

A PRINTABLE JOURNAL FOR TWO

Rebuilding Trust Workbook

Healing Together After Infidelity

A structured path for couples choosing repair — honest conversations, real accountability, and trust rebuilt one action at a time.

INSIDE THIS PACK

- Plain-language guides to what infidelity does — to both of you
- A three-phase roadmap: honesty, understanding, renewed commitment
- Ground rules, transparency agreements, and a trigger plan you both sign
- The full accountability apology, and the questions that help (not hurt)
- Structured listening turns, forgiveness reflections, and a new relationship vision
- A weekly rebuild check-in and 6 cut-out pocket repair cards

A printable workbook for two, informed by established couples-research principles.

How to Use This Workbook

If you are holding this, something deeply painful has happened in your relationship — and you have both decided to at least try to repair it. That decision takes courage from two directions. This workbook gives the repair effort structure: what to talk about, in what order, with guardrails that keep hard conversations from becoming harmful ones.

Two roles, two readers

This workbook uses two terms throughout: the **hurt partner** (the one who was betrayed) and the **involved partner** (the one who had the affair). Some pages are written mainly for one of you; most are for both. Both of you will write in these pages.

Getting started

1. **Read the education pages first — separately is fine.** Many couples do better reading alone, then coming together to talk. Either way works.
2. **Agree to the ground rules before your first hard conversation.** The Conversation Ground Rules page exists so that talking about the affair does not become a second injury. Sign it early.
3. **Go in order, but at your own pace.** The pages follow the three phases of rebuilding. There is no schedule, and no prize for speed.
4. **Print extra copies** of any worksheet or check-in page. You will reuse them.
5. **Expect big feelings.** Rage, grief, shame, numbness, and sudden moments of hope are all normal in affair recovery — sometimes within the same hour. A hard conversation is not a failed conversation.

What this workbook is — and is not

This is a psychoeducational self-help resource. It can support the work many couples do with a couples therapist, but it does not replace one. If your conversations repeatedly flood, stall, or circle without landing, that is not failure — it is a sign that a trained third person in the room would help.

SAFETY NOTE: This workbook is NOT designed for relationships involving abuse, control, intimidation, or fear. If you are afraid of your partner, or honesty gets punished, safety comes before repair — please see the resources on the final page and reach out for support.

We are starting this workbook on (date):

Hurt partner — one hope I am carrying into this:

Involved partner — one hope I am carrying into this:

What Infidelity Does

Part 1: For the Hurt Partner — You Are Not Going Crazy

For many people, discovering a partner's affair lands like a trauma. Not "like" in a loose way — the reactions that follow often look and feel like a trauma response, because the person you counted on for safety suddenly became the source of danger. If your mind and body have been doing strange, frightening things since discovery, there is a reason.

Common reactions after discovery

- ☐ **Intrusive images** — unwanted mental movies of the affair that play without permission
- ☐ **Hypervigilance** — scanning, checking, "detective mode," unable to power down
- ☐ **Mood swings** — rage to grief to numbness to tenderness, sometimes within an hour
- ☐ **Obsessive replaying** — combing back through the timeline for what you missed
- ☐ **Sleep and appetite changes** — wired at 3 a.m., no interest in food, or the reverse
- ☐ **Doubting your own reality** — "What else was a lie? Can I trust my own judgment?"

Check any you recognize. Every one of them is a **normal alarm response to a profoundly abnormal event**. You are not overreacting, not broken, and not "crazy." Your alarm system is doing exactly what alarm systems do after a break-in: staying loud until safety is proven again.

What helps

- **Waves pass.** The surges are intense, but they crest and fall. You will not always feel the way you feel at the peak.
- **Name what is happening.** "This is a trauma wave, not a fact about today" gives your thinking brain a handhold.
- **Use the Trigger Plan page.** Planned responses turn ambushes into survivable moments.
- **Guard the basics.** Sleep, food, movement, one safe person to talk to. Recovery runs on a body that is minimally cared for.
- **Expect improvement to be gradual.** With real repair, the waves come less often and hit less hard. That is the pattern to watch for — not a finish line.

