, "Our marriage is being destroyed here by this affair," and I say, "Hold it just a minute. He's destroying himself, not destroying you. His affair really has nothing whatsoever to do with you. He's dealing with some kind of evil in his life, some kind of lack in his life, and really it doesn't say anything about you." Now that's hard for us to believe because we're led to believe that in our culture and the therapeutic community says this all the time, "Well what's wrong with you? Why can't you keep your man? Weren't you giving him enough sex? Weren't you paying enough attention? Do you take him for granted?" I mean, we hear all this around that the person who was betrayed in some way was responsible for the affair. I say no. I say no to that.

CLAIRE CASEY: Right, I think that's probably one of the most valuable things we've hit on during this short period of time is that, and Mike and I both say it a lot, which when things like that happen, it's not about you, it's about him. He clearly has... you didn't drive him to do this, although he might put it that way. And he might even sell you on that.

DR. HUIZENGA: Right, and other people are trying to sell you on that.

CLAIRE CASEY: Yeah well he's going to sell you something, probably. Whatever it is, he's gonna try and make it look different than it really is, which is something inside of him that's out of balance, out of order, or wrongly, you know, set up, or inappropriate or unhealthy or immature, whatever those words are that you want to apply to it. Probably not as helpful as the simple fact of saying, "Honey this isn't about you, this is about him."

DR. HUIZENGA: Let me go back here a minute and talk a little about marriage counseling again and why I don't recommend it. Because I would say 95% of the therapists have not been trained in infidelity, and so when a couple goes in to see a therapist and one of them is having an affair, the therapist will... the approach the therapist will use is "Let's work on the marriage."

What's wrong with the marriage?" And that slams the betrayed spouse right in the face and says it must be something wrong with you. And from that point, I don't think counseling will ever work.

CLAIRE CASEY: Because, and also the fact that he's probably been coerced there, dragged there against his will. If he's the one with issues and he's the one who's being dragged in, that doesn't sound like a very good setup.

DR. HUIZENGA: No, it's not. Or he may be there to save face or maintain his reputation of some kind. A number of reasons. But none of them are really helpful.

CLAIRE CASEY: You know that makes a lot more sense to me now, just a whole lot more. I mean, I know you said it earlier, but just thinking about the fact that therapy... you know he's resistant to therapy most likely, and that's probably the thing he needs, he personally needs as opposed to the marriage needs. Talk to me too about... you said most therapists aren't trained in infidelity. That sort of surprises me.

DR. HUIZENGA: I never was.

CLAIRE CASEY: And you have all these degrees too. How does that slip through?

DR. HUIZENGA: I think it's lack of time, lack of, you know, when you go through grad school... you want to get me on this? Grad schools are geared towards insurance companies, okay, because insurance companies pay for therapy. And when you go to therapy, you are given a label, a sick dysfunctional label, and you must have a sick dysfunctional label if you...

CLAIRE CASEY: For insurance.

DR. HUIZENGA: If you want insurance. I never accepted insurance. I refused to work with insurance companies for that very reason. Never did. And so therapy is... you have to train therapists to diagnose problems and use the medical model. And nowadays, therapy is often brief because insurance won't pay for a number of sessions, and so a lot of graduate schools, as I understand it, focus on brief, solution-oriented therapy. Anyway, I could say a lot about that, but I think our system is missing the point here.

CLAIRE CASEY: That's really interesting, and I know we didn't even really plan to go there. I was just so shocked by the fact that traditional education of trained therapists completely overlooks what is such a huge issue in human lives.

DR. HUIZENGA: There are some therapists that can get training in this, but usually you have to go to workshops after your practice is set up, and it's something you have to want to learn, but I don't think there's a great emphasis on it in graduate schools. At least probably not the majority of them. They may have a course or two in it, but to really get the complexity of infidelity, you need to really look at that, which I've done for the past five six years because I knew it was such a huge issue. People going to therapy—I would say 70% of the couples—have one spouse that's probably cheating on some level.

