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## **EPISODE 13 TOPIC: Relationship and Infidelity**

### **What are your limits?**

When is it enough?

What are your limits?

Need not just be infidelity could be other issues, e.g. drug or alcohol abuse, physical abuse, gambling, etc.

Once the decision has been made then there is no need to even get emotional but merely deal with the logistics and the process of ending.

### **If you are being cheated upon and find out:**

**Breathe** – deep breaths will make you more functional and less panicked.

**Confront the cheater** – sitting with the information will not make it easier. In fact you are facing a process of which will include aspects of self-berating but you need to confront the other

**Get your support team going.** Those that won't judge you and blame you. Consider and get therapy – if you can afford it. The sooner the better.

**Ask questions** – there will be tons of questions that come to mind and allow yourself the space to ask these. These will not be dealt with in one sitting but will take time. Questions help to assess what happened in the relationship that lead to this situation. It will help to highlight the dynamics of the relationship. Be prepared that you may not get answers from your partner, or you may not get answers you are ready for. This is where support is necessary to help you deal with your emotions and the situation.

**Deal with the small issues first.** This is a time of turmoil, chaos and your judgment will be impaired so focus on the small things that are nurturing, decide when to meet your support system, what book to read or what's for dinner. Take time before making the big decisions about houses and where the kids should go. Give a little space here. These decisions will come.

### **It's okay to change your mind!**

If you leave your spouse then this places the power back in your hands as opposed to you being left by your spouse who cheated.

During times of crises it is important to focus on oneself and ones' needs. Be gentle with yourself. Of course there are going to be things that you will have to deal with but what you can ignore do and be aware of your general sensitivity now.

Deal with the issues until you feel like you have reached some sense of closure. As this is a process it is evident that you would revisit the issues but ensure that there is balance here because you don't want to live in the past

**Life goes on.** This is both good and bad. Bad in the sense that life and others may seem heartless but at times the demands of life can appear hard to bear but they too can give direction in the mess. If you have kids, they still need to be picked up from school, you still need to go to work or school, etc—life goes on!.

Let kids know soonest! Also let them know that this is not their faults. This is a process and the effects of the break up can be huge and take years to find a new normalcy.

### **If you are having an affair:**

Yenza kahle! Take responsibility and own your actions and their consequences.

Decide what you want to do and stick to it!

If you decide to stay in your relationship you may need to:

Learn to apologise – this must be heartfelt. One won't suffice and there may be many ways in which you would need to apologise and for the various indiscretions that these actions have brought up.

Cut off the 'other' relationship – 100%! Know that the other person may be upset initially but they survived without you and can do so again. Let them know that this is the decision that you have made and ask them to respect that.

Understand that your 'regte'/spouse/partner needs time to deal with your infidelity and give them time and space to do so. If they also want to stay, then it may be useful for you both to go through counselling to allow for renewal and healing towards rebuilding your relationship.

### **Take time to understand and start the healing:**

- Be aware of the unreal. The unreal is what makes the affair seem so exciting and tempting as compared to the partner who knows you and you deal with the issues of kids and other tiresome issues, like who does the dishes.
- See the process that led to this point. What problems within the relationship do you need to acknowledge, that sparked the infidelity?
- What was the point which you knew that you had over-stepped the line? It's not the point where you wake up with another person. This is gradual, it's the small lies about where you are, it's the small lies about where you've been. It's letting things develop, that sms where you talk intimately as intimately, if not more intimately than with your partner. It's that point where what you did you would not comfortably do in front of your partner, that's when the line has been crossed.
- It's tiring balancing more than one relationship and ultimately this is not sustainable. There is a lot of energy wasted to keep both relationships.
- Ask yourself what you can do to help your partner get over your infidelity . This may include ensuring that you are always available and contactable to your partner. Allow them space to mistrust what you have done, as such they may be multiple times when they seek to contact you and they may get upset when you are not available. Patience and kindness are needed to heal your indiscretion.
- Work on trust, perhaps you will need to violate your own privacy initially to ensure that there is openness... e.g. your partner may want to see your phone messages.

- Be aware that it is going to take time for healing to occur and that this is not an end point rather it is something that may be revisited and you need to be patient and open to these explorations so that you ensure that healing can occur
- Remember the times when you first met your partner and seek this time. Remember what first attracted you to them? Are these still there? What has happened to these qualities and can you bring it back?
- Try new things, don't get in a rut - this may have been what led you there in the first place.

What's key to a healthy relationship is to bring these issues in to the relationship. No matter how hard it is. It is key because it can change the nature of the relationship but it can be a turning point as well. Be honest and open.

If you break off the relationship before your spouse has explicitly found out, do you tell them?

### **If you go back:**

Understand that there this is a process:

1. Initial shock and fall out
2. Attempts to stabilise one's life
3. Another wave of anger and hurt
4. Final adjustments

Going to need to renegotiate the relationship if both decide that this is what they want.

### **Always call on your support system**

What has changed? Is this a lasting change?

What ensured that the pattern is not merely playing itself out again.... beware the abusive cycles. Conflict, submission/harmony and reparation, slowly the turmoil builds, then bam, conflict again. Know that ending is a process but need to know your limits, saying no is an affirmation of self.

**Self love** is important, self care, etc. the focus has to be here first before you try to mend issues with the children or others whom may be affected.

Need to learn to trust again

Learn to honour and respect yourself

**Communication is key.** You need to talk about what happened. And the subsequent hurt and pain that you feel.

You need a **shared vision** that both of you are working towards.

Find things that will improve the relationship now:

- This may include being open to counselling from a service provider, religious practitioner, elder or other family member
- Do something new with your partner, something that builds new foundations and commonalities

This time will require both compassion and forgiveness to heal the love.

Fears of the impact on others can keep one bound in a relationship – what will happen to the kids?

If there is a child that has been born out of the infidelity be aware that your spouse will always have a relationship with the other person... are you prepared for this?

### **There are logistics and things to consider**

#### **Multiple partners, condoms and STI's and HIV**

In the episode we see Fikile embarking on multiple sexual relationships. Because he did not use a condom he could contract an STI, including HIV. The lesson here is that having multiple concurrent partners and further not using condoms increases one's risk of STIs, including HIV. He has further violated the trust that his wife had in him and also put her at risk of contracting and STI including HIV.

- *Throughout the talk show make the link to the TV drama episode synopsis and what audiences saw on their screens on Tuesday night.*
- *Advertise that the repeat of Intersexions can be watched on [www.intersexions.co.za](http://www.intersexions.co.za) The video will only be displayed for 7 days.*
- *Refer to Resources for people who may need help and information about STIs:  
[www.safersex.co.za](http://www.safersex.co.za) E-mail: [disa@icon.co.za](mailto:disa@icon.co.za) Tel: 011 787 1222 / 886 2286  
Brothers for life: Website: [www.brothersforlife.org](http://www.brothersforlife.org) Telephone: 012 366 9300  
Email: [joinbrothers@jhuccp.co.za](mailto:joinbrothers@jhuccp.co.za)  
AIDS HELPLINE: 0800 012 322  
Provincial Department of Health: [insert the relevant provincial contact details here]*