

Affair-Proof Your Marriage With These 10 Relational Steps

As a Christian counselor for more than 30 years, I have worked with countless couples that have been impacted by adultery and sexual addiction.

Thankfully, I have seen many marriages restored, but I'd rather you be able to avoid this pain altogether if at all possible. Here are some ideas that can be put into action (James 1:22) to inoculate your marriage from an affair so that you can truly enjoy it to the fullest.

1. Prayer

I am amazed at how few Christian couples pray together. A Christian marriage is not just between a man and woman; it is between God, a man and a woman. God is a real person within our marriages. Are we engaging Him or ignoring Him? If we try to build a marriage without God, we could be laboring in vain (Ps. 127:1). Without prayer, it is impossible to have the marriage God intended for us to taste and enjoy for a lifetime.

2. Feelings

Most of you have not had much preparation in the area of emotional health to be able to identify and communicate your feelings to your spouse. Just sharing two feelings a day keeps you feeling like your heart has a safe place with your spouse. This exercise might seem more difficult during the first few tries, but push through, so you have the skill to share your heart consistently with your spouse. I strongly encourage any exercises that increase emotional connection between a husband and wife. If you can, get a feelings list [here](#) to start.

3. Praise

Often couples can fall out of praise toward each other, and this usually happens way before the famous “falling out of love” lie begins. Think honestly about this over the last month or so. How often have you given your spouse a real compliment—not just for what they do, but also for who they are to you? A daily diet of praise is like giving your marriage a vitamin. The stronger your relational immunity, the more affair-proof you both can be.

4. Dating

Dating is critical to affair-proofing your marriage. If your marriage is no fun and all work, anything can become a temptation. Fun is supposed to be a regular part of a godly marriage. Seriously, if you don't date, you are creating a marriage without a stress valve. In this no-fun situation you will argue more, be less creative parents, not be a whole lot of fun to be around and hence, you will need a counselor.

5. Church

The local church is a great antidote for adultery. I love hearing my pastor preach and actively live his marital values. The local church provides spiritual fun and fellowship as well as opportunities to serve others. Most churches have couple's Sunday school classes, small groups, mentor couples or other ways to strengthen your marriage.

6. Read

Readers are leaders; we have all heard this. Reading just one or more marriage book a year is a really good idea to affair-proof your marriage. There are many great Christian writers who have various ways of presenting some really good ideas. I encourage you to go get a marriage book and just agree to go through several pages a week.

7. Perspective

I want to share with you an idea from *The Ten-Minute Marriage Principle*. So many of us look to God as our Father, and He is. Yet, have you ever taken a moment to think that he is not just your Father but also your Father-in-law?

That's right, the all-powerful and almighty has a favorite child: your spouse. This can help you tremendously if you realize what you say and do to your spouse impacts your Father-in-law (Mal. 2:14). You see God also beholds us as how respectful and responsible we are caring for our spouse, his favorite child.

8. Jezebel

Revelation 2:26 says, "To him who overcomes and keeps My works to the end, I will give authority over the nations—"to him who overcomes I will give authority over the nations." What we are to overcome in this is that spirit that says it's acceptable to be sexually immoral and play the game of religion. The No. 1 reason people move toward affairs is generally due to their behaviors from a secret life that happens hundreds or thousands of times before a relationship has even started.

When we sin sexually, we sin against our own body, creating a neurological desire for bad things. The only way this stronghold can take hold is through silence. So now what I am about to share can seem radical, but let me tell you, it can stop the tears of adultery from occurring. We need to be willing to ask each other, man to man and wife to husband, what, if anything, is going on secretly.

Ladies, you have the right to ask your husband if he is viewing pornography or sinning sexually in other ways. Look him right in the eye. It is much better to deal with the seed of lust than its fruit of adultery. Men, we need to be brave and keep each other accountable by asking, "So when was the

last time you looked at pornography or were sexual with yourself?"

9. Sex

Now we can also protect ourselves from affairs by being in agreement sexually. There are two concepts that can be very helpful. First, make sure you agree on your intimate life together, so expectations are limited to the reality of who the two of you are.

Secondly, you and your spouse can create a sexual agreement. You can together decide the frequency of sex and how to manage this. You can pick days, split the week or rotate back and forth as to who decides and when. Make the sexual area of your marriage one of agreement rather than confusion and manipulation.

10. Reach Out

Marriage is a team sport, and at times you may need to reach outside of your marriage for help. You can reach out to the local church, marriage ministries or attend marriage conferences. If you need counseling, make sure you go to a Christian counselor.

You may need at times to shed some pride to reach out. Remember if we confess our faults to each other we can heal, but if we keep secrets, things can get even worse (James 5:16). Reaching out can easily help a couple get back on course before someone starts looking for a back door.

Marriage is a gift from God. It's a gift that takes work and is worthy of protecting. The ideas here are proactive. If you can proactively pray, share your heart, nurture each other, seek the Lord, don't have secrets and reach out, you are being proactive to protect your marriage. Even if your marriage has already been impacted by adultery, you can heal from this and still have a great marriage. So I would encourage you to be

proactive and consistent. When the enemy attacks your marriage, you'll be ready to say, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

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