CLAIRE CASEY: Wow. Well, that's a whole other conversation probably.

DR. HUIZENGA: Yeah.

CLAIRE CASEY: It is, but it's fairly amazing. And I don't want us to close without at least talking about what we have promised, which is how can we prevent a man from cheating? And I have a couple more questions that sort of are hanging on in my head that I think some of our listeners may have, too, but I want to be sure to touch on that one. So you want to just take that big one on? How can we prevent a man from cheating?

DR. HUIZENGA: I don't think you can. And I think you can't use a direct model approach. Cheating is part of our coping patterns, and I often say to people, his decision to cheat was made long before he or she... before he met you. Because there are particular patterns in his life that indicate that he will stray. Now let me say this also: I believe that most of us, not all of us, in our lifetime encounter two to four other people that we're highly attracted to other than our partner or our spouse. It just happens. We bump into people often where there's an attraction, and the issue is, you know, how do we deal with this attraction? How do we cope with it? And so the temptation I think is always there, and a person who has a weak identity, we'll say this, a weak identity, a little awareness of himself, will bow probably to that temptation one way or another. What you can do to prevent it... here's something kind

of weird maybe: find out how many times your partner fell in love and was dumped when he was a teenager, okay? And it has to be 4 or more times. If he fell in love and was dumped as a teenager 4 or more times, he probably won't have an affair. An affair is an attempt to work through our psychosexual development, and our psychosexual development occurs ages 13-16/17, somewhere in there. And it usually involves some experimentation, it usually involves, you know, facing that issue head on at that particular point and time. So a red flag is, you know, an adolescent that was marked by sexual confusion or sexual abuse perhaps, there's a lot of parents that garner around sexual abuse. So, you know, if you start talking about those kinds of things, I think that's going to be pretty preventive. Another thing you can talk about: what kind of sexual fantasies do you have? We all have them on some level, and if you can talk about those as a partner in a non-threatening way, that also would relieve some pressure, I think, in terms of the capacity or desire to stray.

CLAIRE CASEY: That's interesting, and it's especially interesting when I think about the fact that so much of an affair isn't necessarily directly about the sex.

DR. HUIZENGA: Right.

CLAIRE CASEY: It's about the person and how they feel about themselves and what they, you know, what kind of issues they have.

DR. HUIZENGA: Right, it's how they think and see themselves as a sexual person or as an emotional person or as a person who has value in the eyes of someone else.

CLAIRE CASEY: So I think that. . . I like that, and I find it interesting and I'm glad that you said the first thing, which was find out how many times he was in love as a teenager or young adult and was dumped, which gives us the opportunity to work, to practice, to work through stuff, figure things out. That's an intriguing thing. And then asking about the sexual fantasies that he has and offering some kind of safe arena in which to talk about. . . and that doesn't necessarily mean you're going to do them all, but they're in the conversation, they're in the relationship, they're in the space between you.

DR. HUIZENGA: And expect that he's going to have sexual fantasies and you're probably going to have sexual fantasies and not be threatened by it. It's not a statement about your value as a person.

CLAIRE CASEY: Wow, any others? Those are brilliant! Do you have any others?

DR. HUIZENGA: No that's all I got right now.

CLAIRE CASEY: That's a lot, though. I feel like we've gotten so much good stuff out of this. In fact, I'm almost reluctant to ask. . . I have other questions I have, probably for another call about things like about forgiveness or recovery and what that looks like, also I'm also wanting to ask little questions about that whole detail thing. You know, when it first comes around, and you said the woman is working through her issues of "should I trust my gut" so she wants to know all the details, when did it happen, how did it happen, what did you do, how did it go. . . all those things. Should we just stomp those down? Hold those back because they're not going to get us forward? And yet I think, well, maybe they would get us forward, maybe she needs to say, "I've got to get better at trusting my gut."

