

7 JEALOUSY
STOPPING
SECRETS



SUSIE & OTTO COLLINS

Some Straight Talk About Your Jealousy...

If you're here and you're jealous, the first order of business is to give you a friendly warning about your jealousy and to let you know that it's time for a reality check...

If jealousy is a problem for you and your relationship, you cannot keep doing the same things, acting in the same ways, believing the same things and continuing to be jealous if you want true, lasting love in your life.

We're sharing these 7 secrets to stopping jealousy with you because we know, after working with thousands of men and women who were jealous, that if you don't make the changes first within yourself and secondly within your relationship and the way you interact with your spouse or partner, your relationship is doomed.

Maybe you think your jealousy is justified...

Maybe you think your partner's behavior screams out "I'm cheating" or "I want someone else..." and maybe you have every right to think and feel that way...

And then again...

Maybe it's just your jealousy playing cruel tricks on you and your mind to the point that you're saying things and acting in ways that will absolutely drive your partner away and leave you alone (possibly forever) because of it.

Jealousy doesn't care who it hurts and how many relationships and marriages it ruins.

Jealousy should be thought of as your #1 enemy or obstacle to creating and keeping the love you want in your life.

If your jealousy is ruining your life and is threatening your relationship, this is a serious situation.

Here's a quick story to illustrate how serious this can be...

Otto had one of those fathers who really wanted him to learn to drive a car at an early age. When Otto was only 13 or 14 years old, they'd go out "driving" on Sundays after church on back roads and fields where Otto couldn't hurt anyone or the car and he'd practice driving.

What Otto's dad used to tell him about a car also applies to you and your jealousy.

In order to impress upon Otto the importance of being safe and letting him know how powerful a car was, Otto's dad would tell him—

"Son, driving a car is like fooling with a loaded gun. A car and driving is something that you should take seriously because it has so much power that if you're not careful, it can get out of control and kill someone else or possibly even you and the people you care about most."

It's the same way when it comes to your jealousy...

If you don't take jealousy seriously, its power can be deceptive and if you allow it to get out of control, it can and will kill the love between you and the person you care about most in the world and totally destroy your relationship or marriage.

If nothing you're doing is working and you're feeling hopeless that it will always be this way, you've come to the right place.

We know because we've been there.

Like a lot of couples who love each other, we thought we were immune to the poisonous tentacles of jealousy but we found out that wasn't the case.

Our Jealousy Story...

Here's our jealousy story and the lessons you can take away from it that can help you save your relationship...

As of this writing, we've been together for 16 years (married for 14 of those years) and before we got together, we were both in long-term marriages to other people.

Susie was married to a man from her home town for 30 years and Otto was married to his ex-wife for 15 years.

It wasn't until the last couple of years of Susie's marriage to her previous

husband that jealousy reared its ugly head for the first time.

She didn't realize it at the time but these jealous feelings would become more familiar to her than she ever wanted.

Here's her story in her own words...

"I remember that when my husband (now ex) went out of town for a conference many years ago, I became almost hysterical when I imagined that he was with another woman.

He didn't often go out of town by himself so this trip was unusual.

At the time, I was a director of a library at a university and traveled out of town on a regular basis going to conferences, meetings and other university and other library organization functions.

On this particular occasion when he went out of town, I remember worrying about who he was eating with and actually saw him in my mind going to a hotel room with another woman he met at the conference!

When he called me that evening to say goodnight, I was crying and upset with a fear that was irrational but still very, very real. I remember barely breathing as I tried to calm down and talk with him.

He, of course, told me that nothing was going on but I barely slept that night worrying about him being away from me and being tempted by another woman.

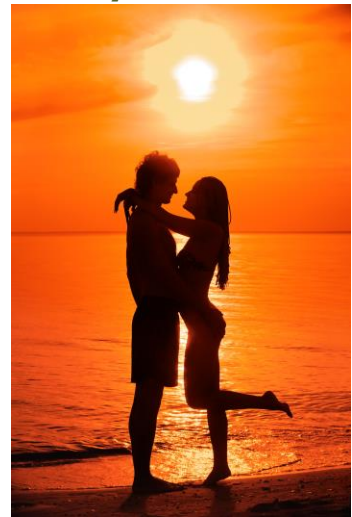
We never spoke of it again and I don't remember jealousy coming up any more with him quite that intense but I do realize now that incident planted the seeds of unwarranted jealousy of Otto many years later."

Being Soul Mates Doesn't Make You Immune To Jealousy

After we both had divorced our previous spouses, the two of us had what we call our "soul mate bliss experience" where we felt like we were "home" with each other and that we always wanted to be together.

In fact, after we had our bliss experience, we were together constantly except for when we went to work.

Not too many months after that experience, while still feeling the bliss of being together, jealousy reared its ugly head—this time from what seemed like out of nowhere.



Here's what happened...

We've always been interested in personal and spiritual growth and in fact this is one of the things that we consider to be the glue that holds us together.

Because of this, we attended personal and spiritual study groups near where we lived at the time. At these meetings, we (and other like-minded people) would study all kinds of topics related to personal and spiritual matters.

Susie remembers being at a one of these study group meetings with Otto one night and seeing him engaged in a deep conversation with another woman and getting triggered in a big way.

Susie was instantly angry, upset and downright mean and said some things right in front of the woman Otto was talking to that most people would be embarrassed about but in that moment it didn't matter.

She was angry and she let it show.

Later, she realized that she was upset because this OTHER WOMAN had Otto's full attention and was having the conversation that Susie wanted to be having with him. She wanted his full attention and she wasn't getting it in that moment.

She also realized that she was triggered because she and Otto had been apart all day, had been to this meeting that night and Susie just missed him.

In that moment when jealousy reared its ugly head, Susie remembers being very upset with Otto (even though he wasn't doing anything wrong) because of the frustration and the fear that came up when she didn't feel important to him anymore.



After that painful situation, we knew something had to change.

We realized that as much in love as we were, if we didn't solve our jealousy problem, it would destroy this otherwise beautiful relationship.

After that, we made the decision that our relationship was more important to us than anything and that we were going to learn and practice everything we could to stop jealousy and create the closeness we wanted.

And that's when we began to discover the secrets we're about to share with you in this book that stopped our jealousy—and can help you stop your jealousy too.

We've applied these 7 secrets with incredible success to stop jealous dead in its tracks both in our own lives and later, after we became certified relationship coaches, with our coaching clients who were jealous.

These secrets are in part what has kept our relationship alive, juicy and growing after all these years of being together. And if you will only practice the ideas we give you here, we know that you can put an end to your jealousy and create more of the love, closeness and connection you want as well.

You can use these 7 secrets as a starting point to rebuild your love and connection, no matter how bad your jealousy has been and how much damage it has caused to your relationship up until now.

Before we get started with the 7 jealousy stopping secrets, here are a few "facts" about jealousy that can help you better understand your situation...

1. It's "normal" to feel jealous when you perceive that your relationship is in danger and love will be taken away

In fact, we and other relationship researchers say that it can be abnormal not to feel jealous when a partner (or someone "hitting" on your partner) is blatantly exhibiting conduct that you think degrades you and violates agreements you've made.

Extreme jealousy (continuous, intense focus on a partner's suspected infidelity) falls outside the "normal" category but the point is, we've all felt jealous at one time or another and in some situations.

Jealousy isn't a character defect and there's no "jealousy gene" that's unalterable--even though some of us are more predisposed to experiencing it at more intense levels because of our past experiences and insecurities.

Jealousy can be a very normal reaction to actions that seem to threaten your relationship (especially if you've been cheated on before) but it becomes not "normal" when you're in a constant state of alert and crisis, especially when your mind is making up untrue stories.

The point is that you can learn how to deal with your thoughts and reactions so that they don't harm your relationship but it actually gets stronger. And you can learn how to deal with a real crisis to your relationship in a way that is authentic and effective.

2. Messages that "everyone cheats" are all around us

Jealousy can be agitated and made worse because we are all constantly bombarded with images in the media and on the internet that suggest that everyone cheats.



Because this message is so pervasive in our culture, it can unconsciously lurk somewhere in the back of your mind and you may not even be aware that it can happen to you.

Just look at top-rated television programs and real-life dramas of celebrities' and politicians' lives.

Cheating is one of the top story lines that gets our attention and hooks us in--but all of these dramas may hook us in more ways than we bargained for.

Whether we like it or not, doubt and mistrust can be planted in our minds and blown way out of proportion and we don't even realize it until jealousy has caused real problems.

3. Your partner's actions or the actions of a supposed rival can stir up jealous feelings

We're not only talking about blatant acts that would cause mistrust like your partner paying too much attention to someone else or looking a little too long at her or him—or maybe even a past affair or your partner's ex who won't go away.

We're also talking about a partner who is closed to sharing much about himself or herself by being guarded, secretive, defensive, angry or blaming.



Whichever of these is the case in your experience, if your partner is acting in any of these ways, you can feel pretty insecure in your relationship and jump quickly to being jealous over what might otherwise be “small” things.

Even though your partner may be acting in certain ways that heighten jealousy, you don't have to be overwhelmed by jealous feelings.

No matter what's contributed to your jealousy, you're here because you want to stop it.

If you want a better life and a happier, healthier relationship, you know that your jealousy has to be stopped.

The way to begin doing that is to keep reading this book and start practicing the secrets to stopping jealousy we're going to give you.

What you're about to read is information we would like to have had when we were going through the pain of jealousy in our own relationship.

Our wish for you is that you'll be jealousy-free and have and keep the relationship that you've always wanted.

Important Author's Note:

Throughout the pages of this book, we offer not only how to apply each of these 7 secrets to stopping your jealousy in your relationship, but we also answer specific questions that real people asked us.

While we wrote our answers to these questions as if we were talking to them, be sure you read these questions AND our answers because our answers to them could be just what you need to hear and try out in your life too!

We encourage you to take these steps to stopping jealousy and start practicing them in your own relationship and life.

At the end of each chapter, we've included a "tool" for you to practice. If you practice them consistently, you'll find these "tools" to be practical ways to deal with your jealous feelings on your way to becoming free of jealousy.

After all, you've probably tried the same thing over and over again and it hasn't worked, so now it's time to try something new...

With that in mind, here are our "7 Jealousy Stopping Secrets"...

Secret #1:

Get Clear If Your Jealousy Is Warranted Or Not



When you're jealous, you may think your partner or spouse is doing things that may not actually be happening...

Or are they?

If you want to stop jealousy, this is the first question that must be answered.

Is your jealousy warranted or not?

How can you tell if your eyes are deceiving you?

How can you tell if your partner really is or isn't doing something that is inappropriate or possibly even destructive to your relationship?

Answering the question of whether your spouse or partner is cheating on you or violating your trust and any agreements (spoken or unspoken) about how you're going to be together is critically important to letting go of your jealousy and creating the love you want in your life for one simple reason...

Figuring out whether your jealousy is warranted or not lets you know the work that's to be done within you and within your relationship or marriage to heal it.

You see, if your jealousy is warranted—meaning, your spouse or partner really is having an affair, cheating or violating your trust in some other way—then, by definition you don't have a jealousy problem.

In this case, if your jealousy really is warranted, you have a trust problem.

If your jealousy is warranted then you most likely also have some problems and challenges that need to be worked out with your boundaries and what we call agreements that the two of you are going to live with (hopefully happily) in your relationship. You'll also need to learn how to calm your jealous thoughts and feelings that cloud clear thinking.

If you find out your jealousy is warranted, you can learn a great deal about how to stop your jealousy and take action to create what you want by putting into practice what we include in this book.

On the other hand, if your jealousy isn't warranted and there's no reason for you to be jealous other than the demons in your head—then you've got some other challenges that you've got to solve if you want to save your relationship or marriage and create the love you want.

Figuring out whether your jealousy is warranted or not is the first critical step in stopping your jealousy because it determines your whole strategy completely for how you are going to move forward.

Right now, you may be wondering how to tell if your jealousy is warranted or justified or not. Here are a few questions and our answers that will help you decide...

Q **uestion: "How do you know whether the jealousy is justified (i.e. partner is not trustworthy) or whether it is just not warranted (i.e. partner is trustworthy)?"**

A **nswer:** We appreciate your question because it really gets to the heart of the confusion. When a person feels jealous, there is generally a strong impulse that doesn't necessarily match what is actually happening.

The confusion is in figuring out what to believe and what to do about the feelings that are coming up.

An impulse from jealousy might be to speak or act in some way based on the assumption that a fear or worry is accurate. The drawback, of course, is that you might be misinterpreting or completely misunderstanding whatever is going on.

Your words and actions may create a problem when there actually wasn't one to begin with.

Another possible impulse that you might have is to withdraw.

Based on the belief that your partner is lying, flirting, untrustworthy or even cheating, you will become very quiet and pull away emotionally.

This can also cause big problems in the relationship.

Focus on the Facts

It's so important to get to the facts and make them your focus BEFORE you get too far down the road of impulse. When you notice that you're jealous and even if you've begun to withdraw or to lash out, pause.

Take the time to determine what is actually going on-- within you and with your partner.

It is always beneficial to make wise choices about whether or not to trust.

Just be sure to base your assessment of whether or not your partner is trustworthy on reliable information.

Start out by getting clear about what your main question is. What is the biggest concern you have?

- Is it the way that your partner looks "too long" at others or one particular person?
- Is it the frequent texts your partner exchanges with a certain co-worker and the fact that he or she tries to hide them?
- Is it a vague feeling you have that you're not being told the full truth?
- Do you miss having regular connecting time with your partner?

Once you have honed in specifically on what you are feeling suspicious or jealous about, then it's time to look at the information you have.

Make a list of the tangible and verifiable information around your main question.

Pay close attention to any inconsistencies in your partner's behavior or any significant and unexplained changes in how he or she acts and treats you.

Take the Perspective of an Observer

As you think about jealousy and your relationship, here's a question for you...

Would an outside third party observer—someone with no emotional ties or connection to your situation see your jealousy as linked to accurate concerns or not?

Would an observer consider your partner to be trustworthy or not?

In other words...

If you were to go to the main street in the city (or nearest city to where you live) and pick someone totally at random and ask them to take a bird's eye view of your relationship situation, what would they say about it?

Would they say there's lying, cheating, and infidelity going on here or would they say to you—this is just in your imagination—you've got to get help with this jealousy problem of yours?

If there doesn't seem to be enough reliable information, get more.

Make your choices about how you're going to act (and react) to your spouse or partner from facts, not stories.

Ultimately, you have to find a way to decide what is best for you in this situation.

When you honestly look at the facts that you have, what seems to be the wisest next move for you?

- ✦ Do you need more facts and what's the best way to get them?
- ✦ Is your next move to present the facts and calmly set some boundaries?
- ✦ Is it time to start changing your jealous habit because your partner isn't really doing anything wrong?
- ✦ Is it time to consider possibly leaving the relationship?
- ✦ Or something else?

Any decisions made from guesses or stories you might be telling yourself are probably going to bring you regret later on.

As you look at the facts, it will be obvious what the right decision is for you at this time. Even if it's something you don't necessarily want, you will feel a sense of certainty and clarity about it.

Do You Pay Attention to Your “Gut” Feelings or Not?

Jealousy might start as a feeling that something is “off” in your relationship or a sensation in your gut that tells you to be wary or mistrust what your partner is telling you.

Because you've probably already experienced how destructive it is to interrogate or accuse your partner, you might be tempted to pretend that internal warning isn't blaring loudly. We talk about what to do in such a situation in our answer to this question...

Question: “How do you get rid of that nagging feeling in the pit of your stomach that keeps telling you that there is more going on than ‘friendship?’ It is that same feeling that has warned you of danger in the past. How do you just ignore it without feeling like you're not just pretending while you're waiting for the sky to fall on you?”

Answer: When you talk about a “nagging feeling in the pit of your stomach,” you are talking about inner information. This could be your intuition, or your gut, that is telling you to pay closer attention and possibly to take a different course in life.

We all get gut feelings all of the time.

Sometimes, we feel drawn to take a particular road home that is different than our usual route. We take that different road and later find out that there was a traffic jam or a wreck on the road normally taken.

Other times, we try to ignore our gut feelings.

An example of this might be, when we get a “bad vibe” from a particular person but go ahead with the business deal. The discomfort and sense that

something is “off” about this person or in how he or she handled a situation is shouting out, but we pretend the warning isn't there.

This can end in loss and pain.

To make things especially confusing, we also have fears, worries and prejudices too. These are also examples of inner information. Because we hold particular beliefs or because of past experiences, we may feel hesitant or wary even when there are no facts to support it.

It can be difficult to know the difference between your gut and your fears or other jealous emotions. Too many times, people react based on their fears and bring themselves needless pain and heartache.

Other times, people push aside their gut feelings and later regret not having listened to their wise inner voice.

When it comes to nagging, jealous feelings that won't go away, don't dismiss them but rather separate out the facts that are happening right now from what's happened to you in the past.

Keep a journal of your speculations and what you find out to be true. Over time, the real facts of the situation will become clear and you can take action in whatever way will bring you what you want.

When There's Cheating...

Question: “I can't stop being jealous knowing very well that my partner is seeing another woman. Is there a way out of this or rather how do I stop him from seeing the other woman?”