You are having a normal reaction to an abnormal event. The alarm is loud because the breach was real.

What Infidelity Does

Part 2: For the Involved Partner — The Defensiveness Trap

If you are the partner who had the affair, you are likely carrying your own storm: guilt, dread, and waves of shame that can feel unbearable. Here is the pattern to watch for, because it quietly kills more repairs than the affair itself: **the shame–defensiveness cycle**.

How the cycle works

Shame says: *"I am a terrible person."* That is so painful to sit in that the mind flips to defense: *"How long am I going to keep paying for this?"* — and out come the eye-rolls, the corrections, the "I already said sorry." Each defensive move re-injures your partner and resets the clock. Then their pain spikes, your shame spikes, and the cycle spins again.

Defensive moves to catch in yourself:

- ☐ "How many times do I have to apologize?"
- ☐ Correcting small details of their account instead of hearing the hurt
- ☐ "At least I..." comparisons, or pointing at their flaws
- ☐ Going quiet or leaving the room with no return time
- ☐ Turning it around: "Well, you..."

An uncomfortable, freeing truth

Both of you are in real pain right now — **but only one of you chose the breach**. Your pain matters and deserves support (a trusted friend, an individual therapist). It does not get equal billing inside repair conversations, and expecting it to is one of the fastest ways to stall.

What the work asks of you

- **Stay present during their pain** without defending, minimizing, or fixing.
- **Answer honestly**, even when honesty costs you.
- **Be patient with a timeline you do not control**. Trust rebuilds on their clock, not yours.
- **Let guilt work for you**. Guilt says, "I did a harmful thing, and I will repair it" — it fuels action. Shame says, "I am bad," and collapses into defense. Choose the one that moves you toward your partner.

Every defended moment resets the clock. Every steady, non-defensive moment moves it forward.

The Three Phases of Rebuilding

A map for the months ahead

Couples who rebuild after infidelity tend to move through three broad phases. Real life is messier than any map — you will loop back, skip ahead, and revisit — but knowing the terrain helps you see that the chaos has a direction.

Phase 1 — Honesty and Repair

This is where the bleeding stops. It includes:

- **The affair fully ends.** All contact with the affair partner stops — stated in writing, witnessed by the hurt partner (see the Transparency Agreements page). An affair that is "mostly over" is not over.
- **Honest answers** to the questions the hurt partner chooses to ask (see Questions That Help vs. Questions That Hurt).
- **A full accountability apology** — not "I'm sorry you're hurt," but the real thing, with no euphemism and no "but."
- **Ground rules and transparency scaffolding** that make safety visible day to day.

Phase 2 — Understanding and Reconnection

Once the acute crisis settles, the questions change from *what happened* to *how did we get here* — explored carefully, without ever blaming the hurt partner. This phase is also where attunement is rebuilt: turning toward each other in small moments, structured listening, and the first fragile positive experiences together.

Phase 3 — Renewed Commitment

The couples who make it rarely describe going back to the old relationship. They describe building a **new** one — with the same person, with open eyes. New agreements, new rituals of connection, new boundaries with the outside world, and a shared vision for what comes next.

Two things to remember about the map

1. **The phases overlap.** A trigger wave in Phase 3 does not send you back to zero. It is a wave, not a verdict.
2. **There is no standard timeline.** Months in Phase 1 is common. Comparing yourselves to a schedule adds pressure without adding progress.

The next page covers the most important idea in this workbook: how trust actually returns.

How Trust Actually Returns

Repeated trustworthy actions, over time

Trust was not broken by a single conversation, and it will not be rebuilt by one. Words matter — the apology, the honest answers — but words only open the door. **Only actions walk through it.**

Trust returns in small deposits

- Being home when you said you would be
- The phone left face-up on the counter, nothing to hide
- A trigger met with presence instead of a sigh
- A hard question answered honestly, even at a cost
- The check-in text that arrives without being chased

No single deposit feels like much. That is the nature of trust: it is built the same way it is measured — in repetition. The hurt partner's alarm system is watching for a pattern, and patterns take time to prove.

