



## Post-Affair Self-Care Guide

*Gentle steps you to begin calming your heart, body, and mind as you navigate forward and find support to engage true and sustainable healing individually and as a couple if you are remaining together.*

### The First Few Days

- ☐ **Take care of your body:** drink water, eat something nourishing, rest when you can, go outside, shower, breathe.
- ☐ **Sleep gently:** keep a soft routine; if you wake up, get up for a few minutes and come back to bed.
- ☐ **Safety first:** if you ever feel unsafe, reach out to a local hotline, friend, family or call 911, or go to a safe trusted friend or family's home. Intimidation or abuse is NEVER ok for either partner.
- ☐ **Medical care (if applicable):** schedule an STI screening ASAP, consider emergency contraceptive within 5 days if needed

- ☐ **Pause the noise:** take a 30-90 day break from social media and over-researching.
- ☐ **Communication pause:** if needed, use the 24 hour “timeout” rule (step back and revisit after 24 hour “cool off” period when you are ready to discuss again)
- ☐ **Anchor yourself:** pick one calming routine—slow breathing, a walk, journaling, prayer.  
[Check our meditations to support you.](#)
  - ☐ A gentle reminder to TRY and not make any big decisions right now.
- ☐ **ASK for help:** meals, childcare, rides, work, house, etc.

## The First Couple of Weeks

- ☐ **Support team:** identify a mental/emotional care team— like my beautiful and loving team— [schedule a breakthrough call with Dr. Haywood to talk about working with our team](#)—and one trusted friend to support you without judgment and with 100% privacy and confidentiality.
- ☐ **Set gentle and firm boundaries:** decide when and how you’ll communicate; protect your emotions and mind as best you can until you get the support and help you both need.
- ☐ **Create small goals:** morning, afternoon, evening, one thing for your body, one for your heart, one for your day.
- ☐ **Establish NON-NEGOTIABLE routines:** meals, movement, bedtime
- ☐ **Journal once daily:**
  - ☐ “What I feel:” (name 3 feelings)
  - ☐ “What I need today:” (one reasonable ask of self/other)
  - ☐ “One thing I can control:” (tiny action)

## Ongoing Care (Weeks 3–12)

- ☐ **Have a plan for triggers:** pause, breathe, move, reach out. *(see list below)*

- ☐ **Revisit your values:** who do you want to become as you heal?
- ☐ **Trust-rebuilding OR separation?:** choose a process (therapy, counseling, mediated separation etc.) NEVER feel ashamed to ask for help.
- ☐ **Anniversaries/landmines:** create new memories in new spaces, be mindful of dates or places that sting, pre-plan how to spend anniversaries, holidays etc.
- ☐ **Find meaning:** *SLOWLY* begin work establishing the *WHY's* of what happened and *HOW/WHAT* must change as you move forward.

## **Daily Self-Care for Both Partners**

- ☐ Sleep 7–9 hours when possible.
- ☐ Keep a *consistent* schedule.
- ☐ 20-30 minutes of walking or any gentle movement daily.
- ☐ Connect with one safe person each day (not always about the affair).
- ☐ Limit rumination— allow yourself a 5 minute “worry period” and then shift. When your mind starts looping, shift to something grounding. We will teach you several skills to eliminate trigger patterns completely and how to overcome them quickly, but until then, you need coping strategies to support you.
- ☐ Fuel: protein & fiber at each meal, stay hydrated!

## **How to: the hard talks**

- ☐ **Schedule it:** 30 minutes MAX of 3x/week, NO MORE— otherwise you will be just circling the drain and not receiving any actual value
- ☐ **RULES:**
  - ☐ NO insults (name calling or other derogatory comments)
  - ☐ NO threats
  - ☐ NO emotional cutting

- ☐ EITHER partner may call a 20 min break to “cool off”
- ☐ Stay RESPECTFUL no matter how much pain you are experiencing
- ☐ **Format:**
  - ☐ Each person receives uninterrupted time; remember, LISTEN then RESPOND
  - ☐ **Prompts:**
    - ☐ “ I want to feel safer...”
    - ☐ “A question I want answered is...”
    - ☐ “What I’m taking responsibility for is...”
    - ☐ “Today I showed reliability by...”
    - ☐ “Today I demonstrated emotional safety by...”