DR. HUIZENGA: Yeah, trust is a huge. . . An affair, infidelity, is a violation of trust and rebuilding that trust takes months if not years for people. I've dealt with many who five or six years later say, "I just can't trust him anymore. I just can't do it. I try and I just can't."

CLAIRE CASEY: Wow, that was, wow, that's some trust that was really kind of exploded, there.

DR. HUIZENGA: Well, most of us are not taught to trust ourselves. We're not. . . We don't go to school on, you know, how do you really. . . what's really going on within you? We focus more on those things outside of ourselves, so most of us don't have much pertinent information in terms of how we go about trusting ourselves.

CLAIRE CASEY: Well that's an interesting question about how we can build trust in ourselves. Is that also like self-esteem? What is that?

DR. HUIZENGA: Self-esteem, yeah, probably. I would. . . I don't know. I think self-esteem probably relates more on how we think about ourselves. The thoughts we have, the labels we give to ourselves in our mind, where trust is something more permanent, it's more gut and stuff.

CLAIRE CASEY: How do you build your trust in that? If it's gut, if it's instinct, then is that an instinct you can develop?

DR. HUIZENGA: Well yeah, sure. The first thing I teach people in the first two weeks, not always but sometimes, is where does it hurt? And they say, "It hurts in my heart," and I say, "Well, what is the hurt in your heart like?" and they say, "Well it's a sharp stabbing pain," and I say, "Well, where in your heart is the sharp stabbing pain?" and they say, "It's right in the center of my heart," and then I say to them, "If that sharp stabbing pain in the middle of your heart could talk, what would it say to you?" and that begins the whole process then of being aware. You start physiologically, you see? Because our body, feelings are related to our body, our physical nature, so we identify where the pain is, and once you begin to notice and identify, you're on the track of trusting. That's step number one.

CLAIRE CASEY: Noticing and identifying how that's playing out.

DR. HUIZENGA: Where it is.

CLAIRE CASEY: In your body.

DR. HUIZENGA: Where is it exactly? Where is it? What is it like? How can I describe it? Is it a picture? Does it have an image? Is it sound? Does it talk to me?

CLAIRE CASEY: Wow, that's powerful.

DR. HUIZENGA: Yeah it's powerful, but it's basic. It's 101 in terms of who am I as a person. Right now, I'm a person who has this incredibly stabbing pain right in the middle of my heart. Now, can you imagine the power that statement would have if you can say it in a non-defensive way to a cheating spouse? You follow what I'm saying?

CLAIRE CASEY: It's a very powerful communication... way of communication. In other words, instead of just saying, "I'm hurt by this," or "I feel terrible," or something.

DR. HUIZENGA: Right. The more distinctions we can make, the more power we have. And part of what we want to do when we've been betrayed is we want to reclaim our personal power. It's been destroyed, at least from our own point of view. Not in reality, but from our point of view, we no longer have personal power. This person is abandoning us and choosing someone over me and I must be crap.

CLAIRE CASEY: Well, this is some amazing stuff you've unlocked here, and I'm sure that we could go on and on.

DR. HUIZENGA: I enjoy talking to you Claire, you have a good way of following and also adding to, so I appreciate that. It's easy to talk to you.

CLAIRE CASEY: Well, I'm glad, and I think this has been very powerful for all the people who had a chance to listen to it. This one is just—I know—going to get a lot of attention, because cheating is something that we've all thought about or experienced in our lives in some way, and it's not at all uncommon. Although I don't think—and it's amazing to me like you said—I don't think people are very... therapists certainly aren't well trained in helping us deal with it, so maybe a good thing for us to get smart about dealing with it in an effective and powerful way. So thanks for all your time and your energy, and I'm sure I'll be talking to you again sometime soon. Meanwhile, this is Claire Casey, and you've been listening to Dr. Bob Huizenga at breakfreefromtheaffair.com and saveamarriageforever.com, and I'm so glad you were here. Thanks so much to all of you who've been listening and to you, Dr. Huizenga.

DR. HUIZENGA: Thank you, Claire.