

AFFAIR RECOVERY TIMES

Volume 2, Issue 10
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THE FOUNDER'S CORNER

UNDERSTANDING

I'd like to share this letter with you. It came from one of our clients while they were going through the recovery process.

Dear Bill,

You must feel smug and better after your cleansing confession to me about your hidden life. I can't believe how you deceived me for so many years! You are a skilled liar indeed!! I have always thought myself a great judge of character, especially my own husband. I am so shaken by the fact you could look me directly in the eyes and say, "No, I've never had sex with anyone else since we've been married." How can I ever believe you again? I know that you're feeling better, now that you've dumped your stuff on me, and you feel like you are going through a conversion experience, as

you put it, but how can I ever believe you? Are you really changing, or are you just lying to me again? How can I ever know?

Your confession leaves me in want of a bath! The images of you with seedy, dirty women are unbearable. Knowing the complete you, I realize that so much of who you are and what makes you tick are characteristics that I've always loathed in people. There is no honesty in you, no honor in what you do, no moral character on which you base your life. I've said it before, but now with ever so strong conviction, you are like moral silly putty. If you're around someone who thinks strongly about "x," then you jump on that bandwagon and say, "x is the way to be." Then if someone comes by and thinks strongly about "y", then you are quick to change and say, "y is the way to be." Whoever you



Founder Rick Reynolds

last had contact with is the way you are thinking. You have no conviction of your own, much less any conviction of any goodness.

I'm so angry about all of this, and wonder whether it's worth staying with you. Can someone really change? Can you really change? And what if you do change, aren't you drawn to this seedy behavior like a moth to the light? What will happen in the future if you have to be out of town with some new job with an expense account? Will you be able to stand firm with this new change, or will you "silly putty" yourself into

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Special points of interest:

- A Letter from a Hurting Spouse
- Camille's Tale
- The next EMS Weekend is coming in November!

HARBORING HOPE

In our continuing series of true firsthand stories of couples and their journey to recovery, we are proud to feature the story of Camille and Jeff and their experience with the EMS weekend.

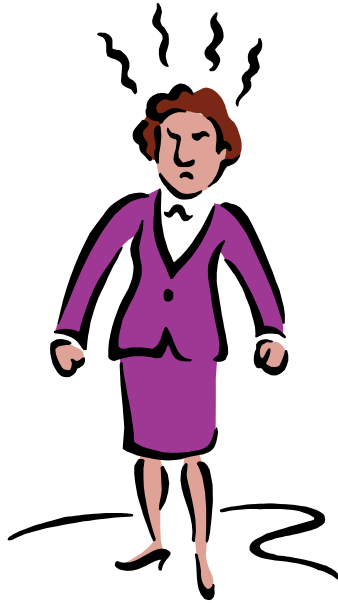
Camille's Story

Compiled by Leslie Hardie

Nine years ago, Rick Reynolds was recommended to me by my dear church family. I was going through a divorce, and I really needed someone to talk to. Little did I know that those first counseling sessions were only the seeds of a relationship that would later bear fruit. As it turned out, the true reason I was introduced to Rick was to get me through a crisis yet to come. The divorce was pretty black and white- a jerk husband with a ton of sexual issues who ended up leaving me for another woman. But this time, I was married to an amazing man: a man that Rick gave me permission to marry; a man who adored me and my kids; a man I loved being married to; and a man addicted to pornography! Ouch! That last one hurt. If someone would have come to me and told me that this man had a secret sin, I would have called them a liar and never spoken to them again. Life stopped. I couldn't breathe. I truly wanted to die. I remember standing in front of the medicine cabinet thinking I needed to take something to make it stop hurting, but realizing that there weren't enough pills in the house to make that happen. I was so angry. How could God let me do this AGAIN?

I called Rick. He set me up with Leslie and we did some phone sessions. They had me buy a book, *Living With Your Husband's*

Secret Wars. Jeff went to see a counselor in our community who advised medication and psychoanalysis!? Although we thought we had begun to address the problem and make it better, Jeff relapsed within six months. I did not understand. We had talked about it. We had read the books. We had "fixed" our computer with very expensive software. We were handling the problem! So why couldn't he just stop?



Rick would know what to do. I called on Monday, and by Wednesday I had cleared our calendar, farmed out the kids, and had a place for us to stay in Austin for the weekend! We left in a whirlwind (west Texas!) and began another phase of this long journey. Rick called it EMS, Emergency Marriage Seminar.

I cannot truly express the emotions going through me. I could not cry. I wanted badly to break something, but that really is not my style. I could picture myself injuring him, but I could not imagine hurting him bad enough

to make me feel any better. I was pissed! If I were completely honest, I would have to admit part of my motivation for getting to Austin was hoping that the weekend included a "beat-the-hell-out-of-your-unfaithful-spouse" session. For good or ill, it did not.

In actual fact, the weekend offered a wonderfully safe place to talk very naturally about this most unnatural topic. I could talk about what I was experiencing, listen to other men and women talk about their problems, and begin to understand better both my husband's problems and my own emotions. There was a lot of crying and not a little drama during two very intense days. Everybody had different stories, but we shared the critical desire to "be better." After the intense anxiety of the preceding days or weeks, it was actually refreshing to admit freely that things were not all right at all! We talked openly and candidly. Among the women, we could commiserate and know that we had a perfect right to our feelings and our emotions. The men had to look at a different part of their addiction- the effect it has on their wives, their kids, and ultimately their souls.

