

START OF A SLIPPERY PATH

I'm getting in ahead of the Christmas and New Year "silly" season. It's such a fun time of the year when we start celebrating. However, unfortunately, more opportunities have become available for the "silliness" to go too far with regretful consequences. It may well be easier to throw caution to the wind at the time. However, acting on feelings harboured throughout the year, such as resentment or lust, can get you in a right pickle.

For this reason, it's timely to write about the topic of infidelity. The repercussions impact generations. They cause poor physical health, fuel alcohol and substance abuse, create symptoms for post-traumatic stress disorder and even result in suicide. Many people mistakenly think that infidelity isn't really infidelity unless there is sexual contact.

With special thanks to influencers for this series, Dr Jenny Fitzgerald, Dr Shirley Glass, Dr Sue Johnson, the Relationship Institute Australasia and Esther Perel, here is some clarification on what can be defined as infidelity.

He/she dominates your thoughts. You are consumed by thoughts of them when you wake up, when you fall asleep, and mostly

THE EARLY SIGNALS OF ATTRACTION AND HOW THEY CAN PROGRESS TO DISASTER

WORDS: JOANNE WILSON



anytime in between. Most affairs don't start with a steamy sex scene, they start in the mind.

You talk about the difficulties in your current relationship. You may have a few close friends you share your frustrations about your partner with. When you find yourself sharing many of those problems and concerns with this "special person", you may be crossing the line.

He/she becomes the first person you call. How about when you get some exciting news, or you've had a dreadful day? Who do you think to call first: him/her or your partner?

Contact outside of "friendly" hours. If you find yourself communicating at

questionable hours, this may be a sign. Most friends don't text at 2am.

They "get" you. When you start to feel like he/she understands you better than your partner, this is a red flag. This usually leads to increased communication with him/her and less communication with your partner. We are more likely to communicate with someone we feel "gets" us than someone who does not.

You redirect your time. If you find yourself finding excuses or creating more reasons to spend time with him/her, this may be a sign. However, spending more time does not just mean physical time. If you are spending more time texting, emailing, Snapchatting, Whatsapping, Facetiming etc,

this may be a sign as well.

You compare your partner. When talking to your partner, do you think to yourself, "he/she wouldn't respond like this" or "he/she would be more attentive?" When out with your partner, do you think: "If I were with him/her, I'd be having more fun"? This automatically makes him/her the good one and your partner the bad one.

You lie. Lying by omission counts. Leaving out details such as meeting him/her for lunch, deleting messages or you just deny communicating with that person at all is a lie. If you must lie, chances are you have something to hide; and if you have something to hide, you probably know it's not OK.

Coming up in the weeks ahead will be:

- Why do affairs happen?
- The signs to look for?
- Pornography and affairs.
- Can you recover from affairs?

Joanne is a neuro-psychotherapist and relationship specialist at The Confidante Counselling. Email jo@theconfidantecounselling.com

In times
of crisis you
can give

H  **PE**
WHERE IT'S NEEDED MOST

This Christmas,
a \$29 box of emergency
supplies can give hope
to a family in crisis.

Please donate \$29 now

13 SALVOS | SALVOS.ORG.AU