Answer: We want to start out by reminding you that there is always a “way out” of the jealousy and torment you feel. You have many options-- even if it feels like you have few or none.

The more you can remind yourself that YOU get to choose what is best for you and the more you can open up and see the possibilities that are available to you, the easier it will be to get unstuck and move forward.

We also want to clarify the difference between being jealous and responding to a break in trust. When you and your partner have a relationship commitment to be monogamous and he violates that, this moves out of the realm of jealousy and into the realm of broken agreements.

You might have a history of being jealous and this is something to look at and make changes about. But, if you have reliable proof that your partner is cheating, this is not jealousy.

It's your opportunity to make some decisions that are wise and beneficial for you.

Affirm That You Are Powerful

While you cannot make your partner stop seeing the other woman, there are many things that you can do.

“You DO have the power of choice”

For starters, tell yourself (and really know and believe it) that you DO have the power of choice. You can make conscious choices about what you will tolerate and what you won't. You can set some boundaries with your partner.

You could choose to tell your partner that you will end your relationship if he doesn't end the affair-- and prove to you that he has actually done so-- within a specific period of time.

This is a strong boundary to set. It is actually an ultimatum and we don't recommend that ultimatums be used unless you will truly follow through.

Giving an ultimatum isn't meant to be manipulative or a game, so be mindful when choosing what you will say and do.

If you decide to set a deadline by which your partner has to prove to you that he's ended the affair, make sure you stick to what you said you'd do. In other words, don't make empty threats.

You deserve to have the kind of relationship that you want.

If being with someone who will respect your commitment and be monogamous is important to you, explore an option you can live with and that will help you have what you want.

Protect Yourself

If you stay with your partner, please remember to make your health and well-being your priority. As much as you might not want to lose this relationship, don't sacrifice yourself in the process.

Make sure that you are using protection if you are sexually intimate with your partner and he is still having an affair. Even if he proves to you that he has stopped cheating, both of you go get checked out to be sure he didn't contract (and pass on to you) a sexually transmitted disease (STD).

If you aren't comfortable or willing to give him a deadline for ending the affair, come up with at least 3 boundaries that you will set and follow through with.

What Are Some Signs of an Affair?

It requires knowledge and practice to discern between your gut and your fears.

If you feel like something is awry with your partner's behavior, look more closely at the messages you are getting from within and also at reliable information you have about your relationship, your partner and the friendship.

Identify observable, verifiable facts about your partner's behavior and about your relationship in order to get an accurate view of the situation.

Knowing what is factual can also help you sort through what you are feeling.

Here are some signs of cheating:

- ⤴ Secretiveness
- ⤴ Inconsistencies
- ⤴ Big and unexplained changes in behavior, appearance, self-care, etc.
- ⤴ Accusations or defensiveness

These signs don't automatically mean that your partner is lying to you or cheating. These can be your wake up call to gather more facts and then make a decision based on what you discover.

Are Your Eyes Playing Tricks on You or Did You See It?



When you're struggling with jealousy, it can seem that your eyes play tricks on you. You can feel very sure that you saw "something" but when you bring it up, there's a logical explanation given and you don't know if you can believe it or not.

This is why it's so important to get facts and make sure you're seeing, hearing and understanding clearly.

For some people who struggle with this problem, they really ARE seeing things they should pay attention to and not discount or ignore as is shown in this question and our answer...

Question: "I was never jealous before. I never had reason to be. Then he sent an email to an ex-girlfriend saying, "I wish I would have had a chance with you" and how he still thought about her and the night in the hot tub, how he is glad he left his watch there for her to have something to remember him by...and this is after us being together for almost 2 years. Now I am almost obsessed with thinking he is doing something behind my back. I don't know how to stop."

Answer: When it comes to jealousy, there are many times when a person's thoughts conjure up images that feel very real, but aren't actually based in present time reality.

From what you write, it sounds like you are in a different situation. You **do** have reliable information that is causing you to question your relationship and whether or not it's wise to trust your partner.

It can be a shock to come upon something like this-- an email, text or overheard conversation-- that shakes all that you previously thought was true about your partner and your relationship. This kind of a shock can leave you uncertain and wondering what to do.

Get Clear, Reliable Facts

While we don't want you to obsess about the email you found, we don't recommend that you pretend that you didn't see it either.

Until you find some resolution and make a firm decision about what is best for you, it's probably going to get more intense and upsetting.

To reach resolution, find out what's actually going on between your partner and his ex. Gather the observable proof that you have access to and try to assemble a bigger picture.

In other words, don't assume that he is having an affair with his ex when this might just be a moment of regret about the past. At the same time, don't assume that this email is the extent of it.

Dig deeper and figure out if your partner is possibly lying to you or cheating.

We can't emphasize enough how vital it is to rely on observable and verifiable facts. These aren't always easy to get, we know. Do your best to obtain information that's accurate.

If you choose to talk with your partner about the email he sent to his ex, don't make an accusation-- unless you have reliable proof to back it up.

If you choose to talk with him, don't start out with an accusation--instead, make a request like this... "Please help me understand why you wrote these words to your ex."

Instead, ask him to, "Please help me understand why you wrote these words to your ex."

Listen closely to what he says and see if his words match up with other facts you have.

If he gets defensive and doesn't answer you, repeat your request.

Even if you believe that there is no affair and that this email is the extent of it, be honest with your partner about how you feel knowing that he has lingering feelings for his ex.

Ask yourself if you can be okay with him having these feelings for her and also him emailing with her.

Create some agreements that will help you re-gain your connection with him because this is more about the two of you rather than the two of them

If you are in the situation where you think your partner may be cheating, then it's up to you to find out what's true.

Our program "[Where There's Smoke There's Fire...](#)" was written especially for women (men can use it too) to help them find out once and for all if their partner is cheating and lying.

If you don't know, do what you can to clear your head (and your emotions) and find out for sure because if your partner is cheating on you, you have a violation of [trust](#) which is another set of issues that's related to, but separate from your jealousy.

Mistrust and jealousy can become inflamed when your partner has cheated in the past. Nobody wants to go through the pain of feeling betrayed and rejected and so it's natural that you might be shielding yourself and resistant to trust because of what he or she did before.

Can You Trust Again After an Affair?

One of our readers asked this very important question about trusting again after past infidelity....

Question: "My husband had an online affair with an old lover from 35 years ago. He secretly met her on a trip we took together. How can I forgive and forget? He's done this twice now and I'm afraid to trust him. We've been married 33 years in June."

Answer: Infidelity, unfortunately, comes in several different forms these days. With technological advances, it has become easier to connect with people who live far away. It has also become easier for some to cheat online.

The destruction to trust and your marriage from an online affair is just as severe as with any other form of affair. Because your husband has repeatedly broken your trust by cheating, it is understandable that you are having a difficult time forgiving him and forgetting about the affair.

Actually, it's smart for you to proceed with some caution before trusting him again.

As much as you might not want your 33 year marriage to end in divorce, you probably also don't want to be lied to and cheated on ever again. It's time to be honest with yourself and come up with a plan for how you will create the kind of future for yourself that you want and deserve.

Ask yourself these questions to help decide whether or not you will trust him again.

- ✧ Do I have reliable proof that the affair has ended?
- ✧ Has he made observable changes to prove to me he's trustable?
- ✧ Am I willing to learn from his affair and possibly make changes to my own habits?
- ✧ Am I willing to open my heart to my partner again if they show to my satisfaction they are making changes and really do want to be with me?

As you answer these questions, it will become clearer to you what your next move will be.

Ask Yourself Whether It's Wise to Stay

Ultimately, you also need to ask yourself whether or not it's wise for you to stay in the marriage. We intentionally use the word "wise," because many people want to stay in their relationship, but as they look at what's going on, they see that it's unwise to stay.

This may or may not be the case for you.

Even if you are committed to staying in the relationship, we encourage you to consider all of your options. You have the option to stay with your husband even if he cheats again. You have the option to stay with him and make some positive and long-lasting changes if you see that that's what he really wants and will take action toward—and you have the option to end the marriage if he's not interested in changing.

When you provide yourself with a full range of choices, you can feel more empowered to make the best choice for you.

Consider any and all reliable and observable information you have so that you can make an accurate assessment of whether or not positive changes are happening.

Make Conscious Agreements and Find Out the True Commitment to Your Relationship

If you do choose to stay in your marriage, it's important that you two come up with some agreements. You can make these agreements in a conscious way so that you both are truly "on board" and will follow through.

Consider creating a conscious agreement with your husband about his internet accounts. You could ask him to be transparent and give you full access to his email and social networking accounts and phone records too.

This is one way for him to prove to you that the affair has ended and that he is now committed to rebuilding trust with you. Seeing repeated demonstrations of his trustability will help you let go of the past and restore your connection.

Also, the real question if he's cheated several times before is if he's really committed to your marriage.

So far, the evidence says he isn't but you need to look into yourself to find out if you want to be with a man who is not fully committed to being with just you. And then find out if he's honestly committed to building a marriage with you and only you.

What About a Chronic Liar?

It's not always cheating that erodes trust and triggers jealousy. Here's a question from one of our readers that shows just how confusing things can get...

Question: "He has lied to me before and says he doesn't do anything I would not approve of, but lies to me when he thinks it would prevent an argument. How can I convince him to tell me the truth, always, so that I can learn that I have no reason to be jealous?"

Answer: Every couple has habits. Some of these habits help them create the kind of close and trusting relationship that they want and some of them stand in the way.

It sounds like you and your partner may have fallen into some habits that are blocking you from having healthy trust and communication.

The short answer is that you cannot “convince” your partner with your words to tell you the truth.

For some reason, he has become accustomed to avoiding conflict by lying to you. This is, understandably, frustrating and it further erodes your trust.

It can become a destructive cycle.

When you repeatedly experience a different dynamic, both of you will be able to change this cycle. Developing new habits is one way to do this.

Own Your Role

While there is no doubt that your partner's lying is not helping you learn to trust him, you cannot force him to change.

You CAN look at the role that you play in this dynamic and start doing things differently.

We advise our coaching clients and readers to take responsibility for “no more and no less” of their share of whatever is going on.

This means that it's just as detrimental for you to take the blame for the mistrust in your relationship as it is for you to avoid any ownership for your actions that might keep this destructive cycle going.

Be honest with yourself about the way you usually react when your partner disappoints you or disagrees with you.

What have you said or done in the past that may have sent the message that it's not safe for your partner to be completely honest with you?

Your role in this dynamic may be something else. Get curious and find out what you do that contributes to the mistrust and unhealthy communication.

That certainly doesn't excuse your partner for lying but it is taking action by starting with you.

Watch for Signs of Improvement

As you make changes in your own behavior, acknowledge that. Be sure to also recognize it when your partner makes positive changes.

When your partner tells you something that is difficult to admit or he or she shares information you won't want to hear, give him or her credit for being honest. Keep yourself in a calm and open place and really listen.

Remember, just because you listen with calm and openness, it doesn't mean that you are going along with anything your partner says or does.

What it does mean is that you are co-creating an environment of honesty.

This will allow you two to work together to resolve whatever disagreements or challenges that come up.

As you can see, lying isn't always about covering up wrong-doing.

Sometimes, it is a result of unhealthy communication habits that are fueled by jealousy.

Without a doubt, you can't stop jealous thoughts if you have lingering doubts about your partner's actions.

It's up to you to find out if there is any truth to your suspicions.

If You Have Evidence That there is Truth to Your Suspicions, then It's Time to Create a Plan and Take Action.

A plan like this will most likely include (but not be limited to) how you're going to start a conversation about what you've found in your evidence gathering.

You'll also want to know what you're going to say to your partner when you start talking to him or her about what you've found out.

You'll want to have a good idea what tone of voice you'll use, the actual words you'll use, what you want from your partner and your relationship

“When your partner tells you something that is difficult to admit or shares information he or she knows you won't want to hear, give them credit for being honest.”

(specifically) as you move forward.

You're also going to want to have a good idea what requests you're going to want and need to make in order to start creating what you want as you move forward.

And finally...

You'll want to have in mind what you're going to start "noticing" and watching out for as "signs" that what you want to start happening is actually happening.

On the other hand...

If you figure out that nothing's going on and there's no truth to your thoughts, fear and accusations and the problem is just a bad case of jealousy and the green-eyed monster attacking you—then you need to create a plan for stopping your unwarranted jealousy.

We're going to give you lots of great tips and ideas for how to best work on your jealousy as you continue reading this book and here are a few seeds we'll plant with you right now for what you're going to want to take a look at that will help you get rid of your jealousy.

For example your plan for stopping your jealousy might include (but not be limited to) things like these...

- How you're going to stop obsessing about what your spouse or partner is or isn't doing all the time
- What you're going to do when something happens and you get "triggered"
- What you're going to do to calm yourself and get your fears under control when a beautiful or attractive person is paying attention to your spouse or partner
- What you're going to do to calm yourself if your partner is giving attention to someone else (maybe without even realizing that they're doing it)

- What you're going to do to start questioning your thoughts, stories and fears as they well up within you about whether your spouse or partner truly loves you or not
- How you're going to ask for help from your partner and other people who can support you in healing your jealousy instead of pretending you can handle it by yourself when it's obvious to everyone around you that you can't or relying on friends who will keep you stuck

Use the tools we give you in this book, especially the one at the end of this chapter and gradually you'll see that your jealousy loses intensity and even vanishes after awhile. The point is to find out whether your jealousy is warranted or not and then create your course of action that will take you to what you want.

Tools to use...

The Choice Map:

If you are unclear about whether your jealousy and suspicions are based on facts, lay out a path for yourself to move from this place of uncertainty to one of not just knowing the truth, but taking wise action.

Get out a piece of blank unlined paper and a pencil or pen. Turn the piece of paper sideways so that the long side is at the top.

Create for yourself a choice map with a brief description of where you are now on the far left of the paper and a short general description of where you want to be on the right side.

Now, write out a series of steps you could take to move yourself from the left to the right (your goal) and you can use arrows to point the way. We call this a "choice map" and here's an example (and yours may look totally different):

I don't trust my boyfriend -----> make a list of his observable words/actions ----
 -> create agreements with him about Facebook habits -----> stop accusing him
 without proof -----> acknowledge the good stuff -----> appreciate it when he
 does things I like -----> **I easily trust my boyfriend.**

A choice map helps you break down the process of moving from mistrust to trust (in a smart way) that's doable. It's a visual aid to keep you on track and moving toward your ultimate goal.

What about you?

What's one action step you will take to find out if what you fear is really happening or not?

Secret #2: See Jealousy As The BIG Problem That It Is



One of the biggest reasons it's so hard for many people who suffer from jealousy to get rid of this awful affliction is because of THIS...

Men and women who suffer from jealousy rationalize, rationalize, rationalize their jealousy first to themselves and then to the other people in their lives by thinking and then saying words like these to themselves and to others...

"It's not so bad"

"It's no big deal"

"If only he (or she) would stop doing _____, everything would be fine."

and

"I've got it handled."

To us, as relationship experts when we hear words like these, one of the first things we want to do is replace the word "rationalize" with the words like these...

Rational Lies

Rational Lies

Rational Lies

This is because "rational lies" are what you are probably telling yourself about your jealousy and the ways you're dealing with it.

Most people who've got challenges with jealousy in their relationship and life are a lot like racehorses in one respect.

They have "blinders" on and can't see the real truth about anything going on in their relationship and life except for a narrow window of sight.



This plays out in so many ways and the plain truth is that most people who suffer from jealousy refuse to see just how bad their jealousy really is and how many problems their jealousy is causing for them now and how many more problems their jealousy WILL cause them if they don't do whatever it takes to stop it.

What happens is you develop a selective amnesia and forget how much pain, anguish and heartache your jealousy has caused you, your spouse or partner and how much damage it's caused to your relationship.

Energetically, when we put on our Jealousy Coach's hat, this feels to us a lot like the way an alcoholic or drug addict acts and feels.

Think about this for a moment and notice the similarities...

The alcoholic or drug addict, very often, can't see how much pain and destruction he or she caused and continues to cause because of his or her problem.

It's not uncommon at all to hear about someone who's an alcoholic or drug addict who can't seem to kick the habit until he or she hits absolute rock bottom.

You probably know one or more people who've done this and it's not pretty.

Someone gets arrested one too many times, loses a driver's license, can't drive a car, can't go to work, starts arguments and fights with the people he or she loves, flirts with other men or women, cheat, the wife or husband leaves and takes the kids and worst all, the person can't see or refuses to see how bad the problem is.

Jealousy is a lot like this...

You rationalize, rationalize, rationalize first to yourself and then to other people that your jealousy's "not so bad" and then you wake up one day and

your relationship, life and everything that you loved and everything that has mattered to you is washed away like a giant wave would wash away a beautiful sand castle on a beach at high tide.

We hope you're starting to get the picture that if jealousy is a problem in your life, don't ignore it.

If people (your partner included) are talking about your jealousy (even jokingly) then YOU HAVE A PROBLEM and it's time for you to admit it and take action whether it is warranted or not.

If you have evidence that your jealousy is warranted but you're making excuses for not tackling the issue that is in front of you, know that jealousy is a big problem because it will keep you spinning and incapacitated when action taken from clear thinking is what is called for.

The idea is to quit getting defensive and denying it but rather practice ways we're giving you in this book to stop it.