Setbacks are part of the pattern

A bad week does not erase the deposits that came before it. Expect anniversaries, triggers, and stretches where the ground feels like it is sliding backward. What matters is what happens next: a rupture that gets repaired is not a failure — it is a repetition of the exact skill you are building.

There is no fixed timeline

Ask ten couples how long rebuilding took and you will get ten answers. "Shouldn't we be past this by now?" is a question that adds pressure and subtracts nothing. The honest measure is direction, not speed: are the waves slowly getting smaller, and the deposits slowly adding up?

An honest word about outcomes

No workbook — and no therapist — can promise your relationship will survive this. Some couples rebuild something they describe as stronger and more honest than what they had before. Others discover, after doing this work honestly, that separating with dignity is their healthiest ending. **That is a legitimate outcome, not a failure.** What this work promises is smaller and real: clearer conversations, true information, and far less accidental damage while you find out.

Involved partner — one small trustworthy action I will offer this week:

Hurt partner — one small deposit I noticed recently, if any:

Conversation Ground Rules

An agreement to sign before the hard talks begin

Conversations about an affair are among the hardest conversations two people can have. Without rails, they flood, spiral, and wound. These rules are the rails. Read them together, check the ones you both agree to, add your own, and sign.

Our rules (check each rule you both agree to)

- ☐ **We schedule the hard talks.** We pick a time on purpose — 30 to 45 minutes maximum — and we stop when time is up, even mid-topic. There will be another talk.
- ☐ **Either of us can call a time-out.** The one who calls it names a return time (within 24 hours), so a pause never becomes avoidance.
- ☐ **No ambush conversations.** No 2 a.m. interrogations, no starting in the car, no opening the topic at dinner or in front of others.
- ☐ **No third parties in the room.** Not in person, not on speakerphone, not by reading messages aloud mid-argument.
- ☐ **Phones away, screens off** for the length of the talk.
- ☐ **What is shared in the talks is for healing, not ammunition.** We do not weaponize it later.
- ☐ **We end every talk with one sentence each:** one thing the other person did *in this conversation* that helped, however small.

Rules we are adding

Our rule:

Our rule:

Signatures

Hurt partner — signed:

Involved partner — signed:

A time-out honored — with its return time kept — is not an escape. It IS a trustworthy action, deposited in real time.

Questions That Help vs. Questions That Hurt

Hurt partner: you get to choose — on purpose

After discovery, your mind generates questions by the hundred. That is normal: your story of the last months or years has been shattered, and questions are how a mind rebuilds a story. But research on affair recovery points to something important: **not all questions heal equally.**

Questions that tend to help

These are **meaning** questions — the whys. Their answers build understanding and help you judge remorse and safety:

- "How did you let this happen? What were you telling yourself?"
- "What did it mean to you? What was it giving you?"
- "What was missing *for you* — in yourself, not in me?"
- "How did you feel afterward — during the lying?"
- "What have you done to make sure it is truly over?"

Questions that tend to hurt

These are **graphic detail** questions — the exact physical specifics, the comparisons, the where and what and how. The hard truth from clinical experience: their answers rarely add understanding or safety, but they reliably **install intrusive images** — mental movies that replay for years and deepen the wound you are trying to close.

This is about your power, not your limits

You are entitled to ask anything. This page is not about denying you information — it is about choosing *deliberately, while calm*, instead of in a 2 a.m. spike. Two tools:

1. **The test:** "Will this answer help me understand and decide — or will it hand my brain a movie it can never unsee?"
2. **The parking lot:** park a question for a week. If you still need the answer, ask it in a scheduled talk.

