



# When Spouses Cheat

If it happens, rein in your emotions to make logical decisions

— BY DIANE YORK —

**W**hat is the busiest day of the year for private investigators?

Valentine's Day. That's the day lovers celebrate their relationships by sharing tokens of their affection. Sometimes those relationships are meant to be secret.

Cindy Patterson was a Henrico police-woman. Finding her outlook on humanity becoming tarnished, she retired from the police force and became a private investigator as well as a bail bondswoman. She soon found herself with numerous requests (some even from ex-fellow officers) to check on their own spouse's activities.

"With the technology now there are so many ways to check on people," she says. There are baby monitors in rooms to overhear conversations, spyware if you co-own the computer, phone recorders, GPS systems to put on a car to see where it's traveled and of course, the hands-on, direct investigative services she provides.

## MORE MEN HIRE INVESTIGATORS

In Virginia, Patterson says, all you need to prove adultery are signs of affection and opportunity. A kiss or an embrace caught on film shows affection. The couple coming out of an apartment, house or hotel together shows opportunity. Younger couples tend to be bolder, while older couples are typically more cautious. Husbands hire her much more than wives do. She thinks

this is because men usually have the money to pay for her services.

"I screen my clients before I accept a case. I must be very careful how I give my findings to my clients. It can be emotionally devastating to them and they can go off the deep end in many ways. Men are more sane in their reactions; they are generally concerned about money, not emotions. Women are usually in more pain."

Her advice if you are the cheated-on spouse: "Catch up to speed: Your head must catch up with your heart if your heart is determining your actions. Try to get your head and logic to catch up with your emotions. It may take time to adjust; your spouse is dealing from logic and you from emotion."

Why do people cheat? M. Gary Neuman, who has appeared on the Oprah Winfrey Show as the author of several books on marriage and relationships, has said: "Ninety percent of men who have cheated say they felt neglected..."

If neglect was the problem, however, did it take 51 different women to make Tiger Woods feel appreciated? Did Jessie James dally with various strippers and tattoo artists because he felt slighted by Sandra Bullock? Did Peter Cook cheat on Christie Brinkley with an 18-year-old because he needed reassurance?

## IS IT AN ISSUE OF CHARACTER?

Dr. Joyce Hudson, a Richmond marriage and sex therapist who has counseled over

1,800 couples in her career, disagrees with this theory. "Infidelity is a character issue."

Hudson's belief is that people will either cheat or they won't. The marriage vows have meaning. She has seen terrible marriages where neither spouse would choose the option of cheating. On the other hand, she has seen many marriages, which both spouses describe as very satisfactory, yet one or the other chooses the option to cheat. She advises: "The cheated-on spouse must not take responsibility for [their] partner's actions. You cannot be so 'bad' that you force a spouse to cheat nor can you be so 'good' that you prevent a spouse from cheating."

Today, cheating makes for salacious reading but has lost the truly scandalous element it once had. Home wreckers, who at one time would have been figuratively, if not literally, stoned, now become news icons. The cultural climate is such that Marla Maples, who publicly stole Donald Trump's affections from wife Ivana, was put on the cover of *Vogue* magazine. Monica Lewinsky, who seduced a president, was made the spokesperson for a national diet plan. There is even a website for married people who want to carry on with other married people. Its tagline is "Life is Short, Have an Affair!"

Disgusting? Yes, times have changed. **B**

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