The "Reverse" Trust Problem If Your Jealousy is Unwarranted...

There's another big problem that gets created and causes bigger problems than you ever dreamed about in your relationship if you're jealous.

It's what we call a "reverse trust" problem and it usually happens when your partner grows tired of putting up with your over-the-top jealousy for an extended period of time when he or she has done nothing that would justify you being as jealous as you are.

Here's an example of how it plays out in real life...

Tom and Mary have been married for 20 years and have 2 children ages 15 and 18.

In the last couple of years, Tom has become increasingly wary that Mary's not happy with him and is looking around at other men. He's noticed that when he initiates sex, she does it but it feels to him like it's a chore for her and he feels like she wants it over as quickly as possible.

When they're out at parties with their friends, she seems to come alive when she's talking with other people, especially other male friends—and as they're driving home, his accusations cause fights every time and spoil the evening for both of them.

If she's late for work, he throws a barrage of questions at her like "Who were you with?" and although he knows that his jealousy is killing their relationship—and that she's not really cheating on him, he can't seem to stop.

Mary's tired of being constantly falsely accused of having a "wandering eye" when she's just being herself.

Every time they plan to go out now, she cringes and feels like it's not even worth it anymore because it will end in a fight.

She doesn't trust that Tom will keep it together and just have fun—but instead be hyper-vigilant about what she's doing and saying and who she's doing and saying it with.

Tom secretly knows he has a problem but continues to lay the blame on her without doing anything to stop his destructive thoughts and actions.

Unfortunately, if you're jealous, scenarios like this one are probably playing out in your relationship right now.

The problem that your unchecked jealousy is creating (without you even realizing it) is that your extreme jealousy first causes you to not trust and question your spouse or partner's every move causing them to feel like they have to be on guard and defend themselves against your false accusations.

And then...the tables turn and after a while of you falsely accusing your partner of cheating or sleeping around or even just "wanting" someone else, he or she gets fed up with it and starts to lose faith and trust in you.

When this problem starts happening in your relationship (and it probably has), then the trust reverse happens. While you were the one who was originally dealing with fears, doubts and mistrust—now YOUR PARTNER DOESN'T TRUST YOU!

Are you starting to see even more clearly how your jealousy is damaging your relationship or marriage?

First you were the one who didn't trust that your relationship would be OK and now they don't trust you. This is now both people not trusting each other and if you don't have trust in a relationship and in each other, you don't have a relationship and a love that sits on solid ground and a firm foundation.

"A relationship where both people are filled with mistrust is filled with landmines that are set to explode at any time one or both of you says or does anything."

A relationship where both people are filled with mistrust is filled with landmines that are set to explode at any time one or both of you says or does anything.

If this mistrust on both your parts continues for an extended period of time, what normally happens is that first there's anger, defensiveness, and lots of finger pointing and blame.

Then, when this becomes so upsetting and irritating that your partner has just "had it" with your false accusations and fears, then you'll probably start to notice them pulling away (if you haven't already).

The very thing you feared—which is your partner pulling away and you feeling like you're losing their love—will start actually happening right before your very eyes.

In order to stop mistrust on both sides from spiraling out of control, you'll need to acknowledge just how big of a problem jealousy is for you and then take action to heal it.

If your jealousy is warranted, work with your partner on rebuilding trust, creating new agreements about how you're going to be in your relationship together and get whatever help you need to repair the damage that's been done—if he or she is open to being with you in that way.

If your jealousy isn't warranted, you've got to get a handle on it and get it

under control right now before it does any further damage to your relationship.

Your Unconscious “Payoff” for Being Jealous...

As we just talked about a moment ago, some people who have a jealousy problem do everything they can to avoid facing jealousy and owning up to how big of a problem it is in their life. Another way jealousy plays out in relationship is that men and women use their jealousy as a tool for getting their needs met.

One of the things we’ve discovered over the years of reading, studying and learning about personal and spiritual growth and how to become the best versions of ourselves we could possibly be is this...

We all ALWAYS get our needs met in life.

The question is how?

We’re not saying it’s healthy...

Or desired

Or smart

And it’s certainly not the best way to get your needs met in your relationships and life but some people will do ANYTHING and yes, this includes using their jealousy to get their needs met.

If we were to ask anyone who does this (maybe you) if they’re using their jealousy as a way to get their needs met, every single person would deny that they’re doing this and with good reason.

It’s totally unconscious.

That’s right, almost everyone (and we mean close to 99% of the people including us) we’ve ever talked with or worked with who had issues with jealousy and used their jealousy to manipulate, motivate and make other people do some truly bazaar things, in almost every case was totally unaware that they were using jealousy as a tool for getting their needs met.

3 Unconscious “Payoffs” for Being Jealous

There are lots of “payoffs” that could be gained if you were to use your jealousy as a tool to get your needs met in your relationship and in other aspects of your life.

Here, we’ll take just a moment and mention three of the most common...

1. Jealousy is a way to get attention from your spouse, partner or lover.

And how ingenious is this?

Very.

Susie tells the story about her maternal grandmother who for over 20 years told Susie’s mother “I’m going to die!” especially when the family went away on vacation without her.

So what happened?

She was always there when they returned from vacation and the people in her family caught on very quickly so her strategy for getting love backfired.

Although she did get some attention before we left on vacation, she succeeded in pushing everyone away with her guilt and fear instead of bringing us closer as she really wanted.

Since feeling important is something we all want to feel from others, this is also what happens many times with people who are jealous.

They unconsciously use their jealousy to get attention, feel important and to try to get other people to pay attention to them.

What usually happens after a while is that people figure out that jealousy is a way to get attention and they stop playing and participating.

Next on the list of payoffs for being jealous is...

2. Jealousy is a way to get love and assurance



We all want love and in love and life we ALL have a strategy for getting it.

For many people who struggle with jealousy, one of the ways this plays out is that they've made up a story (that's usually unconscious) that the attention they get from the drama they create means they are loved.

One of the reasons why some people hang onto their jealousy and refuse to let go of it is because of a hidden payoff they get from being jealous and acting in jealous ways and the attention they get because of it that they translate to mean love.

Let's say that you're jealous and your partner (in your opinion) looked at an attractive person WAY too long for your liking while you're out at a bar, a restaurant or even at a church or social function.

When you see what he or she is doing, you first give the "look" and when that doesn't sufficiently telegraph that your partner's doing something wrong, you explode.

When you do this, it leaves your partner so angry, upset and disgusted inside that the next time you want to go somewhere, because he or she wants to try to keep the peace and keep you happy, he or she isn't just a little—but a lot—gun-shy to say "yes" about going out or doing what you suggest.

When this happens, your partner makes up some lame excuse about how he or she doesn't want to go out but would rather just spend time at home.

The problem is that you may think you're getting love but your partner feels like he or she is trapped and can't do anything without you having a jealousy meltdown about something he or she considers to be small.

This isn't an exaggeration. This happens all the time and plays out exactly like this across millions of relationships, possibly even yours.

Again, there's a right way and a wrong way to try to get the love you want

and this is certainly a wrong way.

With a strategy like this for getting your love and your needs for love met in this way, there is always a reckoning and that usually results in your spouse or partner growing tired of being manipulated in this way and starting to pull away.

We hope this isn't happening in your relationship or marriage but if you are starting to notice that that your spouse or partner isn't as loving or attentive as you'd like or as loving or attentive as he or she used to be, your use of jealousy as a tool to manipulate your partner into giving you love may be the problem.

And finally...

Here's one last "payoff" you might be getting for staying stuck in your jealousy...

3. Jealousy is a tool for manipulation and control

It certainly isn't healthy and it isn't something we recommend but many people think that the way to make sure that they get their needs met is to try to "control" EVERYTHING.

In fact, some people actually act much like the way a physical bully would act except their bullying isn't physical—it's emotional bullying and controlling.

Someone who's eaten up with jealousy (either consciously or unconsciously) figures out that one way he or she can get the need for attention and possibly love met is to use jealousy much like a weapon to "keep a partner in line."

This is tragic because first of all, this isn't love and secondly, this never works in the long run.

No one likes to be controlled and if your partner starts to feel "controlled" by your jealousy and you, then there's a possibility that the very thing you thought would keep him or her close and your love safe will actually push your partner away and destroy your love.

Since this isn't what you want, if you're doing this (whether it's conscious or

unconsciously), it has to stop by acknowledging the pay-off and reminding yourself what you really want as you practice healthier ways of getting it.

Your love and your relationship depends on it.

Something that's equally as dangerous for your relationship or marriage is that you can stay stuck in your jealousy and have such a hard time getting beyond it because it can be so "addictive."

The "Jealousy Drug"...

Another reason why jealousy can seem so hard to get beyond is because it can feel addictive.

For many people who suffer with jealousy, it can be like a weird high that you get as an adrenaline rush streams through your mind and body from imagining all sorts of scenarios where your partner is leaving you for someone else—and you being "right" all along.

This jealousy "high" can be addictive.

Even though it's hard to admit, somewhere inside, you almost want it to be true so all your jealous behavior can be justified.

You might even imagine saying "See I told you so..." when you catch him or her in the act of whatever you fear is happening.

Your partner might even say and do things to goad you into being jealous—because he or she likes the high and the drama of it also.

"This jealousy 'high' can be addictive."

Maybe in some weird way, you think it proves you love your partner if you're jealous--but then it always ends in a fight and you find yourselves further apart than you were before.

You're here because what you've been doing is overwhelming you, making you emotionally sick, maybe you're having panic attacks and you're tired of it ruling your life.

Your jealous behavior has caused separation between you and your loved one, as well as other relationships like your children have suffered, and you're probably not able to concentrate on your work.

In most cases, even when you don't think your partner is cheating, someplace deep inside you is a belief that it could happen—or you'll be disrespected in some way.

Maybe it's not happening now but it's like waiting for the other shoe to drop—and you're waiting for it to happen.

You brace yourself, thinking that if you're hyper aware or hyper vigilant, it won't hurt so much when it happens.

Maybe your partner does certain things that you wouldn't do—have lunch with colleagues of the opposite sex, be driven home by them, looks a little too long at someone else, talks to an ex— and you question your judgment/don't know whether to listen to your intuition that's screaming at you or not.

The bottom line is that you need to look honestly at what you're doing and believing and ask yourself if your jealousy has been bringing you the love you want or if it's killing your relationship.

And are you willing to admit right now that jealousy is enough of a problem in your life, as well as in the future, that you're ready to stop it?

“Jealousy Justifiers” That Keep You Stuck...

Even though people tell us that jealousy is a problem for them, they continually find ways to justify their jealous behavior.

We've share a few of these ways already in this chapter and here are a few more of what we call “jealousy justifiers” that can keep you from seeing jealousy as the BIG problem it really is and prevent you doing something to change it...



****A “Jealousy Justifier” Can Be Believing That It’s Something You Can’t Do Anything About**

What we have discovered is that no matter how overwhelming your jealousy seems to be to you and no matter how much or what lengths you might go through to avoid dealing with it and putting it behind you—there are ALWAYS things you can do to start letting go of your jealousy.

As you’ve read earlier in this book, we’ve had our own turn with jealousy and we know how painful it can be and how out of control it can make you feel.

For some people, jealousy can feel so intense and unchangeable that they even wonder if they have some kind of a psychological condition as shown in this question...

Q **uestion: “Is jealousy a psychiatric condition and will I ever get rid of it? I now have had 6 relationships ended in tears because of my jealousy and I am 33 and want a family. I feel very down...”**

A **nswer:** According to the DSM IV listing of mental disorders, which is determined by the American Psychiatric Association, there are a couple of disorders that involve delusional and paranoid jealousy.

These tend to be pretty extreme forms of jealousy that involve very specific symptoms and signs. The vast majority of people who are jealous do **not** fit the definitions of these mental disorders.

We are not psychiatrists or psychologists, so we do not diagnose mental disorders.

But, even if you do not have a mental disorder, we can bet that your jealousy feels intense and possibly overwhelming at times.

From your question, it sounds like you've noticed a pattern in your life in which jealousy wreaks havoc and brings you upset and pain.

Jealousy won't just instantly disappear or go away on its own. You're going to need to make some changes in order to stop this unwanted pattern.

Re-frame Your Jealousy Habit

We recommend that you start out by shifting the way that you look at your jealousy. Instead of wondering if this is a psychiatric disorder, view it as a deeply ingrained habit and a problem that you're ready to solve.

This way of living and interacting with other people is one that you've probably been practicing for quite some time. It's also a habit that's not helping you create the relationship and life you want.

Treat your jealousy as you would any other unwanted habit or problem. This isn't meant to diminish the intense way you feel. It's a way for you to begin to see this habit as something you **can** change instead of something that's "wrong with you" that you can't do anything about.

We intentionally use the word "practice" when it comes to jealousy because this is what you'll need to do in order to make long-lasting and significant changes.

To stop one habit and develop a new and healthier one requires awareness of your patterns and also a willingness to interrupt your usual way of thinking and interacting and try something different. It might feel foreign and even uncomfortable at first, so keep at it.

****A "Jealousy Justifier" Can Be Blaming It on Low Self-Esteem**

We go even deeper with the idea that jealousy is a habit and one you CAN change in our response to this next question.

Low self-esteem becomes a wedge between the pain you're experiencing now and what you want for yourself. Insecurity can skew your view of yourself and your partner and can inflame jealousy, as well as become an excuse or justifier for jealous behavior.



Question: "Is insecurity the cause of jealousy? What kind of insecurity causes jealousy?"

Answer: There are many causes of jealousy. There can be a complex mix, including thoughts and beliefs about the self and painful lessons from the past that form jealousy in a person's experience.

Most definitely, for many people who have a jealousy habit, low self-esteem and insecurity are part of that mix.

In general, insecurity consists of beliefs that you are somehow deficient or lacking. It is because of this perceived lack that you might then expect to be betrayed by the one you love and maybe even abandoned and fall into a jealousy pit that you can't seem to get out of.

Insecurity can come through in the way you think and literally see yourself.

It can show up in the comments you make about yourself and others. And, insecurity can prevent you from having the kind relationship and life you desire.

You can take a giant step in stopping jealousy when you question and turn around your insecure thoughts and beliefs. The more you can heal your past and strengthen healthy self-esteem, the easier it will be for you to put jealousy behind you and not use it as an excuse.

Forms of Insecurity

There are a few different ways that insecurity displays itself...

- ⤴ Believing you are professionally inadequate (in terms of financial or professional success and other related areas)
- ⤴ Believing that who you are is inadequate (appearance, age, body size, skin color, level of fitness, etc.)
- ⤴ Believing you are inadequate because of constant comparison (frequently pitting yourself against friends, family and even strangers to see how you "measure up")
- ⤴ Believing you are morally, spiritually or ethically inadequate (thinking you're not "good enough" in a particular way)

At the root of each of these forms of insecurity is a lie that you tell yourself.

This lie might sound slightly different, but the core meaning is the same...

You believe that you are somehow not okay and will never be deserving of what you want.

The lie of insecurity sparks jealousy and causes so much pain and destruction.

Make Boosting Your Self-Esteem a Top Priority

When you have healthy self-esteem and sense of self-worth, it's really tough to hold onto a thought that you don't deserve to be happy or to be treated with respect by your partner. There's just no room for self-defeating thoughts like these.

What's even better, as you prioritize boosting your self-esteem, your confidence begins to grow. Any jealous thought that comes up can quickly and effortlessly be handled.

Here's what Tonda, a coaching client, told us about her struggle with low self-esteem and how it affected her relationship...

"Since high school, I never felt like I was good enough for someone to love me and when Steve asked me to marry him, I still felt like I was waiting for the other shoe to drop and he'd leave me. I would tell myself that I wasn't as pretty or had as good of a figure as other women he came in contact with. I was even jealous of women on tv because there was no way I could measure up to them. Even though Steve didn't say anything, I knew that I had to do something to start feeling better about myself—and soon or I would lose him. I had been using my low self-worth as an excuse for holding back my love and it had to stop!"

Heal the Roots of Low Self-esteem

Here's what Tonda did to start practicing feeling better about herself—and what you can do too...

Pay attention to what your insecure thoughts usually are and see if they trace back to past experiences that you might still be carrying with you.

These are possibly hurtful or traumatic events that could go back to your early childhood.

Get into the habit of reminding yourself that you are in a different place in your life now and do what you are moved to do to heal that younger you who may still be hurting. As you heal, find any excuse you can to treat yourself with kindness and love.

In Tonda's case, she realized that her low self-esteem started when her dad left her mom when she was a freshman in high school. After that, she crawled into a shell and avoided being around people. As she thought about it, she realized that she had been punishing herself for all these years and holding herself back from love.

As she began to do an exercise to talk to her young self and tell her how she deserved to be loved and that she didn't do anything wrong—as well as start each day with an affirmation of love for herself, she began to relax and to be happier. In the process of feeling better about herself, she began to focus on enjoying her life instead of finding ways to mistrust Steve.

So a belief that you're powerless to change and insecurity are two things that keep you stuck in jealousy.

****A "Jealousy Justifier" can be Thinking That a Little Jealousy is Good for a Relationship**

Some people are so resistant to facing up to their jealousy problem and one of the other ways they do this is that they rationalize it by saying (and probably believing) that a little jealousy can be good for your relationship.