A note for the involved partner

Your job is honest answers to the questions actually asked — not information control. Deciding your partner "can't handle the truth" is another decision made over their head, and lying again is the one answer that ends repair. If a graphic-detail question comes, you may gently ask: "Do you want the full detail, or the honest summary?" — **and then the hurt partner decides.**

Choosing My Questions

Hurt partner: a planning page for the answers you actually need

Use this page while calm, not mid-wave. The goal is to walk into your next scheduled talk with questions you chose — instead of the ones that ambushed you at 2 a.m.

Step 1 — The brain dump (optional, private)

On a separate piece of paper, write down *every* question in your head, unfiltered. Nobody sees this page — it exists to empty the flood so you can choose from it. Keep it or shred it; both are fine.

Step 2 — The three questions I actually need answered

Question 1:

What this answer will give me:

Question 2:

What this answer will give me:

Question 3:

What this answer will give me:

Step 3 — The check (before asking)

- ☐ These are meaning questions, not graphic-detail questions
- ☐ Each one has sat with me for at least a day and I still need it
- ☐ I am asking in a scheduled talk, with the ground rules in effect
- ☐ I have thought about what I will do with a painful answer

You can always ask more later. You can never un-hear an answer. Choosing slowly is not weakness — it is you protecting your own healing.

The Full Accountability Apology

Involved partner: what "I'm sorry" was never going to cover

A quick apology cannot hold the weight of an affair. What can begin to hold it is a **full accountability apology** — five elements, each one doing work the others cannot. Missing any of them weakens all of them.

The five elements

1. **Name what you did — without euphemism.** "I had an affair and I lied to cover it" — not "what happened," "the mistake," or "that situation." Euphemism protects the speaker, not the listener. Plain words prove you are not still hiding.
2. **No "but."** "I'm sorry, but..." deletes everything that came before it. Explanations and context may come later, in Phase 2, *when asked for*. They do not belong inside the apology.
3. **Name the impact you caused.** Show that you actually see it: the broken safety, the humiliation, the sleepless nights, the doubting of whole years of memories. Naming their pain accurately — without flinching — is the heart of the apology.
4. **Say what you are doing differently.** Concrete and checkable, not poetic: "I ended all contact in writing. I've offered the transparency agreements. I've started this work." Intentions are invisible; actions are not.
5. **Ask what they need.** "What do you need from me now?" — and then listen to the answer without defending, even if the answer is hard, or is "I don't know yet."

Before you draft (check honestly)

- ☐ I am doing this for their healing, not for my own relief
- ☐ I can hear whatever response follows without defending myself
- ☐ I understand that one apology will not be enough — and that this is normal, not a sign it failed

Expect to give versions of this apology more than once over the coming months. That is not the apology failing — that is how an apology this size lands: in layers.

One euphemism I have been using that I will retire:

Drafting My Apology

A private working page for the involved partner

Draft here first. Then say it face to face, in a scheduled conversation, with the ground rules in effect. Reading straight from the page is completely fine — the care shows in the work, not the memorization.

The draft

What I did (plain words — no euphemism, no 'but'):

The impact I caused — what I have watched this do to you:

What I am doing differently, starting now (concrete, checkable actions):

How I will ask what you need — and what I will do while I listen:

Read-it-back check

Read your draft out loud to yourself, then check:

- ☐ No "but" anywhere in it
- ☐ No explanations of *why* (those come later, if asked)
- ☐ Nothing in it asks my partner to comfort me
- ☐ Every action I listed is one I have already started, or will start this week
- ☐ I could hear this apology read back to me and believe the person meant it

If tears come while you read it — theirs or yours — pause, stay in the room, and let the moment be what it is. Staying is the apology too.

Transparency Agreements

Scaffolding while trust regrows — not forever-surveillance

After an affair, "just trust me" is not a reasonable request. Trust regrows through **voluntary openness**: the involved partner *offering* visibility, rather than the hurt partner extracting it. Think of these agreements as scaffolding around a wall being rebuilt — temporary, load-bearing, and designed to come down when the wall can stand on its own. Review them monthly; keep, loosen, or retire each one.

