

The Powerful Gift You Can Give to Uplift Your Spouse Daily

“Dr. Weiss, why do I hurt so badly? It feels like all of me hurts inside and out.”

I have heard this question thousands of times in my 30-plus years of caring for partners of betrayal trauma. These women come from every walk of life—every color, every age, every religion and on every continent.

A partner who is smart, attractive, intelligent, good-hearted and faithful to her husband is writhing in pain because she has been betrayed. She asks with a tear-stained face, “Why do I hurt so badly?”

When she has had enough time to feel this, she looks at me again with a look of “OK I’m back. Talk to me.” I tell her, “The reason you hurt so much is because you love so much.” She nods her head in acknowledgement. That is exactly why she hurts so badly.

Let me share with you how I explain the trauma of betrayal to her in a very practical way.

Mary Jo is an executive with an MBA. She makes over six figures, is successful, athletic, a faithful wife and mother of two daughters. Her husband is also a professional and travels. Unbeknownst to Mary Jo, her husband was addicted to porn his entire life. Over the last five years when her husband traveled, his behavior shifted to prostitutes and one-night stands. Mary Jo was informed of all of this when her husband was told he would lose his job if he didn’t get “significant help.” The couple came to my office to do an Intensive. Her husband completed a polygraph clarifying the

extent of his behavior.

Even though Mary Jo already knew 90% of what was on the polygraph, she was still in pain from all the betrayal from her husband of 14 years. She couldn't understand why she was hurting so badly.

I said, "Mary Jo, I want you to stand up. I want you to lean all of your body weight on this chair." She did. "Now in this position you're all in in trusting. You have no defense, no balance, no safety. This is the position you were in when your husband sucker-punched you with betrayal. You had no defense against this hit at all. That's why you hurt all over. The trauma cracks from his betrayal have gone through all aspects of your being (spiritually, emotionally, cognitively and sexually) but also to other areas of your life. You're feeling multiple fractures and the multi-dimensional impact of betrayal trauma.

I encourage you to find a stable sofa or chair, and lean all in. Let your body and soul totally trust the chair. This is who you are. You are all in; all trusting, all giving and a faithful, amazing woman.

You have fully trusted in the past and are now experiencing trauma from the betrayal. The reason your pain is so great is because you were vulnerable and all in.

I want to highlight many ways you probably trusted your husband before the betrayal. The partner betrayal trauma story doesn't start when a woman finds out about the betrayal. It starts when her heart is all in the relationship with the man who betrayed her.

There were many days you gave your heart, trust and sexuality to this man you loved. You dated and bought wholeheartedly the image of him that he was creating for you.

Then came the day you put on your white dress and walked down

the aisle to the classic tune of "Here Comes the Bride." You declared before God, family, and friends that you were all in with this man. You heard him declare some version that he would "forsake all others and love, honor and cherish you."

You trusted him. You trusted him as you moved into apartments and houses, bought furniture, dreamed together and as you supported him in his career. You trusted him enough to have children together, including all of the joys and responsibilities that come with them.

When you go back through the movie of your life, do you see that you were all in with this man? You trusted, and this trusting is where the story begins.

Your trust has been impacted significantly due to his betrayal. His betrayal is huge because the marriage relationship is so intertwined. The Bible says when we get married "The two will become one flesh" (Gen. 2). This is probably the best word picture ever written about marriage.

You become one unit. This marriage combines and utilizes your various strengths and weaknesses. You extended your trust to him in the most significant manner humanly possible.

This is the entire argument for partner betrayal trauma. The sacred, multi-dimensional, interdependent relationship of marriage is a totally different, unique and much more intimate relationship than any other relationship possible.

The marriage relationship has trust as one of its key ingredients to be successful. I know I can totally trust my wife, Lisa, in every area of our lives, and she knows she can trust me. This trust helps us stay intimate as friends and lovers, but practically, it also allows us to function seamlessly on so many personal and professional areas of our lives.

Trust is a very powerful gift you give someone. Total trust

(spirit, soul, body, sexual and financial) is the kind of trust you give to the one man you are all in with. You trusted him in so many areas of your life.

Your trust was huge before betrayal and became part of your story due to no fault of your own. He chose to betray you, whether with porn or sex with others (known or unknown to you), or through intimacy anorexia and withholding himself from you. Regardless if you're a partner because of sex addiction, infidelity or intimacy anorexia, you are a partner who has experienced betrayal and the trauma that comes with that betrayal.

As a partner, you will need to work through the betrayal, and embark on the journey of partner recovery, and begin to become the amazing person you were meant to be. I have seen thousands of women heal and become stronger as a result of this courageous journey.

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