Unfortunately there are even magazine articles and bad advice out there that claim that a "little jealousy" is the secret to more passion and connection.

In this question, our reader wants to know the truth behind such claims and we give our answer, including ways to keep the spark alive without ruining your relationship in the process....



Question: "But isn't a little jealousy good for a relationship? I read this in a magazine and wondered if it's a good way to

keep my partner interested and excited.”

Answer: Especially when it comes to jealousy, there is a lot of advice floating around--online, in magazines, on talk and reality television shows and from your friends and family. While some of this advice might initially sound appealing or make sense, it usually does more damage than it helps.

Of course, there's a lot of useful advice available that can help you bring improvements to your relationship and life. We urge you to be choosy about who you listen to and what you decide to try out with your partner.

If a suggestion you read or hear about peaks your interest and resonates with you, it might be useful to you. Before rushing to implement any tip or piece of advice, however, ask yourself if this is in alignment with your priorities, your relationship agreements and if it will help you move closer to your partner or will push you further away.

While you might not know with certainty what the effects will be, at least take some time to think about what you're about to do before you do it.

Why Creating Jealousy is NEVER Good for Your Relationship...

From our many years of studying about jealousy and relationships, working with coaching clients and observing the relationships of our friends and family members (including our own), we have NO doubt that jealousy is not going to bring a happy and healthy relationship.

In fact, jealousy stands as a serious block to passion and connection. It is one reason why many relationships end and many people continue to be miserable.

Jealousy may seem like a tempting way to add a sense of “competition” to spice things up or to let your partner know that you actually are desirable to others. It might seem like a playful game to get you both excited or just to get your partner to wake up and show you some love.

But, in the end, it's nothing like this.

The game can almost immediately turn ugly and painful. Your “harmless” flirting with someone else as an effort to make your partner jealous can send the wrong messages to everyone involved.

Mistrust, tension, conflict and distance will be what you're left with.

If jealousy isn't an issue for you or your partner, don't make it one by flirting, lying or somehow attempting to make your partner jealous.

****Another "Jealousy Justifier" is Believing That Your Jealousy and Mistrust Somehow Protect You from Being Hurt Yet Again after Being Cheated On**

This idea that your jealousy and mistrust protect you from being hurt again after being cheated on is nothing more than faulty logic and thinking.

We address this question and what to do about it in much deeper detail in our answer to this next question here...

Q **uestion: "How can I ever learn to trust another person when I've lost all trust in everyone after I was cheated on, including myself?"**

A **nswer:** Trust can be a very fragile thing.

In the course of our day-to-day lives, we trust all kinds of people and things. We trust the roads and bridges to hold our car as we drive from place to place. We trust the chefs at restaurants to prepare our food in healthy and careful ways.

We put our trust in others (and ourselves) all of the time and don't give it much thought.

It's when someone lets you down that the fragility of trust is felt. It is felt intensely and painfully when you are betrayed in some way, especially when you've been cheated on.

After trust has been broken in a relationship, trusting any other person and even yourself can seem difficult and can be a justifier for jealous behavior.

Previously, you automatically trusted people to support you and interact with you in particular ways and now you doubt practically everyone.

You also doubt yourself and your own judgment.

This way of looking at other people and yourself is not uncommon if you have been disappointed and betrayed, especially if repeated lying and cheating occurred.

Take Time for Healing

When you're down and believe that there is literally no one you can trust, it's definitely a sign that you have healing to do.

Instead of asking yourself the question, "How can I ever learn to trust another person?" ask yourself, "What can I do to help myself heal and feel better?"

Your answer to this second question will change, so be willing to ask yourself regularly and then follow through.

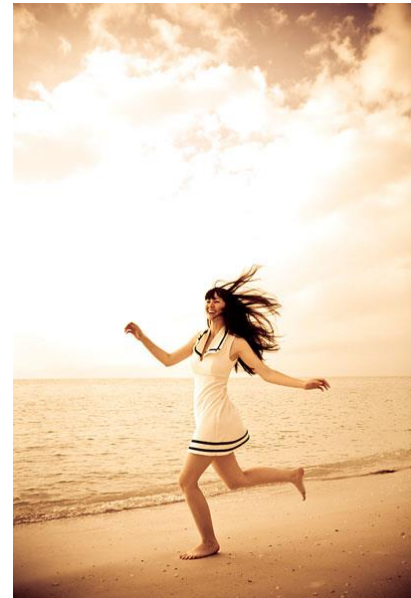
For the moment, spend more time focusing on how to soothe yourself and bring yourself ease and less time wondering how you will trust anyone again.

All of this requires you to be more present-oriented. If your mind drifts back to the past to when you were hurt or betrayed, recognize that you are having a memory and be gentle with yourself. Allow yourself to cry, get angry or have whatever feelings that come up.

Then, bring yourself back to the question, "What can I do to help myself heal and feel better in this moment?"

One possibility is to stop focusing on that memory. Another possibility might be to turn to a friend or family member whom you enjoy spending time with. Yet another possibility is to go do something that you find soothing like taking a bubble bath or walking in the park.

Really listen to yourself and open up to healing and trusting just a little bit more, one moment at a time.



"Instead of asking yourself the question, 'How can I ever learn to trust another person?' ask yourself, 'What can I do to help myself heal and feel better?'"

Whatever your reason for holding onto jealousy, we invite you to look beyond what you're living right now and know that you can stop jealousy and start imagining the jealousy-free life that you want

Tools to use...

Affirmations: If you want to stop your jealousy, one way is to remind yourself just how big of a problem it is in your life so you have an incentive to interrupt your jealous thoughts and actions.

Using affirmations is a good place to start. Set aside some time when you can be alone and away from distractions. Take out a piece of paper and a pen or pencil and come up with an affirmation to remind yourself of your intention to release jealousy from your relationship and life.

This may take a few tries, so just write down what occurs to you. Phrase your affirmation in a positive way-- what you DO want-- and keep it simple.

Once you have an affirmation that feels hopeful and uplifting to you, write it on a note card and keep it somewhere you'll see it often. You can even carry it with you in your wallet.

What about you?

What will your future look like if you don't heal your jealousy? What would your future look like when you **do** stop being jealous?

Secret #3: Make Stopping Jealousy a Must



An important step to take when you're dealing with jealousy in your relationship is to make it a "must" instead of a "should" to stop it.

The plain fact is, being jealous or having challenges with jealousy in your relationship and life is NOT something that you or anyone else is born with.

When the human species came into being, our creator didn't endow certain ones of us with a jealousy gene and predetermine that some people would be jealous and others would not.

When you were born and you came out of your mother's womb, the pronouncement was, "It's a boy" or "It's a girl" and not—"It's a jealous boy" or "It's a jealous girl."

That's crazy and yet many men and women very often leave it to chance that they'll ever get rid of their jealousy.

Don't let that be you.

One of the big differences between men and women who get rid of their jealous thoughts, feelings and emotions and go on to be jealousy-free forever and the people who stay stuck with their jealousy permanently is that the people who eliminate it from their lives make it a MUST and not a should.

In other words, they make the commitment and vow to that, "I may have jealous tendencies now but there's no way I'm going to let jealousy get the best of me." And then they commit with every fiber of their being to do whatever it takes to stop their jealousy.

So your job is to first believe that stopping jealousy is possible for YOU (not just other people) and our job is to give you proven ways to stop jealousy so you can take your life back.

Your next job is to make stopping jealousy something that you **must** do and put into practice what will bring about the changes you want in your relationship.

For example, during a teleseminar that we offered on jealousy, one man had an instant "ah-ha" about the root cause of his jealousy. He realized some harmful patterns that developed in his previous relationship and decided then and there that if he wanted to make his new relationship work, it was a "must" for him to leave his old anger and resentment behind.

Another woman whom we coached had been jealous for as long as she could remember. With the information we shared with her, she was able to figure out how she kept it going in her life and made the decision that it was a "must" for her to stop doing the things that fed her jealousy.

What's important for you to understand is that anyone can heal jealousy--including you.

It just has to be a "must" for you.

Once you truly understand this (and believe it), here's what to do next...

Decide What a "Must" and What a "Should" are in Your Life

We all have the same amount of 24 hours in a day and what you choose to do in those 24 hours is totally up to you.

Some of the things you do are "musts" for you and some things you do in your daily life are "shoulds."

A **must** for you can be something like—changing diapers, dealing with you're a cold, grocery shopping, sleeping, eating, etc. This is something you believe **MUST** get done no matter what. No excuses here—it's a must and it will get done.

On the other hand...

A **should** for you doesn't necessarily get done. It might be exercising, eating a salad, calling or visiting certain people, cleaning out your closets, going to

a chiropractor for an adjustment, getting a massage, finding a new job and so on.

A “should” is an action we think we need to do because it’s the good (healthy, practical or common-sense) thing to do but it’s also an action that we put off or allow other ones to take on over our time.

A “should” can become a “must” when the stakes get high enough and when your life, relationship or livelihood depends on it.

For example, a “should” becomes a “must” when you have a health crisis. If you want to get well, you may start an exercise program and you also may have the reason to eat better.

A “should” can become a “must” when the stakes get high enough and when your life, relationship or livelihood depends on it.

Or if you get laid off from your job, a “should” becomes a “must” to find another one.

If you’re jealous and you know that you “should” learn how to stop being jealous and your loved one suddenly threatens to leave because of jealousy—your “should” quickly becomes a “must.”

Our challenge to you is that unless you make stopping jealousy a **must**, you won’t practice the tools we’re going to give you and you’ll keep sabotaging your relationship.

It’s all up to you. We can’t get in your mind and do it for you because that’s what free-will is all about. You have to make the decision in every moment that stopping jealousy is a **must** for you.

Take Responsibility For Your Jealousy and Make the Commitment to Heal It No Matter What

Many people “say” they want to heal jealousy, but the sad truth is that almost everyone who struggles with jealousy will do everything else except take responsibility for it and make the commitment to heal it.

After working with hundreds of individuals and couples to help them

overcome jealousy, we can absolutely tell you one thing...

Without taking responsibility for it and making the commitment to heal it, your jealousy will never go away. It will just continue to hurt like pouring salt onto an open wound until you make the decision to once and for all do something about it.

You've made a great start by reading this material and now it's time for you to get serious about stopping jealousy and make a strong commitment to actually doing it.

"Take responsibility for having jealousy as an issue and make the commitment to heal the issue."

Taking responsibility doesn't mean taking blame. When you take blame out of it, you can start to step into taking action.

Making it a "must" to stop being jealous starts with recognizing the damage it's doing and committing to making another choice in every moment that brings you more of the love you want...

Making your commitment to stop jealousy a "must" can mean different things to different people.

*It can mean going cold turkey on stopping snooping on your partner's cell phone or computer if you've never found any evidence of cheating or wrongdoing—but you've still done it anyway.

*It can mean practicing calming yourself with your breath when jealous thoughts start swirling inside you.

*It can mean distracting yourself from obsessively calling or texting your partner by taking a walk, a run or getting busy with a hobby that takes your mind off what you do in your normal jealousy pattern.

Making the commitment that stopping jealousy is a must for you means putting action with your words.

Read how Roxanne decided stopping her jealousy was a must for her and what she did after making that decision...

Roxanne was tired of constantly thinking her long-time boyfriend of 10 years was cheating on her when he had never given her any reason to doubt him.

Every time he was late, she imagined him in the arms of the beautiful blonde he works with.

He had always been very loving with her and understanding of her jealousy but recently, he just became angry at her accusations and walked away.

She was really afraid that she was losing him and she knew that she couldn't put it off any longer—she had to commit to healing jealousy, making it a “must” and practicing the mindsets and actions that would do that.

As she worked through our book, she wrote down her commitment to healing her jealousy as well as specific ways she was going to practice doing that. Her commitment was to creating a healthy jealousy-free relationship and she was determined to practice doing that in every moment.

One thing she practiced was identifying her jealousy triggers—one of those being when her boyfriend was late from work.

The strategy she used to soothe herself when this would happen is that she took several deep, cleansing breaths and told herself that he loved her and would be home soon. She also would start cooking to distract herself from her negative thoughts.

This wasn't easy at first but the more she did it and the more committed she was to it, the easier it became—and the closer the two of them became to one another.

Take it one thought and one moment at a time. Be very choosy about the decisions you make and what you focus upon. Intentionally look for your

jealousy triggers and experiment with what distracts you from acting on them.

Make your commitment today to heal your jealousy. Make it a “must” not a “should.”

Tools to Use...

Mind Movie:

Pretend that you are a screenwriter for a big Hollywood movie production. You have complete freedom to “write” the story of your relationship and/or your life in whatever way pleases you. This means that you get to decide how conversations go, what happens when you and your partner are alone and intimate together and, generally, what you are committed to in your life.

Take a particular “scene” – like a common argument you and your partner have or a tricky situation that usually leads you to feel tense and jealous. As the screenwriter, how would you change the mind movie so that the conversation or situation turns out different than it usually does?

What would you say or do (that you don't normally say or do), so that the “scene” eases your jealousy and brings you and your partner closer together?

Have fun with this and try out your re-write in real life. See what happens.

What about you?

What are you willing to do right now to make it a “must” that you stop jealousy?

Secret #4: Stop Pointing Outward and Take Responsibility



Making your partner wrong and you right just seems to be what we humans do when we get into an intimate relationship. When we first get together, our partner seems so wonderful and can't do anything wrong and then after the "honeymoon" period ends (yes, there is such a thing), nothing he or she does is right or up to your standards.

When you find yourself saying, "If only he would..." or "If she'd just stop..." you know that you're in the finger-pointing-outward stage of your relationship—and this can last for as long as the two of you are together if that's what you want for your relationship or marriage.

This is especially true about jealousy.

The person who is jealous typically points at the partner who's doing or not doing something that triggers and incites jealousy.

The person who is with a jealous partner points at the partner for being unreasonably jealous.

The "if only's" and "how dare you's" fly back and forth and nothing gets resolved. In fact, mistrust and distance only seem to get worse.

Past experiences can certainly influence how much you point the blameful finger at your partner when jealousy comes up inside you. There can also be present moment situations that have that same effect.

Sometimes it's the way that your current partner communicates with you (or doesn't communicate) that contributes to jealousy taking root.

Here's an example of how this can happen...

Question: "Is it possible that my feelings of jealousy are exacerbated by the fact that my companion has difficulty telling me he loves me or being tender with me?"

Answer: Jealousy is usually a many-layered thing. Jealousy often stems from beliefs you hold about yourself. These beliefs might reflect low self-esteem or a lacking sense of self-worth. They may go back to past relationship experiences that left you wary and emotionally wounded.

Adding to this are the words and actions of your partner.

In this case, it sounds like this is definitely a factor. If your partner does not tell you that he loves you (often enough for you or not at all) and doesn't treat you the way you'd like to be treated, your jealousy can intensify.

Yes, jealousy can be exacerbated by your partner's words and actions.

The solution does not lie with your partner, however.

The mistake that many people make when it comes to jealousy is that they believe that if only their partner would _____, their jealousy would just go away.

This is rarely the case.

It's vital for you to heal your jealousy from within by exploring its many layers and the practices that will bring you out of that state into one that creates a healthy, happy relationship.

It's perfectly normal for you to want your companion to tell you he loves you and be tender with you. Keep in mind that different people have different ways of expressing love and saying the words or being tender may not be the way your man has learned to express it.

Instead of blaming your jealousy on this, explore how he does express his love and look for when he does.

You may find that you want more of a demonstration of love than he's willing to do and if that's the case, you'll need to consider whether in the long term, he's the partner you want to be with. If he is the partner you

want to be with in many other ways, learn to give yourself the love and appreciation that you want from him.

The point is to not blame your jealousy on him but take charge of your thoughts and feelings instead.

Inappropriate Flirting is a Big Issue That People Blame Each Other Around

What we've seen in other couples throughout the years is that sometimes otherwise intelligent people are clueless about what is and isn't appropriate conduct with other people who aren't their spouse, partner or lover.

We can't tell you what is and isn't appropriate conduct with other people and what's acceptable or what's not in your relationship or marriage. We will share with you what our agreement is...

We have an agreement in our own relationship that we're only going to flirt with each other.

This seems like the smart thing to do since we are always wanting to do the best things possible to keep the spark alive and growing between the two of us and NOT create any spark between either one of us and someone else.

However some people see it differently and sometimes it create challenges in your relationship or marriage—like it did for this couple who asked us an important question about flirting...

Question: "He knows I get jealous, so why does he keep flirting?"

Answer: Flirting is one of those sensitive points for many people who have a jealousy habit. The thing that's especially difficult about flirting is that it is subject to interpretation. Your partner might claim to be "social" and "friendly," while you see his or her behavior as inappropriate and undermining trust.

Worse yet, you can't see the other things that your partner may be doing that you appreciate and you can't see what's going well in your relationship because the flirting has obscured your view.

A tense stalemate can develop over flirting and your partner might react to your words about it in one of the following ways...

- 1) Your partner feels wrongly accused, denies it's happening and pulls away from you emotionally.
- 2) Your partner keeps flirting with others in a passive-aggressive manner.
- 3) Your partner listens to you and agrees not to flirt, but continues to do it, unaware of what he or she's doing.
- 4) Your partner keeps flirting with others because he or she doesn't believe that this behavior is flirting. Your partner dismisses your opposition as just you being jealous.

