SURVIVING
AN AFFAIR
Other books by Willard F. Harley, Jr.

His Needs, Her Needs
Love Busters
5 Steps to Romantic Love
Give and Take
Your Love and Marriage
The Four Gifts of Love
To
Joyce and Phil
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YOU CAN SURVIVE THIS AFFAIR

If you are a victim of infidelity, you have been on the emotional roller coaster ride of your life. Most couples caught up in the tragedy of an affair tell us that they have never felt such intense emotions. They are overwhelmed by anger, depression, fear, guilt, loneliness, and shame.

A betrayed spouse will ask, How could my spouse do this to me—cheating on me, lying to me over and over again? I can never trust my spouse again. I have so much anger and resentment it scares me. My feelings go way beyond hurt—I can’t even put into words the pain I am feeling.

A wayward spouse often says, I used to beg my spouse for more attention but I never beg anymore—my lover gives me all the attention I need. But I don’t know if the attention I’m getting is worth the price. One moment I’m sure I’ve done the right thing. Then I look into the faces of my children and I’m not sure anymore. I don’t want to give up my family but if I give up my lover, I’ll be losing the best thing that ever happened to me. What should I do? I’m an emotional wreck!

When a couple feel such strong emotions, many question if marital reconciliation is possible. How can we ever recover from such pain? And even if we recover, can we live with the memory of betrayal? Can we ever trust each other again? Can we ever love each other again?
SURVIVING AN AFFAIR

As marriage counselors we have been asked these questions thousands of times and have been able to respond with a definite yes. Let us assure you that if you put into practice what we recommend in this book, the prognosis for the future of your marriage is very good.

In the pages that follow, we use “I” to refer to either of us as we describe our experiences and counsel.

It’s Hard to Believe That Marital Recovery Is Possible after an Affair

When I first counseled spouses that were trapped in an affair, I thought I would be preparing them for divorce. But to my surprise, again and again I saw opportunities to save marriages. Infidelity did not necessarily cause either the betrayed spouse or the wayward spouse to want a divorce. Often what they both wanted was to escape the pain of their mistake and create a thriving marriage.

The path that leads to recovery is very narrow, and unless couples find that path, the tragedy of an affair can permanently cripple a marriage and often leads to the further tragedy of divorce.

So that became my mission—to help couples recover from the disaster of an affair and create a fulfilling marriage that would prevent any future affairs. Since I began helping these tormented couples, I’ve witnessed the recovery of thousands of marriages. But the path that leads to recovery is very narrow, and unless couples find that path, the tragedy of an affair can permanently cripple a marriage and often leads to the further tragedy of divorce.

If you are a wayward spouse or a betrayed spouse, you may be undecided as to what to do next. One moment you want to divorce your spouse, and the next you want to try to reconcile. That’s the way most people in your situation feel because there are advantages and disadvantages to both choices. Divorce carries with it the destruction of a family and the loss of a spouse you may still love, and yet reconciliation means you will be living with the scars of
YOU CAN SURVIVE THIS AFFAIR

betrayal and the risk of another affair. Your emotional reactions may be so strong that you simply cannot make the choice right now.

Even if you have decided that marital reconciliation is impossible, or if it’s only you or only your spouse who wants to survive the affair and restore your marriage, I would like you to consider my strategy for recovery. It has proven successful for thousands of couples, and once you understand its objectives, you may be willing to try it. My plan is that narrow path that gets you beyond the affair, helps you make your marriage better than it’s ever been, and protects you from future affairs.

You Can Do Better than Survive—Your Marriage Can Thrive

There is hope for the recovery of your marriage, and thousands of couples have proven it. When you complete my program for reconciliation, you will have the marriage you have always wanted—one that is filled with love and compatibility.

My plan is that narrow path that gets you beyond the affair, helps you make your marriage better than it’s ever been, and protects you from future affairs.