After I first discovered my husband's problem, *he* had vowed that *he* was going to stop. *He* had to stop because *he* had to save our marriage, and *HE* had to be better. *HE* had to stop because it was wrong. *HE* had to stop because *HE* wanted to. ***HE, HE, HE, HE, HE...*** We were thinking all wrong. We had ignored ***HIM***.

Rick and his team reminded us of our foundation in Jesus. For Rick and his associates, Christ is the center of their lives and the heartbeat of their counseling ministry. *(continued on next page)*

HARBORING HOPE (CONTINUED)

istry. While logically and scientifically informing and explaining sexual addiction, Rick makes it clear that there is nothing good in the flesh. There is no such thing as self-help. To believe and to act as if we can somehow reason and discipline our way out of this or any other problem is the self-regard that follows our eating of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil and abstaining from the Tree of Life. As any addict well knows, for all your efforts you will always end up where you started. At the end of the day, "...you can do nothing apart from me" (John 15:5). Rick gently and courageously reminded us that we are each a child of God, and that not only did He make you but, "He that began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus" (Phillippians 1:6). Our weaknesses, our addictions are in the flesh and are of

this world; and we know who has dominion over the flesh. It is when we recognize our inability to succeed on our own, a recognition God requires and may even induce in us, that he can continue that work in us.

I left that weekend exhausted! But Jeff and I had a peace we had not enjoyed in at least two years. The change in my husband is staggering. He is a man that prays and reads his Bible. He is much more attentive to my needs and our boys changing our relationship from one of anger, guilt and strife to one of openness, honesty and respect. For my part, I have let go of the anger I had directed towards God and began talking to Him again. That amazing weekend let God begin to heal us. Sharing and confessing literally drained the poison of sin and resentment eating away at our souls.

I wish I had the golden words that would compel couples dealing with sexual compulsions to call Rick and see what an EMS weekend can do for their faith, their intimacy and their marriage. Jeff and I did not have fun during our EMS. At times, it was excruciating. But it was a gift from God given through Rick, Leslie, John and the rest of the team. We knew this was a spiritual battle from the beginning. What Rick and his people did was to show us the futility of our own frantic efforts and to remind us to put our true champion into the line of battle: "be still and know that I am God." There is our power. Let Him heal you. He calls you to "approach the throne of **grace** with **confidence**, so that you may receive **mercy** and find **grace** to help you in our time of need" (Hebrews 4:16).

THE FOUNDER'S CORNER (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

someone who says, "no one's watching me?" Will I be able to trust you again?

Actually the hardest part and what I hate most is this: Suppose by the grace of God you have changed, and you never again do any of these seedy behaviors. I still won't be able to believe it because you have burned me too many times. So now in the long run, I look like the bad guy, and the distrustful and hateful person. I despise you for this!!! You're the one with the problem, but if you are healed, I'll still have a problem believing you.

Sincerely,

The Hurt Spouse

Some of those reading this month's article will be able to relate to the pain this woman expressed as well as her sentiment. We find the concept of being "understood" to be one of the most critical tasks in the healing process. Unless the hurt spouse can feel that his or her mate truly understands what this betrayal has done to them, they will find it difficult if not impossible to let go of the hurt. Unless they feel their mate "gets it," then they can't release to come back. What's amazing about this letter is the fact that it was not even written by the hurt spouse, rather it was written by her husband in an attempt to assist her healing. In reality, it is difficult for

the hurt spouse to quit talking about the hurt until they feel their mate has "gotten it." Recovery from betrayal is possible, but it's helpful to know the steps that need to be taken. If you're the unfaithful spouse reading this article then I want to encourage you not to give up, even if your mate seems stuck and unable to move on. It may be that you haven't been able to give he or she what they need to be able to let go. If you are the hurt spouse, then don't give up. It may be that your mate doesn't even know what to do to move forward. If there is any way we can help then please give us a call.

Rick

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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 wanted to take a moment to thank everyone who supported our last EMS weekend with their prayers and well-wishes. I am happy to report that some wonderful events transpired there, as well as some profound healing.

In an attempt to quantify our

progress, we pass out marital assessment forms at the beginning and end of every EMS weekend. We are pleased to announce that there were extremely significant gains from when the couples came in to when

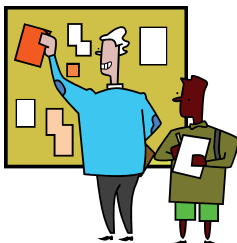


Dr. John Mark Haney

they left at the conclusion of the weekend.

If you think that you are ready to prayerfully consider joining us, please let us know. One of the counselors here would be very happy to discuss it with you.

THE BULLETIN BOARD



The Affair Recovery Center wants to announce our next EMS (Emergency Marital Services) weekend. It is an intensive couple's seminar that has helped countless marriages. It is scheduled for November 4-6. Call us or log on for more information, to register, or to request a brochure. Weekend lodging information is available.

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.