Know the Difference between Flirting and You Being Jealous

The tricky thing about flirting is it's confusing to figure out what's actually flirting and what's your jealousy taking over.

Yes, everything you are feeling is real.

Jealousy is real, although the beliefs it is based on are often inaccurate for the situation. It's really important for you to figure out what's accurate and then make a decision based on that.

Here's the challenge...

Flirting involves an invitation of sorts. It is usually a light and sensual way to send the message that there is romantic interest and availability.

Other times flirting can be more playful, intense and overt and also show romantic or sexual interest as well.

Flirting with others can satisfy a need to feel desired or important.

Flirting is about intention and this is why it's difficult to accurately identify in your partner's behavior.



You think you know what his or her intentions are but you can't know with absolute certainty what is actually true.

With as much objectivity as you can, look at what your partner is literally doing when he or she seems to be "flirting." Watch the body language, proximity to the other person, amount of touching (and where) if there is any. Pay attention to the actual words that your partner says to the other person.

Among those observable behaviors that you see and hear, does anything cross the line? Does your partner's body language or words violate the commitment that you two have?

What is it that YOU want and are not getting in your relationship?

Keep the Connection During Triggering Situations.

If you do notice observable behaviors that feel like a violation of your relationship commitment and seem to be flirting, then it's time to set boundaries.

If you realize that what you think is him or her flirting is coming from your jealousy (and not from the actual words or actions), then make a conscious shift in your focus. Remind yourself of what is true and what about your relationship is actually working well and is going right.

When you tell your partner how you feel, be sure to ask him or her for more of what you DO want. Let your partner know that you would like more attention or to connect in with him or her more frequently-- even if it's just for a moment at a time.

If, for example, you tend to get jealous when you and your partner are at a party or social event together, come up with a strategy in advance to stay connected. Ask him or her to make eye contact with you periodically throughout the night. Let your partner know how special it makes you feel to hold hands or when he or she puts an arm around you when you're in these triggering situations.

It can be amazing when you start focusing your attention and your requests more on what you do want instead of on what you don't want, instead of pointing your finger outward—unless your partner is obviously violating agreements.

How to Stop Feeling Jealous When There's No Evidence...

Question: "When I begin to feel jealous and it is not based on any evidence, how do I make myself stop feeling jealous?"

Answer: When jealousy is in full force, it can seem to take over. It can be difficult to think clearly and it can be nearly impossible to know what the best thing to say or do is in a charged and difficult situation.

Jealousy can be even more frustrating when it is apparent that there's no evidence for it.

An example of this could be when you are suspicious, but your partner has given you literally no reason to doubt him or her.

Or, it could be the fact that you are insecure and sure that your relationship is in danger even though you and your partner just shared a loving moment together.

Situations like these leave you feeling helpless and at the mercy of your jealousy.

When there is no evidence to back up your jealous worries and fears, get curious instead of defensive and fearful. Look at your past and identify any old beliefs or unhealed wounds that you are still carrying around with you.

Don't make yourself "wrong" or "bad" for feeling jealous; it's just how you feel in this moment. Instead, try to understand what is at the roots of jealousy for you.

Recognize the Early Signs of Jealousy

In addition to healing your old wounds, another powerful way to prevent jealousy from taking over is to recognize its early signs. These are different for everyone, so it helps if you can observe yourself-- especially when you feel jealous and think back to just before the jealousy came up.

Here are some common early signs of jealousy:

- ⤴ Tension in the pit of your stomach
- ⤴ Stiffness or tightness in shoulders, arms and hands
- ⤴ Overall nervousness or unease
- ⤴ Increased heart rate/racing heart
- ⤴ Lump in throat

The more you can identify and be on the lookout for the sensations that tend to come up for you when you're starting to get jealous, the better. These are your signals that it's time to tune inward and take care of yourself instead of getting fearful and lashing out at your spouse or partner.

Stop-Soothe-Shift

The sooner you can interrupt jealousy before it builds, the easier this process will be. If you recognize an early sign of jealousy in your body (or your thoughts), stop what you are doing.

Take a deep breath and ask yourself a question like, "What will soothe me right now?" (Ask the question again if the answer that comes back is: chocolate, pasta, any other comfort food—drinking, drugs or spending money. These are comfort "drugs" of choice for many people so if you get any of those answers, say to yourself, "Besides that...")

It might be that you need to connect in some meaningful way with your partner.

Your jealous feeling may be coming from a desire for your partner's loving touch or embrace.

Your jealous feeling could be coming up for a totally different reason than your fears about your spouse or partner.

We've found both in our own lives and in the lives of our coaching clients we've worked with over the years that sometimes fear, doubt, pain, upset or even anger can get triggered by something, someone or some situation that has nothing to do with your current partner or your jealousy.

But when this kind of mis-placed jealousy gets triggered it could be that this

is just where your emotions happened to file your upset (as "jealousy") and not as the real underlying problem that has been bubbling up underneath the surface all along.

It could also be that something unexpected happens and for no apparent reason at all your jealousy gets triggered.

Here's What Happened to Jamie and Rhonda One Night Not Long Ago...

Jamie and Rhonda got married young by most people's standards. Jamie was 20 and had a good construction job and Rhonda was 19 and a freshman at the state university when they tied the knot.

They had some rough times early in their relationship because of an affair on her part while she was at school, but things seemed to be humming along great for the past 9 years or so until one night recently when Jamie totally exploded on Rhonda in a jealous rage when Rhonda came home about an hour later from work than normal.

She tried to explain that she was in a meeting until the time that her work was normally over and then she had to meet with the director of her project privately and that made her even later.

Combine all that with getting stuck in traffic that extended her normal 15 minute commute home to 30 minutes and it made for a long day.

What would normally be a relaxing evening at home turned into a nightmare when she was greeted by her husband Jamie and his accusations about what she was really doing and who she was really with that caused her to take so long to get home.

She tried to explain but Jamie wasn't buying any of it.

Within 5 minutes of her arrival home, Jamie and Rhonda were in a full blown jealousy meltdown argument.

He was accusing her of having an affair with this new guy she “smiled at” who frequents the neighborhood restaurant and bar they go to a couple of times a week.

Bear in mind that Rhonda was completely innocent of any wrongdoing but now they were facing damage control.



As it turned out, what most triggered Jamie was a small comment Rhonda made when they were out with their friends the previous weekend about how Jamie had become a little “pudgy” around the middle since he took his new job and hasn’t been working out as much.

He didn’t realize it at the time but he at the back of his mind, he started thinking that she was indirectly saying that she wasn’t attracted to him anymore even though their sex life was just as strong as ever. He couldn’t get this nagging worry out of his head.

Rhonda’s comment about Jamie getting a little “pudgy” was meant as a playful little comment but although Jamie didn’t say anything about it, he couldn’t let go of what she said to him and couldn’t get over feeling hurt.

Rhonda thought her comment was no big deal and had honestly forgotten all about it. The fascinating thing is that it took five days and Rhonda being late coming home from work for Jamie’s upset to get triggered and also for him to recall her affair 6 years ago.

This story illustrates so clearly how jealousy or anything else can get triggered by something that has nothing to do with the truth or reality.

But just as happened with Jamie—it felt so real in the moment triggered by a small comment Rhonda made about his pudginess (that she’d already forgotten about.)

This is how crazy jealousy can be and it happens much more often than you might think.

You get upset about one thing; you get triggered and your upset comes out sideways as jealousy. No wonder solving your jealousy issues can seem so daunting.

Stories like this serve as a reminder of how important it is to stay in the

moment as much as possible.

Stories like this also remind you to recognize when you get triggered and to take a deep breath and have some strategies on hand for how to soothe yourself when jealousy strikes.

As you soothe yourself in whatever way you need, gently shift your attention back to the present moment. Look around at the room or space you're in. Use your senses to take in everything around you.

Affirm to yourself what is true here and now. If you tense up because a situation reminds you of something from your past, take the time to consciously bring yourself back to what's true right now. This can diminish your jealousy and allow you to really be present.

The way to make jealousy a non-issue in your life is to first recognize it in the moments it first comes up. Even when you're not feeling jealous, the everyday words you use, thoughts you choose to focus on and actions you take are what can point you away from jealousy and toward trust, happiness and connection.

This is especially the case when you feel jealous. When your mind is running at full-speed with images of what you fear your partner is doing with others or what he or she thinks of you THAT is the moment for you to step in and do something different than you normally do.

Handling Overwhelming Feelings...

In this question, a reader shares about how paralyzing anxiety and depression can be...

Question: "How do I handle these overwhelming feelings of depression, anxiety, and abandonment when he spends time with friends or does something with other people and disconnects from me? He doesn't call and when I call he seems distant and I freak out. How do I keep from calling him and just let him be then when he does call, how do I keep from being angry and withdrawn?"

Answer: When it comes to jealousy, knowing what triggers you and being able to recognize your patterns (as well as your partner's patterns) can really help. These observations can provide you with valuable information that you can use to make significant changes...

And to overcome jealousy.

It's unwise to expect that you and your partner will ALWAYS act and react in the same ways. Be sure you allow for the possibility of growth. At the same time, learn from the past so that you can create a different (and desirable) present and future instead of holding your partner responsible for your feelings.

Use Re-directs in Triggering Situations

There is a tricky line between distraction and conscious re-direction. We encourage you to explore what re-direction might be like when your partner goes out with friends and especially when you feel the urge to call him or her.

Please be sure to take care of your emotions and give yourself the opportunity to heal the parts of yourself that fear abandonment. These might stem from old wounds from past experiences.

Here's the conscious re-direction part....

When your partner goes out with friends, soothe your hurt feelings in healthy ways AND try a re-direct.

A re-direct is when you make a conscious choice of a new or different thought or activity that breaks your jealousy's evil spell and redirects your attention to a different thought or activity that takes your mind off your obsessive jealous thoughts that you're having.

To give you a quick example of how re-direction works, here's something that parents of young children frequently do...

Let's say a small child happens to get fascinated with the idea of sticking toys in an electrical outlet in the wall.

Because this is an activity that could harm him or her to actually do, the child's parents might "re-direct" by giving him or her a different toy to play with or maybe give some wooden spoons and a tin can to fascinate and distract the child from an activity that could cause harm while also physically moving him or her away from danger.

To re-direct yourself and your energy when jealousy pops up, have a list of specific ways you can soothe yourself, activities that will draw your attention away from your worries, or friends and family members who are willing to be there for you when you get triggered and before your jealousy takes over.

You might have some other methods that work for you like, meditation, listening to soothing music or going for a walk in the woods or around the block.

Brainstorm a list when you're feeling calm and settled and then refer to it when jealousy rises up within you.

Our advice to the woman above and to anyone struggling with overwhelming and intense feelings is this...

While you might not feel like going out dancing with friends when your partner is out with his friends, you may enjoy a phone call with your cousin who you don't get to see very often. You might like meeting a friend for coffee.

Try NOT to center your conversation with friends or family on how jealous you are or even about your partner being out with friends.

“When your partner goes out with friends, soothe your hurt feelings in healthy ways AND try a re-direct.”

In other words, open up to interests and conversations that aren't so focused on your boyfriend. Talk about a good book you read or a funny movie you saw recently. Debate politics or social issues, if you find that enjoyable.

If you don't have a friend or family member available to spend time with you when your partner is out with friends, pick up a good book, watch an uplifting movie or pursue an interest you have.

Get Professional Help with Depression and Anxiety

If your depression, anxiety or intense emotions feel too big for you to handle, reach out for help. Find a professional who will work with you and guide you to develop healthy ways to cope with intense emotions.

Recognizing what works and then sticking with it and returning to it when you backslide are really two of the most effective ways to overcome jealousy.

And it happens in the moment.

But this can be a real challenge, can't it? We know how difficult-- maybe even impossible-- it can seem to return to what you know calms you down when intense emotions flood in.

Anger, Suspicions and Abuse...

Especially if your spouse or partner hasn't done anything to warrant your jealousy--anger, suspicions and abuse are three things that **MUST** be stopped if you want to pull your spouse or partner closer to you instead of push him or her away.

Here's our answer to this reader's question about anger and suspicions...

Question: "How do I stop becoming so suspecting and then becoming so angry which results in me being abusive and judgmental?"

Answer: Just as you describe, it can all build up to one regrettable explosion.

In nearly every situation, something happens to trigger jealousy or suspicion.

Then worries, fears, irritation and anger intensify.

Judgments form in the mind about the other person and they are usually negative.

Finally, it all erupts in rage.

Shouting, accusations and maybe even physical violence can occur if you don't know the secrets to keeping your jealous thoughts under control or don't have coping strategies to ease your jealousy when it strikes.



This may or may not be what you experience when you get jealous and angry. Even if it happens differently for you, it's likely that hurt and the gradual destruction of your relationship are the results.

There's no doubt that, if left unaddressed and uncared for, intense emotions can become overwhelming and can lead a person to say and do things he or she later regrets. When it comes to both jealousy and anger, the sooner you notice you are feeling them, the better.

Jealousy and Your Love Relationship are Just Like a Garden...

It's easier to keep your garden free of weeds if you care for it regularly. In a relatively short period of time, weeds, especially certain types, can take root and choke out the plants that you want to grow.

It's no big deal to pull out a dandelion, for example, when there's only one and it's just popping up out of the ground. It's more of a challenge (and it's also more time-consuming) to tackle a whole bunch of dandelions that are invading your vegetable patch.

It's the same exact phenomenon with jealousy. Start questioning your jealous thoughts while they're fresh and new. That way, they won't gather any energy to intensify and they won't become even more difficult to deal with.

Be Willing to Stop the Momentum of Anger

Don't allow yourself and your relationship to be threatened by an out of control "crop" of jealousy and anger. Stay in regular touch with your own emotions so that you can recognize the first signs of these strong feelings.

When you notice that you're feeling suspicious, frustrated, irritated or angry, stop what you're doing. It only takes a few moments to tune in and get clear about what's really going on within you.

In many situations, the thing that you are getting all worked up about is less of a big deal than what it initially seemed to be.

It's your habit of getting jealous and angry that sends you to a more heightened state.

This is all the more reason why it's vital for you to pause a conversation, your work and definitely your stream of thoughts and figure out why you're starting to get upset.

Tend to Your Jealousy and Anger

Find ways to soothe your strong emotions before you say or do something that will push your partner further away and possibly hurt him or her.



Ask yourself what you need right now. Sometimes, frustration and anger are made worse when basic needs aren't being met. Do you need rest, water, food or something else?

It's never wise to make an important decision or try to resolve a disagreement with your partner when you are exhausted, ill, dehydrated, hungry or otherwise off-kilter. Fulfill these basic needs as best as you can and then see how you feel.

These are very simple ways to deal with anger. They won't necessarily make your jealousy or anger vanish, but they can help you see the situation more clearly and accurately. Clarity will help you make a decision that will best serve you and your relationship.

When you resist the urge to shove down or ignore your anger and you really care for it in whatever manner works for you, that choice will benefit you not just now in this moment, but in the future too.

Anger isn't the only intense emotion that can take over and make it impossible to deal with your jealousy in healthy ways.

One of the biggest problems jealousy causes is that it keeps your heart closed.

Jealousy keeps your heart closed not only to your partner, but to every other person in your life as well.

You're probably already well aware that when you're jealous, you wall yourself off from other people and put a shield up around your heart that even your children can feel.

When jealousy forces you to close your heart to others, it's impossible to truly give or receive the love that you really want in your life.

It's been our experience that if you really want love in your life, you have to learn how to calm yourself, start opening your heart and find a way to feel safe—and take charge of your own life.

It's a decision you make in every moment.

We realize that not every episode of jealousy is unwarranted and that sometimes you do need to take action in some way.

If There is a Reason For Your Jealousy, Here's a Re-frame For You...

Look at jealousy as a sign that you are to pay attention to what's going on, either inside you or outside you in that moment.

Whatever's happening, we invite you to calm yourself so that you can either deal with what you're thinking or what's actually happening that needs to be addressed.

“Jealousy or Love: Which will it be for you?”

In either case, jealousy will keep you in a never-ending loop if you don't do something about it.

The question is...

Are you going to allow jealousy to keep your heart closed or are you going to say NO to jealousy and open your heart, mind and soul to the love you deserve?

The choice is yours in every moment.

Jealousy or Love: Which will it be for you?

By now, you probably know how painful, exhausting and destructive jealousy can be-- especially if it's allowed to grow and get bigger. For many people, jealousy feels overwhelming. They try to stop it. They make changes (at least temporarily), but they don't see the lasting improvements they want.

Their jealousy doesn't disappear and this is disheartening. Maybe it's the way you feel too.

You've done your best but the positive effects aren't showing up. You're just about ready to give up. And maybe that's what brought you to this book in the first place.

We encourage you to keep at it. Read and re-read the material here and keep learning about how to create the relationship and life you want. Continue to practice the tools we've offered because that's key.

The earlier you catch jealousy, the easier it is to effectively handle and release. If you know that your suspicions and doubts about your partner aren't coming from facts or a real situation, the temptation may be for you to dismiss your feelings completely and pretend everything is okay.

“The earlier you catch jealousy, the easier it is to effectively handle and release.”

When you try to force yourself to stop feeling the way you do, this only grows those feelings (and your jealousy) bigger.