Our menu (check the ones you are agreeing to)

- ☐ **Location sharing on** both phones, revisited at each monthly review
- ☐ **Open phone and devices** — passwords shared; looking is allowed and never punished
- ☐ **Check-in texts** when plans change or one of us is running late
- ☐ **All contact with the affair partner ends — in writing.** The no-contact message is drafted together, sent where the hurt partner can see it, and any attempted contact *from* the affair partner is reported the same day
- ☐ **Heads-up on unavoidable contact** (shared workplace, mutual circles): what happened, when, and what was said — volunteered, not interrogated
- ☐ **Shared calendars** for the next few months

Agreement we are adding:

The review

We will review these agreements monthly, starting on (date):

The goal is not permanent monitoring — it is a relationship that no longer needs the scaffolding. Retiring an agreement, together, on purpose, is a milestone worth marking.

Signatures

Involved partner — I offer these openly, signed:

Hurt partner — signed:

Transparency offered is medicine. Transparency extracted is surveillance. The same actions — completely different healing.

Trigger Plan for Hard Moments

Turn ambushes into moments you handle together

A song. A street. A hotel logo. A time of night. The date it was discovered. Triggers flip the hurt partner back into the wound without warning — and an unplanned response ("Again?") turns a hard moment into a new injury. You cannot remove every trigger. You *can* agree, in advance, on exactly what happens when one hits. Handled well, a trigger becomes a repetition of repair.

Step 1 — Hurt partner: my known triggers

Songs, places, times of day, situations that hit hardest:

Dates we should both have on the calendar (discovery day, affair-related dates):

Step 2 — Our agreed response protocol

When a wave hits...

1 — Signal. Hurt partner uses our signal word or phrase:

Our signal:

2 — Stop and turn. Involved partner stops what they are doing, comes close, puts the phone down.

3 — Presence, not defense. Say something like: "This is a wave. I'm here. Take your time." Never: "Again?" or "I already said sorry."

4 — Ask. "Do you need words, quiet, closeness, or space?"

What usually helps me (hurt partner):

5 — Afterward. No penalty, no scorekeeping, no post-mortem unless asked. A survived wave is a deposit.

Keep this card where you will both find it. Triggers lose frequency and force when they are met with presence — that is how an alarm system learns the danger has passed.

Understanding How We Got Here

Phase 2 — read this framing before the next page

The affair was 100% the involved partner's choice. Nothing the hurt partner did — or did not do — caused it, and nothing on these pages says otherwise.

Why look back at all?

Because most long relationships develop **vulnerabilities** over time: growing distance, unspoken resentments, needs that went silent, two people who slowly stopped turning toward each other. Vulnerabilities never cause an affair — plenty of people in struggling relationships never cheat, and the involved partner always had other doors: speak up, ask for change, ask for help. Choosing the affair door was theirs alone.

But here is why this work still matters: **understanding the vulnerabilities is how you affair-proof the future you are building.** Understanding how dry the forest was never excuses the one who struck the match — and knowing where the dry places are is how you protect the forest you are replanting.

When you are ready for this — and when you are not

Do this work only after Phase 1 has genuinely landed:

- ☐ The affair has fully ended, confirmed in writing
- ☐ Transparency agreements are in place and being kept
- ☐ The accountability apology has been given
- ☐ The acute waves, while still real, are no longer constant

If the next page sparks fights instead of understanding, that is information, not failure — set it down for a few weeks, or bring it into a session with a couples therapist.

How to use the next page

Each of you fills in your own copy **privately** first. Then share your answers in a scheduled talk, using the ground rules and the Speaker–Listener turns. The hurt partner shares only what they choose — and may skip any prompt entirely.

One more time, because it cannot be said too often: this is information about the relationship, gathered to protect the future. It is never evidence against the hurt partner.

How We Got Here: Both Voices

Print two copies — one for each partner. Answer privately; share in a scheduled talk.

Answer honestly and gently. You are two people describing the same weather from different windows — expect your answers to differ, and let the differences be interesting instead of threatening.

