

Believing These Crafty Lies Can Lead to Infidelity

When I was in college, I spent a summer working in a lock shop. My supervisor, Rock, was an old, stocky African-American man with a raspy voice.

He was a hard-working man who had a nickname for everyone and was a great storyteller. One of my favorite stories he told was about a day he was asked to collect screws in the warehouse.

Apparently, the company was trying to save money and time for an in-house building project requiring screws. Rock's manager brought him into the warehouse and pointed to the high steel shelves. Then he asked Rock to remove all of the screws fastening the shelves to the walls.

Rock diligently got out a ladder and went to work, moving right to left. With each screw removed, the shelves stood in place. Finally, he ascended the ladder and removed the final screw on the last shelf. As he looked at the final screw in his hand, the last shelf leaned and crashed into the one next to it. The rest went down like thundering dominoes, discarding all of the contents in an enormously mangled mess.

The manager came running in to find a pile of destruction. Behind the debris was Rock standing sheepishly on a ladder holding one screw in his hand. They stared at each other until Rock broke the silence: "This is your fault."

Marital affairs rarely happen randomly. They result from believing and justifying lies. In marriage, believing lies is like removing the fastening screws. It is dangerous, causes bad decisions and leads to broken marriages.

Exposing lies for what they are keeps us from falling into

their traps and knowing the warning signs of infidelity can keep the dominoes from falling.

Here are the dangerous lies that lead to infidelity. Although I am speaking to husbands, I believe these apply equally to wives as well:

1. My wife should make me happy/I deserve to be happy.

Marriage is actually not about happiness. It may be a part of it at times. The problem is that this attitude is selfishness, plain and simple. When this attitude is nurtured, spouse blaming becomes routine; bitterness is right around the corner. The list of negative qualities in the spouse gets longer and longer. All it does is attempt to justify the selfish attitude so the person is free to chase happiness or the greener grass. Marriage is about dying to self, giving and loving in good times and bad. That's why it's so difficult, but also so rewarding.

2. There's nothing wrong with a little flirting. It's exciting. When someone finds you sexually attractive it feels good, particularly when you feel the same way about them. No one wants to lose that feeling, they want it to continue. So they justify it by telling this to themselves accompanied by: *It doesn't mean anything.* It does. It's hurtful to the spouse because it trains the heart to wander. It's natural to have those feelings, but playing with them gives the wrong person an improper place in the heart. Flirting is like entering a river with a powerful current that ends at a large drop off.

3. What she doesn't know won't hurt her. This attitude can take root in the person doing something they know would make their spouse upset. They recognize it's wrong and probably feel guilty, but don't want to stop. In an attempt to make themselves feel better, they simply tell themselves: *It's not like I'm hurting anyone.* It does hurt. Secrets cause disconnection. Spouses can intuitively sense when there is

distance, no matter the degree. They may not address it, but they sense it. Believing a lie like this is just the beginning of allowing disconnection to enter the relationship. The distance just gets wider and wider until this person connects to someone else.

4. I have sexual needs. Food is a need. Sex is not a need, it's a desire. An attitude such as this one gives sexual urges too much power. It is also a subtle way to justify pursuing sex outside of marriage. Once it's justified in the person's heart and mind, acting on it becomes easier.

5. Our marriage problems are *her* fault. Marriage relationships consist of two people. One person might be more responsible, but not completely to blame. This is a convenient way to avoid responsibility. Anytime a person avoids responsibility, blames others or justifies themselves, they become colder. Walls of defense get fortified and the separation begins. Note: There are occasions where one person is completely to blame, but those are rare.

Can you think of any more?

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