Don't deny your feelings but rather take a moment to give yourself the love and understanding that you may not have received from others—and then practice a technique like taking some deep breaths, questioning your thoughts (which we'll talk about in the next chapter) and redirecting your attention as we've explained.

If you take the time to go through this process whenever those feelings come up, they will lessen in intensity over time—and so will your jealousy.

It's important for you to stop pointing a finger outward at your partner; look within and then take action from what you know to be true.

Tools to use...

Building momentum: Think about a time when you successfully headed off a jealous meltdown or jealousy-instigated argument with your partner. Maybe you took a few moments to breathe deeply and you remembered the facts before accusing or interrogating. Maybe you asked your partner to, "Please tell me more about that..." instead of jumping to a conclusion.

Remind yourself of how it felt-- in that moment-- to be free of jealousy. This is your proof that you CAN overcome jealousy because you've done it before (even if you don't do it always). Use this knowledge the next time you feel jealous to build momentum in the direction you really want to go.

*If you can't come up with an example of you successfully heading off jealousy, think of a "win" in any area of your life. This could be anytime you changed a habit or faced down a difficult situation and persevered. That kind of momentum can be just as powerful and influential when it comes to your jealousy habit and can help you move forward in creating a life free to be as happy, trusting and connected with your partner as you'd like.

What about you?

When do you point your finger at your partner and how does that keep you in a downward spiral of jealousy?

What are you willing to do to stop yourself from not taking responsibility and moving into the next right-action for you to take?



Secret #5: Live in the Miracle Moment

The truth about jealousy is that most of it happens because of what we experienced in the past or what we fear could happen in the future—and NOT what's happening right here, right now.

To stop jealousy, you have to learn to be in the present moment so that you don't drag the past with you into your current life experience.

But as this reader's question reflects, this is not always easy to do...

Question: "How can you stop yourself making up worst case scenarios and forgive and forget the past? I think because it's happened before it'll happen again and ALWAYS think that however much I try not to."

Answer: When you've been hurt in the past-- by your current partner or an ex-- it can be difficult to convince yourself that you won't get hurt again.

This is a natural defense mechanism.

If, for example, your friend's dog nips you, it's likely that you'll approach that same dog with hesitation or caution the next time. Similarly, your impulse might be to protect and defend yourself if you were hurt or betrayed in the past.

This impulse to hesitate or protect yourself from what you expect will be the next round of betrayal is understandable, but it's not necessarily going to serve you or your relationship.

This can keep you emotionally separate from your partner; it can fuel jealousy and can stress you out too!

Forgiveness is an effective way to move beyond the past and open up to the kind of close and connected relationship you want.

Invite yourself to forgive, but not to forget.

We encourage you to separate out forgiveness from forgetting. It's not really possible to literally forget what happened in the past anyway. The more you try to put what happened out of your mind, the more it tends to come up.

It's usually unwise for you to forget. Every single experience you have had in your life-- including those that you didn't want-- has a lesson to offer. Learn from what happened and be aware of how you might be falling back into old and limiting patterns.

“When you forgive, you're NOT saying that you are suddenly okay with what happened or that your partner is now ‘off the hook’ for his or her choices.”

Forgiveness is an essential part of moving forward with your life. When you forgive your partner for breaking trust or for hurting you in some way, you acknowledge that the betrayal (or hurtful actions) occurred.

When you forgive, you're NOT saying that you are suddenly okay with what happened or that your partner is now “off the hook” for his or her choices.

You are choosing to no longer live from that place of betrayal and pain. You remember it happened AND you're willing to heal and release the anger, sadness or other feelings you have surrounding the betrayal.

Forgiveness is a process and cannot be forced. Invite yourself to take a first step in forgiving your partner (and even yourself too) for whatever happened in the past that still feels raw and upsetting to you now.

And remember...

Most jealousy and relationship advice can be boiled down to this...

Live in the Present Moment

Do whatever it takes to keep yourself thinking and making choices based on what's happening right here and right now. When you feel the impulse to judge a situation or your partner based on actions or events from the past, stop yourself.

Ask yourself if that judgment, belief or reaction you were in the middle of is accurate right now. It might be or it might not be.

When your mind does drift to the future, ask yourself if the “worst case scenario” you are imagining is the only possibility. Stretch yourself to consider that something completely different might be what actually occurs.

The more you can return to the now, look around at what you reliably know and live from that place, the happier you can be.

One of the deadliest and quickest ways to kill love and a relationship is when one or both people hold onto resentments from the past—wrongs from either previous relationships or from their current one—and they keep punishing and making the other “pay” for those hurts.

Keep Past Jealousy Episodes in the Past

Whatever you’re carrying from the past—whether you were cheated on in a previous relationship and you can’t get that out of your mind or your current partner cheated on you, lied to you or any other deep hurt and you feel like you can’t let your guard down to trust him or her like you used to...

It’s not easy to let the past stay in the past.

You don’t want to be made a fool of again and we get that.

This question illustrates this painful and stuck place to be...

Question: “The biggest problem I've had is letting go afterward. There were situations with flirting, or where we didn't properly communicate and one of us was hurt, but they are in the past. I still feel wronged by them and feel the need to bring them up whenever they are triggered (for example, if my partner receives a call or message from the woman who was part of the jealousy situation). Better communication does help, but I worry about triggers in the future, or that we'll end up in that same situation again. So I guess my question is how do you let go of jealousy from the past?”

Answer: The short answer to your question is to live in the present moment as much as you possibly can. Obviously, this isn't always easy to do!

When trust is weakened, hurtful words are spoken and suspicions are raised, it can be difficult to fully resolve these situations and truly let them go. You might think that you and your partner have talked out whatever happened, but later it's apparent that you're still raw and unsettled about it.

It's a human tendency to carry with us bits and pieces of the pain, doubt and betrayal that we experienced in the past.

Sometimes, this is because you and your partner didn't totally resolve whatever happened.

You may have reached a stalemate in which neither of you was really hearing the other. You might later realize that you were actually more upset about _____ than you were about _____.

Learn to Let Go

Take the time to figure out what your hurt feelings or your suspicions are really about.

If your partner seemed to you to be flirting, acknowledge that but don't beat it to death if you've tried to talk it out before and keep getting the same answer over and over.

He or she might completely deny flirting so saying, "I saw you flirting with _____!" just invites another denial.

If you are troubled by your partner's relationship with someone, identify what is happening that doesn't feel okay to you. Be specific about the behavior or words.

In fact, we invite you to go beyond what your partner seems to have with someone else and focus on what you'd like in your relationship. In other words, what do you want more of?

When you talk with your partner, focus in on these things and don't get side-tracked or make accusations that you can't back up with facts. Use words like, "I feel _____ when you _____. I'd love it if we could _____ in our relationship."

Make sure that when you and your partner finish the conversation about this issue, you truly feel resolved. This might require you to take some time by yourself to go deeper and find out what you truly need. It might involve subsequent conversations between you and your partner.

Please note: If you two are talking **at** one another instead of **with** one another, you can talk and talk and still not feel resolved. Communicate in ways that are productive and connecting.

Be willing to step away for a specific time from your talk and then come back to it when you can really hear one another.

Letting go doesn't mean turning a blind eye to a situation and pretending it's all okay when it isn't.

Letting go is letting go of the struggle and the defensiveness, simply stating what you're feeling and why—and then what you truly want in your relationship with your partner (not just what has to stop in order for you to be happy.)

“Appreciate the moments when you see signs of improvement in your present life with your partner and build from there.”

If you want to get some specific communication help from us, two wonderful resources we offer are our *500 Communication Tips and Secrets* book and audio program that's available at <http://www.500communicationtips.com> and we also offer a great program on the specific words and phrases to use to create closeness and connection with your spouse or partner here <http://www.MagicRelationshipWords.com>

Watch Your Expectations

Once you've reached an agreement with your partner, remind yourself of it. Honor the work that you two did together to come to that resolution.

For example, if your partner agreed to be completely transparent with you about calls or texts with a particular person, notice it when he or she follows through.

Stop expecting your partner to behave as he or she did in the past or for any person to repeat what happened in the past. Be aware of the overall expectations you have of yourself, your partner, your relationship and others.

Appreciate the moments when you see signs of improvement in your present life with your partner and build from there.

Even if flirting or cheating has never been an issue in your relationship, all of us carry past hurts from the past and these always impact our relationships—until we actively heal them.

And because of this pain, we're usually jealous, "on guard" and put up a big shield around our heart, thinking we won't get hurt again if we do.

Here's the Good News and the Bad News...

The bad news first...

If you're on guard and jealous, your whole body and mind are on guard and you won't completely let love in, even if your life (or relationship) depended on it.

The good news is that you can be smart about opening your heart and you don't have to do it full-out or all at once.

In fact, if there has been cheating or other deep hurts in your current relationship, we wouldn't recommend handing over trust all at once.

In order to get closer in your relationship, letting the past stay in the past and coming into the present moment is one important step to take.

Letting Go of a Painful Past

This is, of course, after you've taken stock of your past relationships that ended badly and decided what you DON'T want and what you do want.

Here's what we recommended to a reader who was struggling to let go of her painful past...

Question: "How do I stop being jealous when my husband has any contact with another woman be it via telephone, internet, in person, or even looking at attractive women in television, movies or magazines? It's not that I don't trust "HIM" but my previous relationship has changed my outlook on all men. How can I get in the here and now and forget the past?"

Answer: So many of us haul around old wounds and memories that can skew how we see others.

We perpetuate assumptions that all men will always be a certain way and all women will always be another certain way... because this is what we experienced at various points in our lives.

If you were a man who had been with a woman in the past and she treated you the same way, you'd probably feel the same way about all women—that they can't be trusted.

From your point of view however, it makes total sense that you might believe that all men will behave in a particular way because you had a memorable-- and painful-- experience in the past that you keep alive today.

This is probably because you've never fully healed from the past experience.

You may have dealt with certain emotions and aspects of what happened, but there are more layers and depth that you haven't accessed yet.

Believe it or not, you might also still be carrying around this old emotional pain (and the beliefs that go along with it) because there's something "in it" for you.

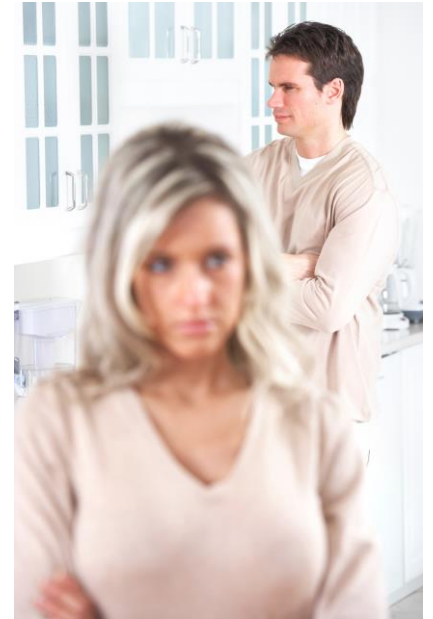
As unwanted and unpleasant as this past experience was, there could be something that you are reluctant to let go of.

For example, on an unconscious level, some people don't fully heal from being cheated on because continuing to be the victim allows them to not take responsibility for contributing to distance and disconnection in that relationship.

We don't know what is true for you and why you are stuck in the pain of the past. This is something you can explore and find out for yourself.

Learn From the Past But Don't Live There

The bottom line is that you can choose to learn from the past, but not to react from it.



You can make the decision to really look at what you've carried with you from your previous relationship experiences and start healing your old wounds.

As you do this exploration and healing, you'll come away wiser and more aware. You'll be more aware of your own tendencies and habits that didn't serve you in your past relationship and more aware of what you're still doing today that isn't serving your current relationship.

Make Completions

When you make a completion, you honestly assess the beliefs, assumptions and expectations that you've brought with you from the past-- and that are often rooted in painful experiences.

You decide which of that stuff is helping you have the kind of relationship you want and which stuff stands in the way of what you want.

Through this process of healing and making completions, you come away lighter and more open.

You can more easily see what is true now. You can stop viewing your partner and current relationship through a filter of what happened in the past.

Stop Yourself from Reacting in the Present by Discovering Your Fears from the Past

Armed with a clearer view and an understanding of what you DON'T want to repeat, you'll more easily discover what your fears are and where they're coming from.

Only then will you be able to pull yourself into this present moment in your current relationship, leaving the past in the past and not fearing the future.

Here's an example of clearing the past and coming into the present moment...

When Sylvie looked at where her jealous thoughts were coming from (she had proven to herself that her partner really wasn't cheating on her), she discovered a pattern from her childhood that was keeping her stuck.

She was the oldest of her siblings and she had assumed the role of caretaker very early. Somewhere inside of her, Sylvie believed that everybody always got more attention than she did, although she usually kept her "selfish" thoughts to herself.

In her intimate relationships as an adult, even though she felt "selfish," she never seemed to get enough attention. She became jealous of every person who got her partner's attention and her jealousy ruined more than one relationship.

Sylvie had to learn to identify when those feelings of lack came up inside her, to love that "little girl" who was expected to "mother" her siblings at such an early age, and to bring herself into the present moment with her partner.

It took learning how to love herself and it took telling herself gently that she was loved and this situation was different from when she was growing up.

Learning to trust yourself can mean noticing when your emotions kick in and then just "be" with them rather than act immediately. This can prevent you from saying and doing what is damaging to your relationship.

Every time you stop yourself from reacting when your thoughts and emotions overwhelm you, trust for yourself builds a little more.

Don't Let Your Past Paralyze You

Here's a question from a newsletter subscriber who seems paralyzed with mistrust because of the past and our suggestions for her about how to handle her fears...



Question: "How can I learn to trust anyone in a relationship? In my last relationship, my former fiancée's words and actions did not align."

Answer: It sounds like you may have been "burned" in your past relationship. When the person you rely on for love and romantic partnership is saying one thing, but doing something completely different, it can be devastating.

The common phrase-- "to get burned"-- is such a fitting description for being betrayed and hurt. It does hurt and the hurt lasts.

The whole experience can leave you feeling wary and hesitant to trust anyone else again.

You may have been "burned" by your ex, but it sounds like you also don't want to be alone.

You're left in a conflicted place where it may seem unsafe to trust anyone you're intimately connected with, but you are well aware that a relationship without healthy trust will not last.

Give yourself time to heal from your past relationship and this will help clear up the internal conflict. While there is no specific amount of time that you "have" to wait before getting into a new relationship, it is important for you to pay attention to how truly ready you are to enter into another relationship.

"You now know the warning signs and you can stop and assess what's going on more closely if you see similar indications in the future."

Don't Make the Same Mistakes

We cannot overstate how important it is to learn from the past even as you are striving to be more present in the now.

Too many people repeat the same relationship mistakes again and again. They vow that they will never let themselves be lied to, cheated on or disrespected like that again...but they end up in similar situations that leave them feeling even worse than before.

It sounds like you became aware of the signs that your ex was not consistent in words and actions. This is really valuable information!

In your situation, you've seen tangible and observable proof that your ex wasn't being honest with you. You now know the warning signs and you can stop and assess what's going on more closely if you see similar indications in the future.

In other words, your chance of repeating the past is minimized because you've raised your awareness.

Be Present and Specific

The trap that many people fall into when learning from the past is that their perception gets stuck there.

There is a HUGE difference between gaining an accurate understanding of what happened in your past relationship-- including your own actions that may have contributed-- AND seeing every new person and situation as exactly the same as your past.

Examine your expectation that it's impossible to really trust anyone else simply because your ex was dishonest with you. This tendency to view all potential partners through the lens of what your ex said and did is not going to benefit you.

Instead, be present with the new people in your life and be specific.

When you are truly present, you will hear the words that the other person is literally saying and you will see his or her actual actions.

From the here and now and specific to the person and situation, you will recognize whether or not there is a match...not only between words and actions, but also between the two of you.

Whether you are healing and re-learning to trust yourself after a past heartbreak or you're currently in a relationship and struggling to trust....

The key is to bring yourself into the present and deal with the situation you're in instead of including everything bad that ever happened to you, which creates a huge ball of trouble for yourself.

Come into the present, deal with what's in front of you and your jealousy will fade into the background until it lets go of you completely.

Tools to use...

Breathing: You've possibly been told to "take a deep breath" or "just breathe" countless times. You may even agree that it makes sense to do, but it seems so obvious and maybe even ineffective-- so you don't do it and instead try to push through the jealous moment.

When you learn how to consciously breathe, you'll discover that your breath is one of your biggest allies!

Practice conscious breathing at least once a day so that it becomes almost automatic. Like this...

Find a quiet space where you can be alone. Sit upright in a chair or lie down on your bed on your back. Close your eyes and inhale slowly. Imagine that inhalation coming from deep in your abdomen and feel your belly rise as you do (like an inflated balloon). Put your hands on your belly if that helps. As you exhale from the same place deep in your abdomen, feel your belly return to normal (like a de-flated balloon).

Next, repeat inhaling and exhaling just like this for 5-10 minutes and keep your attention focused on just your breath by saying to yourself, "inhale" (as you do) and "exhale" (as you do). A variation is to choose soothing words like "calm," "soothe," "love" or whatever feels good to you as you slowly and repeatedly inhale and exhale.

What about you?