I am the (circle one): hurt partner / involved partner

The prompts

When did we stop turning toward each other? (The small bids for attention — a comment, a touch, a 'look at this' — when did we start missing them?)

What was I not saying? (Needs, loneliness, resentments, worries I kept to myself instead of bringing to you)

What did I let slide? (Rituals, affection, appreciation, time together that quietly disappeared without either of us calling it)

What do I want us to protect — on purpose — this time?

When you share

- Use the Speaker–Listener turns on the next page: one speaks, one reflects back, then swap.
- Listen for the picture, not the verdict. "We drifted" is a map of where to rebuild — not a scoreboard.

These answers are information about the relationship — never evidence against the hurt partner. If sharing turns into blame, stop, and return to the ground rules.

Speaker and Listener

Structured turns that rebuild attunement

After betrayal, ordinary conversation collapses easily: two people speaking past each other, each waiting to defend. Structured turns feel artificial — and they work *because* they are artificial. The structure slows the exchange down until understanding can catch up.

The rules

When you are the Speaker:

- One topic. A few sentences at a time — small enough to be reflected back.
- Speak your feelings and needs, starting from "I": "I feel...", "I need..."
- No character verdicts ("you always...", "you never...").

When you are the Listener:

- Reflect back before you respond: "What I'm hearing is..."
- Then ask: "Did I get that right?" — and let them correct you until they say yes.
- Only then may you respond — or simply swap roles.
- **Reflecting is not agreeing.** You are proving you heard, not conceding a point.

Practice topics (start easy, work upward)

- A good memory from early in our relationship
- Something I appreciated this week
- What the hardest hour of my week felt like
- A worry I have about the rebuild (spoken as a feeling, not an accusation)
- One thing that would help me feel closer to you this month

After a practice round

Topic we practiced:

One thing I understood about my partner that I had not understood before:

What it was like to be reflected back accurately:

Feeling understood is not the same as being agreed with — and of the two, feeling understood is the one that rebuilds closeness.

What Forgiveness Is — and Is Not

Few words carry more pressure in affair recovery than *forgiveness*. Before it can help you, it needs to be untangled from what it is not.

What forgiveness is NOT

- **Not forgetting.** The memory remains. Forgiveness changes its weight, not its existence.
- **Not condoning.** Forgiving never means it was acceptable, understandable-away, or small.
- **Not instant.** It is a process, not a moment — it tends to arrive in layers, and it can recede on anniversaries and hard days without being lost.
- **Not owed.** It cannot be demanded, scheduled, or earned on a deadline. "You should be over this by now" is defensiveness wearing a calendar.
- **Not the same as staying.** Some people forgive and still choose to leave. Some stay and need years before forgiveness arrives. Both are human.

What forgiveness IS

Forgiveness, when it comes, is something the hurt partner does **for their own freedom** — the gradual setting down of a burden they did not ask to carry. It is not a gift owed to the involved partner. And it tends to *follow* two things rather than precede them: **felt safety** and **sustained accountability**. This is why the earlier pages come first. Forgiveness grows in ground that repair has already prepared; it cannot be planted in ground that is still shaking.

Reflection — hurt partner

What would need to keep being true, over time, for forgiveness to stay possible for me?

What am I afraid forgiving would mean? (Check the 'is not' list — is that fear on it?)

Reflection — involved partner

How can I keep earning safety without ever demanding a timeline?

On the days forgiveness seems to move backward, what will I do instead of defending?

Our New Relationship Vision

Phase 3 — building the new one, on purpose

Couples who come through this rarely describe saving the old relationship. They describe building a **new** one — with the same person, with open eyes. This page is the blueprint. Fill it in together, in a good hour, and revisit it as the answers grow.

Rituals of connection

A small daily ritual (coffee together, a real goodbye kiss, a 10-minute end-of-day check-in):

A weekly ritual (a walk, a date, cooking one meal together, screens off):

The weekly state-of-us meeting

Our day and time:

Suggested agenda: one appreciation each — what felt good this week — one thing to adjust — the Weekly Rebuild Check-In page.

