

Finding Quality Care

A Comprehensive Guide to Choosing the Right Support

Finding the right therapist after infidelity is crucial because the wrong approach—such as treating the betrayal merely as a "communication problem"—can inadvertently cause further harm.

Please remember that you are in charge of your recovery. You have every right to ask direct questions to ensure a therapist truly understands the heavy weight of your situation and is fully equipped to guide you through it.

To help you find a space where you feel genuinely safe, heard, and supported, here is a list of questions to consider asking both yourself and prospective therapists. We believe both therapy and community are an integral part of healing. If you want to learn more about the types of groups that Affair Recovery offers, please [reach out](#) to our team of infidelity survivors.

Questions to Ask Yourself Before the Search

- **What is my primary goal right now?** Clarify if you need immediate crisis stabilization for acute panic and sleeplessness, space to process the trauma, or guidance on deciding whether to stay in the relationship.
- **Am I seeking individual or couples counseling?** Individual therapy focuses strictly on your healing and nervous system regulation. Couples therapy focuses on the dynamic between you and your partner. Many betrayal trauma specialists recommend the betrayed partner establish their own individual therapist first.
- **What are my logistical and personal boundaries?** Consider your budget, whether you need in-person or virtual care, and if you have a strong preference for the therapist's gender, worldview, or religious/secular affiliation.

Questions to Ask the Therapist: Experience and Training

- **What percentage of your practice is dedicated to infidelity and betrayal trauma?** You want someone who treats this frequently and considers it a primary specialty, not just a general issue they occasionally encounter.
- **Do you hold specialized certifications for betrayal trauma?**
- **What trauma-processing modalities do you use?** It's best to find a therapist explicitly trained and certified in Internal Family Systems (IFS), Emotional Transformation Therapy (ETT), EMDR, or Somatic Experiencing.
- **If providing couples therapy, what specific framework do you use?** Listen for evidence-based models focused on attachment and repair, such as Emotionally Focused Therapy (EFT) or the Gottman Method.

Questions to Ask the Therapist: Clinical Approach

Understanding a therapist's approach to treatment is key to ensuring their methods align with your expectations and how you best learn and heal:

- **How do you conceptualize or define the impact of infidelity?** The goal is that they view it as an attachment injury and a profound trauma that shatters the betrayed partner's reality and sense of safety.
- **Do you view the infidelity as a symptom of a broken relationship or a choice made by the individual?** This is a critical screening question. While marriages can have pre-existing problems that both people contribute to, a trauma-informed therapist will hold the unfaithful partner solely responsible for the choice to betray, without victim-blaming.
- **How do you handle secrets in couples therapy?** If you are interviewing a couples counselor, they must have a strict "no secrets" policy. They should not agree to hold a secret for the unfaithful partner, as this replicates the deception and triangulates the therapist.
- **What is your stance on how the truth should be shared?** A qualified specialist will strongly discourage "trickle truth" (leaking painful details slowly over time) and will instead advocate for and facilitate a formal, structured therapeutic disclosure process.
- **How will we establish safety in the first few sessions?** The immediate focus should be on stabilizing your nervous system, stopping any ongoing gaslighting or deception, and establishing clear boundaries.

Assessing Your Community and Support System

Because betrayal often involves secrets, shame, and a shattered reality, you may feel entirely alone. It is important to determine whether you have a healthy, objective support system or if finding a community to walk alongside you is needed.

- Who currently knows the truth about my situation? Are the people who know capable of holding space for my pain without giving unsolicited advice, judging me, or rushing my decisions?
- Do I feel emotionally safe with my current friends or family, or do I feel the need to protect myself or my partner's image around them?
- Am I isolating myself due to shame, embarrassment, or sheer exhaustion?
- Do I have access to a community of people who have survived similar trauma, such as a specialized betrayal trauma support group?
- Would joining an [Affair Recovery group](#) provide the validation and shared reality I am currently missing?

Assessing Your Healing Timeline and Pace

Healing from betrayal trauma is not a linear process, and the pain cannot be bypassed. However, the *format* of the support you choose will heavily dictate the intensity, depth, and momentum of your recovery. Here are questions to help you determine which format—or combination of formats—best aligns with your current emotional capacity, resources, and desired pace of healing.

1. Individualized Therapy Sessions (The Foundation: Steady, Customized Pace) Individual therapy provides a consistent, reliable container for healing. It allows you to build deep trust with a practitioner over time.

- Does a steady, weekly cadence feel most manageable for my current energy levels and daily responsibilities?
- Do I need a private, one-on-one space to process highly sensitive details without the presence or input of others?
- Am I looking for highly customized trauma-processing (like EMDR, IFS, or ETT) tailored specifically to my unique triggers and nervous system?

2. Therapeutic Intensives (The Catalyst: Accelerated Pace) Intensives typically involve multiple days of highly focused, hours-long therapy. They are designed to accomplish the equivalent of months of weekly

therapy in a very short window.

- Am I in an acute crisis (unable to function, sleep, or eat) that requires immediate, concentrated stabilization and boundary-setting?
- Am I feeling "stuck" in my recovery and looking for a rapid deep-dive to jump-start my healing process?
- Do I have the financial resources, childcare, and schedule flexibility to step away from my daily life for a multi-day intensive?
- Is my nervous system currently resilient enough to handle multiple days of intense trauma processing, or would that cause me to emotionally flood and shut down?

3. Weekly Group Courses (The Community: Shared, Structured Pace) Group courses usually run for a set number of weeks (e.g., 8–12 weeks) and focus heavily on psychoeducation, shared reality, and guided curriculum.

- Am I seeking a structured curriculum to help me understand the mechanics of betrayal trauma, boundaries, and grief?
- Does a weekly group setting appeal to me as a way to break my isolation and learn alongside others who truly understand my pain?
- Do I learn well through guided education and shared experiences, rather than just one-on-one processing?

4. Combining Formats (The Comprehensive Approach: Layered Pacing) Many people find that utilizing a combination of these formats creates the most robust safety net for their recovery.

- Would combining individual therapy (for deep, private trauma work) with a weekly group course (for community validation and education) provide the most balanced path forward?
- Am I interested in using a weekend intensive for a rapid jump-start, but recognize I will need a steady, weekly individual therapist to help me integrate that work long-term?
- Do I have the emotional bandwidth (and financial resources) to handle the intensity of combining two or all three of these approaches right now, or do I need to start with just one to avoid becoming overwhelmed?

