



Northern Light Christian Counseling

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The Three Early Warning Signs of an Affair

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In every culture, marriage is considered a durable, exclusive relationship. Everyone knows it is wrong to cheat. Still, fallible people do. And when caught, they routinely say, "I don't know how it happened. It just happened!"

Here are three intensely personal questions designed to help married people assess the probability they are becoming involved in an affair. Because they are early warning signs, they suggest some immediate, commonsense strategies to prevent extramarital involvement.

Are you enjoying business lunches, dinners, golf outings, sporting events, and parties with a person other than your spouse? Then...

- ◆ Stop rationalizing "My job requires it."
- ◆ Meet clients and coworkers in your or their office and discuss business.
- ◆ When required to attend an event or party, show up late and leave early.
- ◆ And if your employer pressures you to wine and dine customers of the opposite sex, find another job.

Are you cultivating a deep friendship with someone at work or at church and sharing problems you can't discuss with your spouse? Then...

- ◆ Stop telling yourself "We are just friends."
- ◆ Say nothing you would not say if your spouse were sitting next to you.
- ◆ Help troubled friends by insisting that they talk to their pastor or a counselor.
- ◆ Understand that loving others means doing what is best for them, not using them to meet your own intimacy needs.

Are you nursing bitterness and resentment toward your spouse?

- ◆ Stop thinking, "It's got to be better with someone else."
- ◆ Reinvest in your marriage by setting intimacy goals and working toward them systematically.
- ◆ Own up to your part of the problem.
- ◆ When necessary, see a professional counselor to help decipher chaotic communication and coach a better relationship.