Boundaries with outside friendships and attractions

- ☐ Attractions to other people happen to committed humans; **secrecy about them is the danger**. We agree to tell each other early, before anything grows in the dark.
- ☐ Neither of us keeps friendships we hide, minimize, or delete messages from.
- ☐ If an outside connection starts pulling toward flirtation, we name it out loud and step back — together.

Our own boundary:

What we want year one to look like

Hurt partner: what I want year one of the new relationship to look like	Involved partner: what I want year one of the new relationship to look like

Weekly Rebuild Check-In

Fifteen minutes, once a week — the maintenance that keeps repair moving

Use this page in your weekly state-of-us meeting. Print a fresh copy each week. Short, honest entries beat long perfect ones — the power is in looking at the same page together, week after week.

Week of:

This week, in both voices

This week...	Hurt partner	Involved partner
One trustworthy action I saw from you		
One hard moment we survived together		
Something I appreciated		
What I need from you next week		

The quick pulse

Our connection this week (0-10) — Hurt partner:

Compared to last week, that is (check one): ☐ Harder ☐ About the same ☐ Better

Parking lot

Anything that needs a scheduled talk (not right now — put a time on it):

Rebuild weeks are rarely all good or all bad. A hard week recorded honestly on this page is still a deposit — you both showed up to look at it together.

Pocket Repair Cards

Cut them out. Keep them close.

Six small reminders for the moments this work gets hardest — three for the hurt partner's wave moments, three for the involved partner's defensive moments. Cut along the dashed lines. Wallet, phone case, desk drawer, car.

<i>"Hurt partner — This wave is a symptom, not a verdict on today. I can signal instead of carrying it alone. Waves peak, and waves pass."</i>	<i>"Hurt partner — My reactions are a normal response to a real wound. I am not crazy, and I am not too much."</i>
<i>"Hurt partner — I am allowed to ask for what I need: words, quiet, closeness, or space. Asking is part of rebuilding."</i>	<i>"Involved partner — Defensiveness protects me for a minute and costs us a month. Breathe. Stay. Hear it all the way to the end."</i>
<i>"Involved partner — Their pain is the wound healing out loud, not an accusation on repeat. My steadiness is the medicine."</i>	<i>"Involved partner — I cannot argue trust back into existence. I can only act it back — one kept promise at a time."</i>

Cut along the dashed lines.

Please Read: Important Information

About this workbook

This workbook is an educational self-help resource for couples. It shares general information and structured exercises drawn from widely used, research-informed approaches to relationships and affair recovery.

It is not couples therapy, psychotherapy, counselling, medical care, or mental health treatment. Using this workbook does not create a therapist-client or any other professional relationship with its creator. It is not a substitute for assessment or treatment by a qualified couples therapist, psychologist, psychotherapist, counsellor, physician, or other licensed professional.

Affair recovery is heavy work. If your conversations repeatedly flood, stall, or circle without progress — or if either of you is struggling with your mental health — a couples therapist experienced in affair recovery is the right support, and reaching out is a sign of strength, not failure. No resource can promise a particular outcome for your relationship; couples who do this work honestly reach different endings, including both rebuilt relationships and dignified separations.

A note about safety

This workbook is not designed for relationships involving abuse, control, intimidation, or fear. If you are afraid of your partner, or honesty in your relationship gets punished, your safety comes before any repair work:

- **United States — National Domestic Violence Hotline:** call 1-800-799-7233, or text START to 88788 (24/7)
- **Canada — Sheltersafe.ca** lists shelters and 24/7 crisis lines across every province and territory

If you need help now

If you or someone else is in immediate danger, call 911 (Canada and the US) or go to your nearest emergency department.

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (Canada and the United States)

- **Call 988** — free, confidential, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- **Text 988** — if you prefer texting to talking

United States — Crisis Text Line: text HOME to 741741 (24/7)

You do not need to be in crisis to reach out. However this chapter of your story unfolds, both of you deserve honesty, safety, and support.

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