Instead of allowing the past to rule your present, make a conscious choice to bring your attention to what's happening right now. Turn your attention to what you DO want when you're pulled into fearing that your past will repeat itself.

We're not going to kid you—this takes courage, but the rewards can be enormous as you begin to allow love in again in a conscious way.

What is one way that you will bring yourself into the present moment when thoughts of the past or fears of what can happen in the future come up?



Secret #6: Challenge Your Thoughts and Stories that Keep You Stuck

We all have thoughts and stories that keep us stuck. We might not even be aware that we have them, but they can seem to control our every move—especially when there’s jealousy.

Many people know that their untrue thoughts get them into trouble but they don’t know how to stop them.

One of the biggest questions we get asked goes something like this...

“When my jealous thoughts come up, what do I do to stop them? When I’m in the middle of jealousy, I spiral downward and can’t seem to get out.”

Stopping your jealous thoughts and stories can seem impossible when you’re in the thick of it and can’t think of anything else.

The trick is to catch those thoughts and feelings early BEFORE they overwhelm you and take over.

“I’m not important to my partner!” is a thought that plagues many people who struggle with jealousy. It can come up more intensely when your partner disappoints or fails to keep a promise.

This is what happened for one of our readers who asked us this question...



Question: “My boyfriend often says he will call me and then he doesn’t. It makes me feel unimportant to him and I then start to become suspicious and jealous. What do I do?”

Answer: Broken promises can really inflame insecurity and jealousy. If you already feel unsure of yourself or your relationship and your partner doesn't follow through by calling you, it's understandable that this hurts your feelings and triggers jealousy.

There are many reasons why people make promises that they don't keep.

Here are a few--....

- ⤴ They want to avoid an argument or fight.
- ⤴ They honestly intend to keep the promise, but get distracted or something unexpected comes up.
- ⤴ They want to please the other person by saying "yes," even though they can't (or won't) follow through.
- ⤴ They really don't care whether or not they keep the promise.

This is only a partial list of possibilities. Our point is to illustrate that the reason why your boyfriend promises to call you and then doesn't could be any one of these things-- or none of these things.

We encourage you to make a shift in your approach.

Don't spend any more of your energy and time trying to figure out why he's not keeping his promises. You will probably only make yourself more upset as a result and might not come away with a helpful answer.

Instead, re-direct your attention to creating the kind of relationship and life you want by making some changes.

Return to What You Know is True

One thing it sounds like you want to change is your reaction when your boyfriend doesn't call you after he said he'd call.

Try to separate your disappointment from feeling unimportant. It's understandable that you might feel disappointed or frustrated that he didn't keep his promise (again).

We invite you to not make that leap from feeling disappointed to interpreting his actions as an indication that you are unimportant to him.

Always bring yourself back to what you know is true.

What are the reliable facts you have about your boyfriend, your relationship and what's going on?

If you have proof to support your suspicions, pay attention to it.

If there is information that tells you that he is possibly lying to you or maybe breaking other agreements you two have, follow up and find out what's really happening. Then, make a decision about what is best for you from that information.

Get “Buy-in” on Your Agreements

As you get clear about what you know to be true, consider creating some agreements with him that will really stick. You might think that you already do this.

“For many couples, there is a lack of what we call ‘buy-in’ when an agreement is made.”

For example, if you ask him to call you and he says “yes,” this actually is an agreement. We recommend that you look more closely at how agreements usually happen in your relationship.

For many couples, there is a lack of what we call “buy-in” when an agreement is made.

There is often confusion about the specifics of what is actually being agreed upon.

In other cases, one person will agree just to please, to avoid an argument or without being fully engaged in the conversation.

Is it possible that your boyfriend is not truly “buying-in” to your agreements about how often he will call you?

Ultimately, you are the one who needs to decide what is true and what kind of relationship you want. And you will get what you want more easily when you stop reacting from a story that may not even be true.

Shift Your Thoughts

A thought like, “I am unimportant to my partner!” or “He doesn’t respect me!” can be destructive to you and your relationship or it can be a place for healing and growth.

To make a shift, start by slowing the whole process down and taking a good look at what happens inside and outside you when that stressful thought or story comes up.

Here's a question we invite our coaching clients to ask themselves to help them stop harmful stories and determine whether or not they're real --"Is this a fact or is this a story that I've made up about what this situation means?"

An example of when you might ask this question is...

You are heterosexual and your partner is good friends with a beautiful person of the opposite sex at work and you notice you are very jealous about that friendship.

Your partner has never given you any reason to mistrust him or her, but you can't help worrying when you know they will be working on the same project together and it's driving you crazy.

When you start making up "stories" that involve your partner having sex with this person in the stock room and leaving you, you can ask yourself the question, "Is this a fact or is this a story?"

“Can heterosexual men and women truly be just friends?”

Your answer to this question should help you separate what's truly going on right now in this present moment from fears that are based solely on your past experiences.

The root question, "Can heterosexual men and women truly be just friends" is behind a commonly thought and talked about story. Here's what one of our readers asked about this same jealousy-inducing situation and our response...

Q **uestion: "How do you know whether to trust or whether you are being deceived if your husband has a close friendship with another woman from work?"**

Answer: You can't know-- at least not immediately-- whether or not you are being deceived about your spouse's close friendship with another woman.

The only thing you can know is whether you are getting your needs met and whether you're happy with your partner.

The thing is, asking yourself questions about how much your partner cares about you or loves you and how happy he makes you most of the time will take you to a much better (and different) place than fixating on who your partner is with and what your irrational thoughts are suggesting they're up to.

When you feel hesitant to trust, it's always, always wise to pause and back up-- especially before you say or do something in reaction to your suspicions.

“When you feel hesitant to trust, it's always, always wise to pause and back up-- especially before you say or do something in reaction to your suspicions.”

Back up and review the facts you have about his friendship with her and also about your own relationship. Make note of any big changes in his behavior and any inconsistencies between what he says and what he does.

If you do see an inconsistency, this is a place for further investigation.

While it might be tempting to question your husband or even the woman he's friends with, this isn't always beneficial. Your husband might feel accused and pull away from you. If he is lying to you, he may just deny what you're saying and call you “jealous.”

What you need are observable and verifiable facts. Pay attention and keep a private notebook if that helps you assess all of the information you have.

Signs of an Emotional Affair

While it IS possible for a heterosexual man and woman to truly be just friends, this isn't always what happens. Approach this with an open mind, but also with awareness. Be as unbiased as possible as you review the facts and decide what's true for your husband and his female friend.

In some cases, there is no sexual or physical aspect to an affair, but there is a level of connection that breaks trust in the same way. This is called an

emotional affair.

Here are a few signs of an emotional affair:

- ⤴ Secretiveness with partner about interactions with the other person
- ⤴ Stronger emotional bond than the love relationship or marriage
- ⤴ Preference for the friend instead of the partner
- ⤴ Feelings of sexual attraction underlying the friendship

It is difficult to know what your husband's underlying feelings are for his friend. Pay particular attention to what you can know with certainty. Listen closely to what he says and watch his actions.

Make Conscious Agreements

If you determine that your spouse is having an emotional (or physical) affair with his friend, then we recommend that you decide what is best for you. You get to choose whether to allow this to continue, whether you will confront him and whether you will stay in your marriage.

After getting clearer about what is really going on between your husband and his close friend, you could talk with him about this. Ask him to create some agreements with you about his interactions with her.



Frame any agreements in terms of what will keep trust and your relationship healthy and growing (and what will undermine it). Work together to nurture and create the kind of relationship you want. Focus on what you want more of together and not on what he's doing wrong, although setting some boundaries may be in order.

Whether it's his friendship that feels threatening to you or some other issue, the very first step in dealing with your stressful stories about what's going on with your partner is to question them and clear space for the truth to come through. Then you'll know what's next--whether it's to create agreements and set boundaries or to back up and really work on your jealousy.

As you learn how to separate the facts from your stories and stop your jealous thoughts and behaviors, you will be on your way to healing your relationship and life.

The tricky thing about storytelling and jealousy is that your stories may be based on a past event or current dynamic in your relationship that's upsetting to you. In other words... you aren't making it up! You definitely aren't making up how you feel and what you think is going on with your partner.

The Use of Pornography can Provoke Jealous Thoughts and Stories...

Pornography is a divisive issue for many couples and can provoke jealous thoughts and stories. Here's what one of our readers wants to know...

Question: "How do I feel secure in myself like I used to no matter what reasons I have for jealousy towards my partner? He cheated with porn for 2 years. I can't get over it."

Answer: Pornography isn't always an easy topic to discuss or come to a resolution about. We don't necessarily see all pornography as inherently a "bad" thing, but we know that it can be offensive and feel degrading when it's used to replace intimacy with a living, breathing individual and it has the potential to tear a couple apart.

In general, our opinion of porn is this...

If it moves you further away from one another, it's not healthy for your relationship.

If you had an agreement with your partner that he would not use pornography and he did, we can see how this could feel like cheating to you. Breaking this agreement may have felt like a big betrayal of you and your relationship.

Even if you two didn't have a specific agreement about porn, if you are against it and he was consuming porn anyway, the effect could be the same—you felt betrayed and maybe also rejected.

It might help you to acknowledge the ways that he has demonstrated with his actions that he is now honoring your boundary and no longer consuming porn.

What is the Story You're Telling Yourself?

It can also help to look at the story you're telling yourself about your partner's past (or current) use of porn.

You may be thinking things like this...

- ⤴ "I am not sexy enough/passionate enough/attractive enough/good enough in bed to keep him satisfied."
- ⤴ "He finds porn more exciting than me."
- ⤴ "I can't fulfill his sexual needs."
- ⤴ "There's something wrong with me and that's why he turned to porn."
- ⤴ "There's something wrong with him and that's why he turned to porn."

We don't know exactly what your story is about your partner's past use of porn. We bet that if you're like most people you do have some strong stories about it, though.

What associations and connections do you make between him consuming porn and you or between the porn use and your relationship?

Listen in more closely to what your recurring thoughts are about yourself, your partner and his past (or current) use of porn. These form the story that you tell yourself.

It is this story that keeps you stuck in pain and the past.

Identify your story, question it and ask yourself if it is helping you move forward or not.

Re-affirm your Value and Strengthen Your Self-esteem

No matter what happens in your relationship, know that you are valuable. Your sense of security and self-worth are not dependent on the decisions that your partner made in the past (or the ones he's making now or in the future).

As you question your story, we urge you to re-affirm to yourself how beautiful, sexy and worthy of love you are.

Unfortunately, this can all feel shaky and uncertain after going through what feels like a betrayal or rejection. When something like this happens, it's up to you to remind yourself of your positive aspects.

Don't give away your power to anyone.

Stop comparing yourself to anyone... especially actors, actresses, models and especially men and women featured in porn.

Remember that men and women featured on the screen, as models on the runway, in magazines and especially ones featured in porn are ACTORS and are acting. It's not real life.

From a place of healthy self-esteem, you can return to what's true now in your relationship. You can more easily let go of the past and enjoy what you have now with your partner as well as what you are creating together for the future.

One key to successfully dealing with your jealousy-inducing stories is to pause when you recognize you're operating from an unquestioned thought. The sooner you pause the "action" going on in your mind and get to the truth, the sooner you'll return to the reality of your relationship and the potential for happiness and connection.

The "Comparison Game"...

Another jealousy story that we often hear about from our readers and coaching clients comes from what we call the "comparison game." If you've ever played it, you know it's absolutely no fun and can even be destructive and deadly for your relationship.

The question posed by this reader illustrates what we're talking about...



Question: "I get jealous and upset any time there is a woman around who is dressed provocatively. And I do mean ANYTIME. It ruins evenings out together and at home watching tv. These women are everywhere. How do I stop worrying about him seeing these women and thinking 'I wish my wife looked like that?' We fight about this constantly and he says it's all in my

head. Half the time he doesn't even notice the woman until I freak out about her. How do I gain control of my insecure thoughts? Does it matter if he notices these other women? He shouldn't have to have tunnel vision, but couldn't he pretend not to notice?"

Answer: It can be overwhelming.

It can seem like everywhere you look there are beautiful women tempting your partner and making you look bad. What's actually happening is that these situations act as triggers and bring to the surface any thoughts or feelings you may be harboring inside yourself about how you may not see yourself or not feel like you are as beautiful/sexy/shapely/thin/ attractive as you would like to be.

You might watch your partner like a hawk to see if he is showing any signs of noticing the enticing women that you can't help but notice.

All of this brings up fears that you're not enough. You might even doubt that you can hold onto your partner.

Jealousy can play out like this in your mind and it can leave you exhausted and upset. You might be really angry at your partner and feel sure that he IS thinking the same thing that you're thinking about the other women and also about you.

Sometimes, men (and women too) do stare too long or make inappropriate and suggestive comments about others. This can feel like a rejection and possibly even a betrayal.

The first thing to do is to get clear about what's really going on. Do you have verifiable proof that your husband is actually watching attractive women in a way that is inappropriate?

From what you describe--"Half the time, he doesn't even notice the women..." we wonder if your jealousy is mostly about your insecurity and a story you're telling yourself that keeps you stuck.

Stop the Comparison Game

One of the tricks to getting control of your jealousy and being able to be calmer in any situation is to simply stop the comparison game.

This is important because your insecurities fuel the “comparison game.”

You look around at the other women--your server at the restaurant, lingerie models on tv, a woman jogging down the street and your own friends too--and judge yourself against them.

The comparison game consists of you trying to figure out how you rank.

There may be times when you rank yourself higher than another woman in some specific way. If you have a jealous habit, however, you probably rank yourself lower than others most of the time.

This might even include ranking yourself lower or lacking about things that you don't necessarily approve of.

For example, you might not approve of the woman you see wearing a barely-there bikini at the pool, but on some level, you judge yourself to be less (sexy/attractive/thin/well-built/shapely) than what you believe she is.

The comparison game is a way that you deceive yourself and get yourself stuck even deeper in jealousy and insecurity, so stop it.

Stop comparing yourself to others and telling yourself stories that undermine your relationship.

It's not healthy. It's not smart and if you continue to do it, this will only continue to fuel your jealousy thoughts that make your jealousy worse.

Build Confidence in Yourself

Catch yourself if you start to play the comparison game in your mind. Stop yourself if you make comments about other women to your partner that are belittling and denigrating to the other woman and/or to you.

Instead, steer your thoughts toward what will help you build your self-confidence. You don't need to judge anyone else as inferior or wrong in order for you to feel good about your body, your mind and yourself overall.

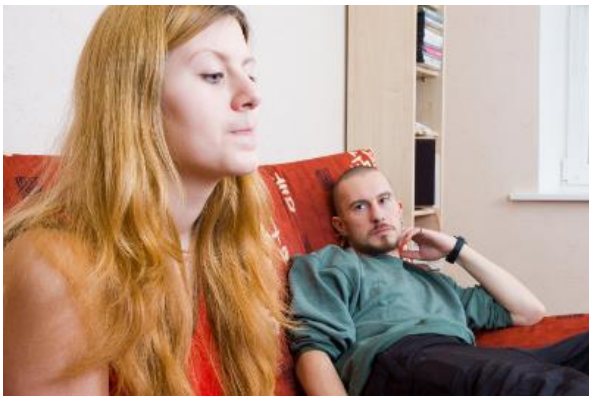
You can appreciate aspects of yourself that you might otherwise ignore or diminish as no big deal.

What do you like and approve of about you? Spend some time to think about this question.

You can also start a conversation with your partner about a topic that interests you both and then really be present and engage with him. If you don't already know what your partner likes and finds really sexy about you, find out. Ask him!

The painful jealousy that arises when you play the “comparison game” can come on fast and consume you. When intense or unexpected feelings of jealousy come up all of a sudden, it's essential that you know and use strategies that will get you out of crisis mode.

Create Agreements that Will Help You Challenge Your Jealous Thoughts...



Karen was jealous of beautiful women on tv or in movies and it was excruciating for her to sit and watch a movie with her partner if there were well-built, vivacious women in it.

She was worried that her partner wanted these women more than he wanted her and she always came up lacking when she compared herself with them.

Her jealousy was fueled by her husband’s occasional comments about these good-looking women.

Somewhere inside Karen, she knew her jealousy was ridiculous and that her husband wanted only her—he’d told her so many times. She also knew that her jealousy was killing her marriage because every time this kind of situation came up, she pulled away from him—physically and emotionally—and they couldn’t even watch tv together without a fight.

“When jealous feelings come up inside you, become aware of your thoughts and challenge them.”

She “punished” him for something that she knew wasn’t really happening.

She knew she had to do something pretty fast and that “something” was to challenge her faulty thinking in each moment and make a specific request to her husband.

She asked him to not comment to her about the beauty of other women and he agreed. She also shared with him what she was going to do to stop her jealous thoughts.

The next time jealous feelings came up inside her, she became aware of her thoughts and challenged them.

To her surprise, sometimes when she reminded herself that he wanted to make love with HER and be with HER, she calmed down and could watch the show.

When this mental reminder didn't break the tension inside her, she got up from the couch and got herself a cup of tea. She then was able to come back and watch the movie with her husband.

Sometimes she was able to shift her jealous thoughts more easily than other times, but she knew to keep at it—even when it was difficult. She knew to keep challenging those jealous thoughts as they arose in the moment in order to bridge the distance that had formed between herself and her husband.