Before I tell you about my plan for recovery, you need to know some of the common characteristics of affairs. I want to tell you about Jon and Sue. Their situation may be different from yours but it illustrates some of the basic elements of most affairs. Like so many couples, Jon and Sue thought it could never happen to them.
About the Authors

Willard F. Harley, Jr., Ph.D., and his daughter, Jennifer Harley Chalmers, Ph.D., are licensed psychologists and marriage counselors. For the past eight years they have collaborated to create and improve methods that restore love to marriages. Their primary effort has focused on the recovery of marriage following an affair. In *Surviving an Affair* they describe the methods they have found to be most effective in achieving this goal.


Dr. Chalmers and Phil, her husband of fourteen years, have two daughters and live in Vadnais Heights, Minnesota.
His Needs, Her Needs: Building an Affair-proof Marriage

In a successful marriage, a husband and wife meet each other’s emotional needs. But when these needs are not met in marriage, a husband and wife are tempted to go outside the marriage to satisfy them.

Ignorance of what these emotional needs are often contributes to a couple’s failure to meet them. Men try to meet needs that they value, and women do the same. The needs of men and women, however, are often very different, and husbands and wives end up trying to meet the wrong needs.

In His Needs, Her Needs Dr. Harley describes ten important emotional needs for men and women. He helps you identify which are the most important to you and your spouse, explains how to communicate your needs to each other, and guides you in learning how to meet each other’s needs.

A successful marriage requires skill in caring for the one you promised to cherish throughout life. His Needs, Her Needs will teach you how to care for your spouse, eliminating the major cause of infidelity. Once you have learned the lessons in His Needs, Her Needs, your spouse will find you irresistible.

(Hardcover—216 pages)
0-8007-1478-4 Retail $16.99

His Needs, Her Needs is available in condensed form on two 90-minute audiotapes.

0-8007-4400-4 Retail $14.99
Love Busters: Overcoming Habits That Destroy Romantic Love

Love Busters are habits that destroy romantic love. They usually develop soon after marriage and, before long, destroy intimacy, safety, trust . . . and romantic love.

In Love Busters Dr. Harley shows couples how to avoid losing romantic love by recognizing and overcoming five common but dangerous Love Busters: angry outbursts, disrespectful judgments, annoying behavior, selfish demands, and dishonesty. When these are unchecked, consideration and thoughtfulness turn into self-centeredness and thoughtlessness. Romantic love is the victim and with it goes all hope for a fulfilling marriage.

Romantic love is not the only victim, however. Dr. Harley also demonstrates how Love Busters prevent couples from resolving common marital conflicts involving friends and relatives, career choices, financial planning, children, and sex. When Love Busters are overcome, these conflicts are easily resolved.

(Hardcover—192 pages)
0-8007-1739-2 Retail $16.99
Marriage can last a lifetime if couples apply two rules to their relationships: (1) Meet each other’s most important emotional needs, and (2) avoid hurting each other. Dr. Harley wrote the international best-seller *His Needs, Her Needs* to help couples learn to identify and meet each other’s most important emotional needs. Then, he wrote *Love Busters* to help couples learn to avoid being the cause of each other’s unhappiness.

Now he has written *Five Steps to Romantic Love* to help couples apply the principles found in his first two books. The contracts, questionnaires, inventories, and worksheets that Dr. Harley has used in his counseling practice are arranged in a logical sequence to help couples follow five steps:

1. Make a commitment to overcome marital conflicts.
2. Identify habits that cause unhappiness.
3. Learn to overcome those habits.
4. Identify the most important emotional needs.
5. Learn to meet those needs.

Follow these *Five Steps to Romantic Love* and you’ll be on the road to a marriage that is passionate and free of conflict. It’s well worth the effort.

(Paperback—192 pages)

0-8007-5623-1 Retail $12.99
Give and Take: The Secret to Marital Compatibility

Most couples begin marriage blissfully compatible and deeply in love. But they usually don’t stay that way. Why?

