

Why do some men cheat? (includes the CHEAT Test)

What is being asked by the question "Why do some men cheat?" I often warn people to be careful what you are asking for. The reason is that people often find what they are seeking. When the information they are seeking is of a general nature, then general answers are what they find. When they are looking for specific answers as "What drove my husband to cheat with that woman at work?" the answers they discover have more direct applications.

In posing the question "why" do some men cheat, people are looking for answers. They want simple, easy to understand answers to explain what motivated a man to 'cheat'. When wives pose such questions, they are often seeking who or what is to blame for the cheating activity. Such questions look for a donkey to pin the tail of blame on for what happened rather than what can be done to correct, rectify or improve the situation.

The structure of the question, "Why do some men cheat?" also suggests a search for 'skeleton key' type answers. Much like skeleton keys of the past opened many doors, skeleton key answers provide quickie explanations for some men in general. Such quickie answers can be applied to a large portion of the gender population. Such answers do little to help them understand their own husband and what his motivations were for cheating.

Even the selection of the term 'cheating' is revealing. Cheating is often used in referring to doing something unsportsmanlike, or where deceit is involved. The cheater is seen as the only person who benefits from the activity. Use of the term 'adultery' carries with it the concept of unlawful relations, and criminal conversations. The term 'adultery' also carries with it a malicious intent. Conversely, cheating does not carry the malicious aspect to it.

Factors to consider regarding cheating

The first tool I use is the "CHEAT" test. The CHEAT Test allows me to identify the motivation behind the cheating. The acronym CHEAT lays out the steps to take:

C-Is he/she cheating? Here I consider what evidence exist that someone is cheating on their spouse. You need to consider the evidence in terms of what you know for sure. It is also helpful to understand their mindset on cheating. If they do not view what they did as cheating, there will be little or no remorse concerning what they did. These questions address character and moral related issues. Some questions to consider here include:

1. Does the man consider cheating as immoral?
2. Does the man believe that he must be 100% faithful to his spouse?
3. Does the man believe that he can have more than one wife or more than one love in his life?

H- Are they honest? You know from living with him/her whether or not they tend to be honest in their dealings with others. One trait to look for is if they are often dishonest in order to avoid hurting other people's feelings. When they are dishonest in order to avoid hurting others, there is a risk that that behavior is going on with yourself as well.

E- Environment. This deals with being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Although it is rare, there are circumstance where either false accusations of cheating are made or that the man is caught in a blackmail type situation. Some people do continue running cons and use cheating as a way to accomplish this. This also includes situations where the accusations of cheating are spread as a way to attack their character.

Some questions to consider in evaluating this step include the following:

1. Was the man trapped in a compromising situation by those seeking to use it to their advantage?
2. Did the person they were caught cheating with want money from your spouse? Are they using the situation to obtain and some kind of advantage?
3. Was the man a victim of slander and rumors?

This category also includes where the man was in a high risk situation. The acronym **HALT** is often used to know these situations. H-Hungry, A-Angry, L-Lonely, T-Tired. Persons in the recovery community know the danger of each of these high risk factors, especially when they are combined. If one or more of these were involved, the cheating could be considered a 'slip' as opposed to a pre-meditated, planned or intentionally deception. Cheating from slips should be handled differently from the ongoing planned out affairs. Both are painful to deal with.

Another factor to consider here is "F". That F stands for a family history. When the cheater is in a high risk situation (as identified with HALT), if there is a family history of cheating, the risk is even higher. The easiest way to remember it is "**HALT-F**". If you want, you can think of it in terms of "**Halt** the **F**ooling around" or some other personalized version of the acronym.

A- Addiction. The possibility of an underlying addiction will help you know what you are dealing with. It will help you know whether you are dealing with a "cheat" or and "addict". In the case of addictions, you are faced with deeply entrenched patterns which will need to be dealt with. With sexual addictions, the structures of the brain have been reprogrammed. They operate differently than the brain of a non-addict cheat. The addiction will need to be addressed before the cheating.

Some of the questions to consider here include:

1. Does the man have a physical condition that causes him to loose control of his impulses?

2. Does the man have a substance abuse problem?
3. Is there a mental health issue? Is there a history of bipolar behavior with them or their family?
4. Does the man have difficulty saying no to sexual advances from women?
5. Did the man think he was smarter than his wife?
6. Does he seek sexual practices associated with sexual addictions? This includes the following practices (as identified by Patrick Carnes):
 1. **Fantasy Sex.** Sex addicts like role playing and the use of fantasies. This also includes having sexual relations in dangerous places. The added stimulation of danger is part of what stimulates the other areas of the brain.
 2. **Seductive Role Sex.** This includes the practice of multiple or serial partners. In this type of sex, the addict takes an active role in the seduction process.
 3. **Anonymous Sex.** This includes high risk sex with unknown persons. Many types of cruising are included in this category.
 4. **Paying for Sex.** The purchase of sexual services provides the addict with the added stimulation they need. Paying for sex also takes some of the guilt out of the situation for the addict.
 5. **Trading Sex.** This often occurs when people sell or barter sex for power. Oftentimes persons in high powered positions will use sex to either express or gain more power. This includes keeping people in emotional bondage with a series of “You owe me” and payment is often in sexual terms.
 6. **Voyeuristic Sex.** This is where watching is a major component of their activities.
 7. **Exhibitionistic Sex.** This is where the addict deliberately attracts attention to the body or sexual parts of the body. They want to show off first to rev up the stimulation in their brain.
 8. **Intrusive Sex.** This is where advances are made and boundaries are violated without the victim finding out.
 9. **Pain Exchange Sex.** This is where being humiliated or hurt is part of their activities. This often includes degrading or debasing the other person. The stimulation of pain receptors is part of what excites them.

10. Exploitative Sex. This is where relations occur involving a power differential. The power differential is exploited to take advantage of or be taken advantage of.

In discovering what motivates some men to cheat, there are many factors to consider. Each of these factors colors how the 'cheating' behavior will be considered. Some of the factors to consider include:

Once these factors are considered, it will help the person asking the question "Why do some men cheat?" to make more sense of their situation.

Motives for cheating

The motives for cheating are varied. Below is a list of some of the motives given by people who cheated on their wife. Inclusion in the list does not mean that they clinically explained reasons, but rather the motivations that were given. Some of the motives for cheating:

1. Need for excitement/stimulation.
2. Lack of self control.
3. Believed they deserved to cheat
4. The woman they cheated with reminded them of someone.
5. The opportunity presented itself.
6. Sex life at home was unfulfilling.
7. Sex life at home was over stimulating
8. Need for someone who admires them.
9. Need for someone younger.
10. Wife no longer takes care of herself.
11. Flirting got out of hand.
12. I was having a good laugh.
13. Revenge.
14. The woman was asking for it.
15. It was a dare.
16. The friendship got out of hand.
17. She came onto me.
18. I was drunk/stoned.
19. Peer pressure
20. I wanted to see if I could do it.
21. I felt driven to be with her.

If you are wanting a window into the mindset of many who cheat, there are websites on the internet such as textsfromlastnight.com that posts text messages sent on cell phones. Seeing for yourself the messages sent provides insight concerning how some men think

and act in situations where cheating occurs. Some of the messages may upset wives, while some are humorous.

