



Why a Man is Reluctant to Share the Details of an Affair

By Jay Allbright

When a marriage suffers due to an affair there are a multitude of questions by the offended party that need an answer. One of the most common complaints that women have after discovering that their husband has had an extra-marital affair is that the husband refuses to give the details of the affair. In an effort to understand why the affair happened and try to figure out if it's likely to happen again, most women **need** to know everything about the affair:

- How did the affair start?
- Who started the affair?
- Why did he have an affair?
- Where did they meet?
- Was he thinking at all of you and his children?
- Was he planning to leave you?
- Does he love her?
- Does she love him?
- Had they discussed starting a new life together?

These are just some of the questions that all women have when their husband has had an affair whether physical or emotional. Unfortunately, most men refuse to talk about it or give as little detail as possible. It is true that women eventually need to have these questions answered and I'll explain that in this article. And I will also explain why men are reluctant to divulge that information at least at first.

The biggest reason why men do not want to discuss their affairs with their wives is shame. Men by nature crave admiration from women. In fact, many affairs are driven by this need. Men love to be admired and will even risk happy marriages to fuel that desire. The Bible says that wives should reverence (respect) their husbands. Ephesians 5:33 *"Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband."* Men can be lured away from their wives by a woman who respects him especially if he is not receiving that respect and admiration at home. Unfortunately it is mans desire to be respected that prohibits his willingness to give the details of an affair. They also understand that cheating significantly lowers their wife's opinion of them, so they try to get out of having to talk about the affair in hopes of minimizing the damage. It often goes like this, "let's just forget about it and go on because she didn't really mean anything to me anyway".

What men fear most is, "She'll never look at me the same way again" thus they refuse to talk about why they cheated. This fear makes men very defensive because they can't bear the thought of their wife, children or friends (especially church friends) looking down on them.

Another top reason why men don't like sharing details of affairs with their wives is that they're afraid it will destroy whatever chance they had of staying married. Men fear that the more a woman learns about an affair, the more "worked up" she gets and then she'll be too hysterical to forgive him and move on. When a man cheats on his wife and refuses to talk about it, it's not because he thinks he's done nothing wrong. Quite the contrary, it's because he's so consumed by guilt and plagued by the fear of losing his wife's and children's respect and, with it, his

marriage. With some men a defensive mechanism takes over that causes him to acknowledge to his wife that it is in his wife's best interest to not know the details of the affair or even know the person because after all his wife would see that she doesn't compare. Rarely is this true and more often than not it is quite the opposite. This comment is usually made by the husband only because it's a lot easier to convince the wife that he is "all that" than it is to explain why he would step outside of his marriage vows.

Men who cheat are afraid that the more the wife knows, the less likely she is to forgive him, so they hang on to the details of the affair hoping to patch things up before they lose everything. Then they hope that once the relationship has patched up, the wife won't *want* to know for fear of reversing all the progress they've made as a couple.

If you are a woman whose husband has had an affair and you want to know all about it, you can get him to talk, but you'll need to address his biggest fears first. It's understandable that at a time when you're dealing with feelings of betrayal, depression, sadness and insecurity the last thing you feel you should do is worry about the needs of the man who hurt you, but, unfortunately, if it means a lot to you to learn the whole truth about the affair, you'll need to give your husband some reassurances in order to get him to open up.

Here are some steps you need to take:

1. Get through step 1 before you go to step 2. What is step 1, it is determining that you want to remain marriage. Remember that scriptures say's Matthew 19:6 *"Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man (or another woman) put asunder."*
2. You should then have a goal, which should include a specific date when you will begin working out these issues. If you do not set a due date goal this will drag on while both become less interested in resolution.
3. Start by assuring him that you know that the two of you can get through this adversity, but in order for you to be able to move on you need him to first answer all of your questions. Your tone needs to be calm in order for him to believe it.,
4. Don't expect all of it to come out instantly. It could take a conversation lasting hours or even several conversations over a period of days before your husband is able to open up and tell you what you need to know.
5. Even when a man wants to share the details of his affair in order to obtain forgiveness, his fears are so powerful that may have a very difficult time letting go of his secrets even if you give him an ultimatum and threaten to divorce him unless he talks.
6. Remember that even though it only takes an instance to destroy a marriage, saving or rebuilding one can be a long, painful and drawn out process that cannot be rushed. If you want to work at preserving your marriage and eventually being able to trust him again, prepare for a lengthy process and remember what's at stake for you whenever you feel tempted to give up.
7. Sharing how you feel is important but remember that you cannot be so consumed with sharing your feelings that you are not open to hearing what your husband has to say. The reality (not excuse) is that in most cases something was wrong that prompted the affair to begin with. If this is not resolved another affair is likely. Exception, there are some who are sexually addicted who have affairs when they have a wife at home that is everything she ought to be but these are exceptions and usually there is a pattern of unfaithfulness throughout their marriage.

The key is Time, Patience, Openness and Forgiveness.