In Give and Take you will find out why you and your spouse may have lost the compatibility you had when you married. Then you will learn how to restore it, making you as much in love with each other as you ever were.

You will learn about your Giver and Taker (and about your spouse’s Giver and Taker). They certainly can wreak havoc on your marriage, but you can educate these characters and turn them into heroes.

You will become acquainted with the Three States of Marriage and realize how tough it is to negotiate in any of them. Although they can prevent you from getting what you need, their destructive influence can be overcome, and you’ll learn how to do it.

By learning how to give and take fairly and effectively, you can give your spouse what he or she needs the most and in return take what you need the most. The lessons of Give and Take will make your marriage what it was meant to be—a safe and caring relationship that brings out the best in both of you.

(Hardcover—304 pages)
0-8007-1726-0 Retail $16.99

Give and Take is also available in condensed form on two 90-minute audiotapes. Questionnaires are not included, but all of the essential concepts in their original form are preserved.

0-8007-4405-5 Retail $14.99
Your Love and Marriage:  
Dr. Harley Answers Your Most Personal Questions

Dr. Harley’s popular web site, Marriage Builders, has helped thousands of couples learn to resolve marital conflicts. First they become familiar with basic concepts, and then they read the weekly Q&A columns that deal most closely with the conflict they are experiencing. In each of these Q&A columns, Dr. Harley posts questions he has received regarding a particular marital problem and provides his solution to the problem. If the existing Q&A columns do not help a couple solve their problem, they ask Dr. Harley by e-mail for his personal help in finding a strategy that will work for them. These letters and his answers are sometimes included in new Q&A columns.

Your Love and Marriage is a collection of the most important information found on the Marriage Builders web site. It contains a summary of Dr. Harley’s basic concepts, which are followed by the questions he is most frequently asked, and his answers to them. The questions are arranged by topic: How to survive infidelity, sexual adjustment, how to negotiate in marriage, living together before marriage, and how to keep love in your marriage. Under each topic, specific questions are discussed, such as:

- What should I do with my unfaithful spouse?
- Can one spouse save a marriage?
- Why don’t I want to make love to my spouse anymore?
- How can I stop the affair I’m having?
- Would living together prepare me for marriage?
- How should we divide domestic responsibilities?

These and scores of other questions are answered in a concise and practical way, showing how Dr. Harley’s basic concepts can solve any marital conflict.

Read Your Love and Marriage to find the answers to your questions about marriage. Let Dr. Harley’s approach to solving marital problems help you solve yours.

(Paperback—320 pages)  
0-8007-5642-8 Retail $12.99
The Four Gifts of Love: Preparing for Marriage That Will Last a Lifetime

You exchange rings on your wedding day. These gifts symbolize your commitment to love and care for each other. But do you really know what you are promising to do? Is it something you intend to do every day for the rest of your life?

The four gifts of love are care, protection, honesty, and time. Together, these gifts are the essential ingredients for a lasting marriage. When you understand how to apply these gifts through all the ups and downs of daily life, you will be prepared for a lifetime of love.

Dr. Harley will help you begin your marriage the right way by teaching you how to give the four gifts that will guarantee your love for each other.

(Hardcover—112 pages) 0-8007-1754-6 Retail $17.99
Visit Dr. Harley’s web site:

http://marriagebuilders.com

In this Marriage Builders site you will be introduced to some of the best ways to overcome marital conflict and some of the quickest ways to restore love. And it’s free!

Dr. Harley has helped thousands of couples with his revolutionary concepts. These are all clearly explained in the “Basic Concepts” section of the site. Then in his weekly Q&A columns, he explains how these concepts can be used to solve just about every marital problem. And if that’s not enough—if you have a problem that is not addressed in his Q&A columns or are uncertain how to proceed—you can e-mail your questions to him.

Marriage Builders also provides a telephone counseling service at a reasonable fee for those who feel they need personal encouragement to improve their marriage. The toll-free number is 888-639-1639.

Let Marriage Builders help you build your marriage to last a lifetime!