## If You Were Betrayed

- ☐ **Focus on stability:** sleep, nourishment, safety.
- ☐ Decide what information you *need* and what can wait.
- ☐ **Protect your energy:** set boundaries around conversations and time. (contact, transparency, and home life, etc.)
- ☐ **Stop-gap decisions:** where you will sleep, who you will tell, and how you will co-parent short-term.
- ☐ **STOP the spiral:** set timers for searching, replaying, or hypotheticals. Again, this is the first order of business when you begin working with our team– reclaiming your minds and emotions...
- ☐ **Practice self-respect:** list 3 positives and personal strengths per day, be KIND to yourself
- ☐ **Remember: none of this defines your worth.**

## **If You Had the Affair**

- ☐ End contact fully and kindly.
- ☐ **Take full responsibility without self-shaming or blaming:** NAME what you are choosing now and we will teach you the healing and inner skills to prevent it from happening again and teach you WHY this happened in the first place
- ☐ Be consistent, transparent, and patient with healing
- ☐ Work with a team to teach you how to process shame and rebuild integrity and trust

## **For the Family**

- ☐ **Keep routines stable for kids:** speak gently and simply.
- ☐ Avoid discussing adult issues in front of them.
- ☐ Ask trusted adults (teacher, caretaker) to keep an eye out for behavioral changes.

## **When You Need Extra Support**

- ☐ If you feel unsafe, don't wait, reach out to someone you trust and make a plan right away.
  - ☐ If you feel hopeless or can't function, please call or text 988 (U.S.) or your local crisis line.
  - ☐ **This kind of traumatic recovery healing is not meant to be done alone — help is strength, not weakness.**
-



## One Page Quick Sheet

Your Grounding Guide ... breathe and care deeply for YOUR beautiful body, mind, and spirit.

### Today

- ☐ Drink a full glass of water.
  - ☐ Eat *something* nourishing, even if it's small.
  - ☐ Move your body — a short walk, stretch, or just step outside.
  - ☐ Take a shower or wash your face — feel the water on your skin.
  - ☐ Reach out to **one safe person** (coach, friend, support buddy).
  - ☐ Pause for **10 slow breaths**, three times today.
  - ☐ Make **no big decisions** — today is for calm and care.
  - ☐ Do **one small kindness** for yourself (a cozy blanket, favorite tea, soft music).
-

## This Week

*... one step at a time*

- ☐ Schedule your **medical screening** if needed.
  - ☐ Book a **session with your therapist or coach** for extra support.
  - ☐ Create a simple **communication plan** (how and when to talk, what feels safe).
  - ☐ Write a short **trigger plan** — what helps when the waves hit (see below S.O.S plan).
  - ☐ Draft a few **boundaries** that support your peace (about contact, home space, or tech).
- 

## This Month

*...building steady ground*

- ☐ Gather a **snapshot of your finances** and important documents — no pressure, just awareness.
  - ☐ Reflect on your **next-step direction**: rebuilding, discernment, or separation support.
  - ☐ Make a **plan for landmine days** (anniversaries, discovery dates, holidays) — choose soothing rituals.
- Revisit and adjust your **boundaries and routines** — what's working, what's not.



## Your Gentle S.O.S. Plan

*When a Wave Hits*

### **S – Signal safety**

Pause and remind yourself: “I’m triggered, but I’m safe right now.” Take a slow look around you. Feel your feet on the floor, the chair beneath you, the air moving around you. You are here, **in this moment**, and you are *safe*.

### **O – Oxygen**

Take 10 slow, steady breaths — let the exhale be longer than the inhale. Imagine releasing tension with every breath out. Let your body soften, just a little more each time.

### **S – Shift your state**

Gently move your body or change your surroundings, step outside, splash cool water on your hands, take a short walk, or wrap up in a blanket. Small shifts help your nervous system reset.



## **Ask for what helps**

If you can, reach out and say what you need:

- “Can you sit with me for a bit?”
- “I need a short break to calm down.”
- “Can we talk about this later tonight?”
- You’re allowed to ask for care and space, both are forms of strength.

## **Time-limit detective work**

- If you choose to look for information, set a 10-minute timer. When it dings, stop, take a breath, and step away. Protect your peace first.

## ***Reflect & release***

After the wave passes, gently note:

- What triggered the reaction?
- What helped soothe it?
- Is there a boundary or routine that might help reduce this in the future?

***You don’t have to get it perfect, the goal is simply to find yourself again in the moment.***