She learned that while she wasn't "perfect" at challenging her untrue thoughts, she WAS making progress and feeling more open to her husband—and even better about herself.

She realized that it truly was a moment-by-moment process of re-training her thoughts so that she can be a more loving and open person.

How to Keep Your Jealousy Demons from Coming Back...

Question: "How do you get rid of the 'fantasies' or 'demons' within and how do you keep them from coming back?"

Answer: We often remind our readers and coaching clients that jealousy is a habit and often it's a stubborn one to break...

If you have a "jealousy habit" this means that your jealousy is something you are continuing to create on an ongoing basis because of the habitual thoughts you continue to think over and over, the beliefs that you habitually

reinforce because of your habitual thoughts and you have some habitual stories you continue to reinforce as true when they aren't true.

They're just stories you made up.

Sometimes a jealousy habit can be based on painful fantasy. For instance, because of your jealousy, other people might seem to threaten your relationship or appear to take your partner away--even though there is no real proof that this is actually happening.

It is also a habit that can feel like an "inner demon" causing you to say or do things that you later regret. Because of this, your fears or anger that stem from your jealousy can seem huge and beyond your control.

Acknowledging that your fantasies or your demons have taken over is an important first step in overcoming jealousy.

This is a way to take back control and make conscious decisions that will help you improve your relationship and life.

Perseverance

We can't tell you that your jealous fantasies or demons will never return. Like any habit, this is probably the way that you've reacted for a long time. You are used to this habit and-- even though it's destructive-- it might somehow be comfortable for you.

Keep persevering-- returning again and again to what works-- to make significant and long-lasting change. If you've ever changed a habit, for example, quit smoking or stopped chewing your fingernails, you've been here before.

Remember the pull you felt when trying to change habits like these or others. When certain situations arose that stressed you out or threw you off balance, your impulse was probably to reach for a cigarette or chew on your nail.

When you noticed yourself reaching for the cigarette or chewing your fingernail, what did you do?

It's probable that some of the time you continued with the old and unwanted habit, but some of the time, you stopped yourself and did something different instead.

It most likely took dozens and dozens of moments catching yourself returning to your old habit and then stopping before the impulse to smoke or chew your nails before the urge dwindled and became easier to manage.

You kept at it and persevered.

What is at the Root of Your Jealousy?

Do some inner searching and look for what is at the root of your jealousy. Is it insecurity? Is it lingering pain or beliefs from past experiences?

If you are having trouble figuring out what is at the root of jealousy, pay attention to where your mind goes on a regular basis. Do you frequently put yourself down or focus in on your limitations and mistakes? Do you regularly replay memories of the way that a past partner betrayed you or abandoned you?

Recognize your usual focus. This will help you know where to heal and make changes.

How can you fulfill your own needs?

Ultimately, we encourage you to also identify what your needs are and find ways to fulfill them. This means that you stop looking to your partner for confirmation that you are special, attractive and valuable.

Open up to doing this for yourself.

A first step is to identify what your needs are. Take out a piece of paper and, without censoring yourself, write down everything that comes to mind when you ask yourself the question.... "What do I need?"

Next, write down any ideas you have for how you could meet your own needs. If, for example, you want to feel loved, what could you do for yourself that helps you feel loved? It could be changing the words you say to yourself on a daily basis, for instance.

It might be challenging negative thoughts about yourself that keep you from feeling love for yourself and for anyone else.

Being very honest with yourself about this relationship can also be a way you help yourself feel loved. If your partner is consistently unable or unwilling to express his love and feelings for you, is this something you can be patient with or is it a deal breaker for you?

Be sure to identify if there are ways your partner does show love for you that maybe you are discounting or ignoring. Look at his or her actions and make the choice that is best for you.

Tools to use...

Inquiry: There is really no better way to deal with the stories going on in your mind (that feed and fuel jealousy) than to question them. Do so lovingly and with complete honesty. Byron Katie offers a powerful technique she calls "The Work" which is simple yet absolutely freeing.

One part of Byron Katie's technique is this:

Identify a stressful thought or belief you have and write it down on a piece of paper. (Don't try to be "nice" or "spiritual." Just write it down.) Now write down the question, "Can I absolutely know if it's true?" and write your answer-- either "yes" or "no."

There's much, much more to "The Work" than this, but this first question is a great way to interrupt your jealousy story and give yourself space to return to the facts you know to be true.

You can find out more about "The Work" (including free resources) here: <http://www.thework.com/thework.php>

What about you?

What thoughts and stories do you need to challenge so that you can move closer to healing jealousy and having the love you want?



Secret #7: Ask For Help From People Who Can Actually Help

When you're jealous, you're embarrassed, upset with yourself and want to crawl in a hole, the last thing you usually want to do is ask for help—especially from your partner.

The temptation can be to push down how you're feeling and try to pretend everything is okay around your partner. Maybe you turn to friends or family to complain (or you might be too embarrassed and keep it to yourself), but you try to hide your jealousy from the one you love.

Shame and embarrassment about your jealousy is also one of those things that can make you want to ignore your problem and hope it will go away on its own.

It never goes away any time you deny that it's a problem and you let your shame and embarrassment keep you from admitting that you have a problem that's hurting your relationship and actually keeping you from getting and keeping the love that you're so fearful of losing.

If you're jealous and you feel any shame or embarrassment about it, the question that this reader asked us may be what's going through your mind too...



Question: "When I become jealous, should I let it show?"

Answer: When jealousy comes up within you, it's only going to make you and your relationship more tense and stressed if you go to either extreme and a) bite back how you really feel or b) let loose with your raw and intense jealous thoughts and assumptions.

It's best to be honest--with yourself and with your partner--about how you feel in the moment.

But...

Don't Pretend and Don't Spew It

Have you ever noticed a fake or forced smile on someone's face?

Think about the woman struggling to make it through a child's raucous birthday party when she has a migraine headache.

Think about the guy squirming uncomfortably as he listens to his father lecture about how he "should" live his life.

Both people are doing their best to hide the way that they really feel. To be polite, show respect, gain approval or for whatever reason, they put on a "happy" face and grimace their way through.

If you are even the least bit observant, you can tell that this smiling person isn't feeling all that smiley or happy.

If you pretend that you aren't jealous when, on the inside, jealousy rages, it's going to show through in some way. Your partner might not know exactly what you're feeling, but he or she will be sure that something is upsetting you.

"Don't pretend that you're not jealous, but don't spew it either. Express your feelings in a way that can truly be heard."

This will weaken trust and will only add to the tension in your relationship.

So, don't pretend that you're not jealous, but don't spew it either. Express your feelings in a way that can truly be heard.

You've possibly been on the receiving end of someone's tirade.

Maybe you made a mistake or maybe you didn't do anything besides be in the wrong place at the wrong time.

We're betting that you couldn't really hear what the other person wanted from you or was even upset about because of the shouting and hostility. As the intensity rushed out, you probably felt afraid or defensive and you may have emotionally shut down.

Don't make this mistake as you tell your partner that you feel jealous. He or she will not be able to understand what you are trying to say if you spew your initial thoughts from a raw place.

Spewing jealous venom at your spouse or partner will NOT be helpful to you and your relationship at all—especially if he or she has done nothing wrong.

Do the Inner Work and Then Communicate

Take a few minutes--or more--to calm yourself down before you tell your partner that you feel jealous.

If, for example, it appears that another woman is flirting with your man and he's doing nothing to stop it, you're possibly going to feel jealous and angry.

Your first impulse might be to charge over to your man and let him have it.

Instead, step back and take a few slow and deep breaths. Do the inner work necessary to check your perspective.

Question the story you might be telling yourself about this situation.

Is it absolutely true that she is flirting with him and he's doing nothing about it?

Look at the observable information before you and don't add in what you think might be her or his motives.

If you want to then let your partner know that you're feeling jealous, do it when you can communicate in a calm and even voice. Do it when you can address the specific and observable behaviors.

Own how you feel using words like, "I felt jealous and worried that you were hooking up with that woman when she stood close to you talking and laughing and she massaged your shoulders and I know that's probably not true. I'm working on not being jealous and here's one way you can support me_____."

This can also open the door for you and your partner to get on the same page about what you each consider to be flirting, how he can support you, and what you each will do if this happens again.

"When asking for help from your spouse or partner, say to them, "I'm working on not being jealous and here's one way you can support me_____."

Helping your partner understand...



Question: "What is the best way to describe your jealous feelings to your partner so that they have a better understanding of what you're going through, so they see that to you this is a 'real' fear?"

Answer: It's difficult enough to be jealous and overwhelmed by anxiety and fears. When your partner dismisses your feelings as "just jealousy," it's even worse!

Hearing your partner diminish how you feel can make it seem that much more impossible to truly stop jealousy.

It can be helpful to tell your partner how you feel so that he or she can work with you and support you in making improvements, but this kind of conversation needs to be approached carefully.

If you are looking to your partner to make your jealousy go away, you're probably going to end up disappointed or hurt.

The key here is not so much what your partner thinks, says or does, it's what YOU think, say and do.

We urge you to focus first of all on you.

Get a better understanding of what triggers your jealousy and where it comes from. The more you know about your jealousy habit, the easier it will be for you to intentionally direct your efforts and heal in those specific ways.

Don't Make Your Partner Responsible for How You Feel

When you do talk with your partner, take ownership for your feelings. Don't make him or her responsible for your emotions or your jealousy.

Yes, there are possibly things that your partner does that you feel upset, worried or fearful about. This is certainly something to have a conversation with him or her about and create some agreements you both can get behind.

If you want to stop feeling controlled by your jealousy, make a shift and take ownership of your feelings and habit.

It is YOU who makes certain assumptions or thinks particular thoughts based on what you see and hear from your partner. It is you who can soothe your anxiety and fears by taking a second look at what you are thinking and then really questioning it.

It is also you who gets to decide what is healthy and preferable to you. Instead of trying to make your partner believe that you are feeling "real fear," get to what is bringing up the fear and take steps to soothe yourself and resolve any problems.

Ask for Help In The "Right" Way

One request you can make to your partner is for support.

If you feel overwhelmed by your jealousy, having your partner respond in a way that helps you break out of the flood of thoughts and emotions can make a positive difference.



Be specific about how you would like to be supported. This might change depending on the situation, so tune in to yourself to know what kind of support you need in the moment.

Remember, asking for and receiving help are NOT the same as asking someone to fix the situation for you. Nobody can make your jealousy go away-- this is your work.

Some couples have code words that they agree upon in advance and use when they feel themselves sliding back into destructive habits like jealousy.

You could say to your partner something like, "I need a hug" or "Please tell me you love me."

"Give yourself permission to fully receive your partner's support and use that to bolster your own efforts at overcoming jealousy."

Give yourself permission to fully receive your partner's support and use that to bolster your own efforts at overcoming jealousy.

Nothing's worse than you asking for support in a specific way and then dismissing it when your partner gives it to you.

The key here is to create for yourself an environment that promotes less jealousy and more clear-mindedness.

Be Specific...

When you ask your partner for help with your jealousy, be specific and focus on what you want, not what you don't want.

The important word here is "specific." Be specific when talking with your partner and hone in on what YOU want.

Simply asking your partner to help you when you're jealous without offering details won't really help you at all. Telling him or her what NOT to do won't get you what you want either.

For instance, asking your partner not to stare at beautiful women or muscular or attractive men isn't a "best practice" for what to do in a situation like this.

Instead, identify where and in what situations your jealousy overwhelms you and then feel into what you need in that moment from your partner.

Here's a good example of this is from our own lives....

Early in our relationship, Susie found that she was jealous when she and Otto were in a particular social setting and with certain people. He wasn't doing anything wrong, but Susie's mind would go haywire when he started talking to other women at these events.

She finally figured out that what might help her in those situations would be for him to reassure her every now and then that he was "with" HER.

We thought about it and talked about it and found something we thought would work and it did.

Otto could reassure Susie by just making eye contact, coming over to her occasionally or even as he passed her, putting his arm around her.

She made a request with specific suggestions to Otto and he agreed to do those things to help her when they were in social settings.

In turn, she agreed to keep her mind on the fact that he was "with" her and not with those other women.

This technique has not only worked for us, but has worked for many others who have struggled with jealousy as well—and it can work for you too.

What if your partner refuses to help and says it's YOUR problem?

If this is the case, there are many, many other ways you can help yourself.

The most important thing is for you to take action now.

What If Your Partner Won't Support You or Even Talk About Your Jealousy?

It could be that your partner is fed up with your jealousy and doesn't want to talk about it or support you in any way.

If this is the case, don't be discouraged but tell him or her your plan for healing jealousy and then find other ways of supporting yourself.

Should You Talk to a Friend About Your Jealousy?

If you want to start healing your jealousy, choose who you talk to very wisely. Although it may feel good in the moment, do not choose to spill your guts to a friend who will give you all the sympathy in the world and allows you to pity yourself. Choose a friend who will support you AND help you to see the truth of your situation so you can move forward.

Make sure your friend's experiences don't heavily influence his or her advice to you.

Here's an example of how a woman ignored advice from one friend and how she embraced support from a friend whose advice was helpful...

Patrice told her best friend Sally everything and when she told her about her jealousy and how she feared that her husband liked the secretary at work a little too much, Patrice got all the sympathy she wanted.

Sally's husband had just left her for a co-worker and she was very bitter about it so she was very quick to jump on the "he's cheating" band-wagon in her advice to Patrice. Sally's advice was, "Leave him right now and get a lawyer is you even suspect he's cheating!"

Patrice realized that Sally was very raw from what she'd gone through and maybe wasn't the best person to give her good advice at this stage of what was going on in Patrice's marriage.

Instead, Patrice reached out to another friend who had a happy marriage but also was very aware of what could happen to break up a marriage. This friend counseled Patrice to first get the facts and then make a plan to re-invigorating her marriage.

This advice settled Patrice down and she could move forward in a positive way instead of leading with her emotions which were pretty unsteady at the time.

Open Up to Other Ways of Supporting Yourself...

When it comes to getting the support you need, open up to a variety of different ways to surround yourself with that kind of influence, inspiration and support.

Asking for help isn't just about literally asking your partner or another loved one to help you. It might also mean learning a new skill to help you relax, like taking a yoga or meditation class.

It might be shifting your focus to something that you are passionate about.

If you've been caught up in jealousy, these feelings can be all-consuming and you can feel like your interests and passions have fallen by the wayside.

Along with learning some new communication skills and practicing them, it can be very healthy to turn your attention to what you love or used to love to do.

Invite a friend to take a class with you or do something else with you that you used to think was fun but no longer do.

When is it Time to Get Help from a Professional?

If at any time your jealousy or emotions feel overwhelming or too much for you to handle on your own, then we encourage you to get help from a professional therapist, counselor or trained jealousy coach.

Some people feel embarrassed or are hesitant to seek outside help. They may have been brought up to judge asking for help as a sign of weakness. Please remember that it takes courage to acknowledge your limiting and destructive habits and to do something to change them.

When the strategies you're trying aren't bringing you the results you want or if you can't get yourself to try some new strategies, it's time to get the support of a jealousy coach who can be there for you as you make the changes you want.

We have worked one-on-one with and coached many people who struggled with jealousy and have stopped it. To learn more about our jealousy coaching program, go to <http://www.NoMoreJealousy.com/jealousycoaching>

Tools to use...

Get grounded: Lie down in a hammock or on your bed under a blanket. Just be still and breathe (refer to the "Tools to use" in secret #3) for 5 or 10 minutes. Feel the physical support of the hammock or your mattress under you and around you. Pay attention to how it feels to be supported like this. Relax into and fully receive this experience of being supported. Know that, emotionally, you can surround yourself with support just like this. It's up to you to decide what you need and then to ask for it.

What about you?

What action are you going to take to reach out for help in overcoming jealousy in your life and when are you going to take that action?



Some final thoughts about stopping jealousy...

When most people are jealous, they focus on what's wrong and what they DON'T want rather than on what's going right and what they do want.

We're guessing that if you're jealous, you struggle with this too.

If you make an internal shift from focusing on what you want rather than on what you don't want, it can have big and positive effects on your life and relationship.

Notice the primary focus in this reader's question and also the different focus we recommend in our answer...

Question: "Can I have some reassurance that jealousy will go away from my life? I guess it's all about learning to love yourself and building your self-esteem isn't it? Will that help eliminate the problem?"

Answer: Despite the doubt, uncertainty, fear and worry that jealousy brings with it, you might dream of a future for yourself.

This future you dream about is one in which you never feel jealous again.

This dream is so pleasant and so welcome. It might feel almost opposite of what you have been living up to this point. And this dream is unlikely to become your reality if you focus more on what you don't want (more jealousy) and less on what you DO want (happiness and healthy self-esteem).

Behind your question we detect doubt and worry. You already know one key to overcoming jealousy, but your fear that it will never let up and stop controlling your life is a major obstacle.

We can't promise that at some point in the near or far future, you'll finally be finished with jealousy and never ever experience it again. It just doesn't happen like that.

Jealousy Can Become a Non-issue...

Jealousy can, however, become a non-issue for you if you do the necessary healing and change your focus.

The people and situations that trigger jealousy might always catch you from time to time.

The trick is to notice how these things that trigger your jealousy continue to lessen and lessen until one day you notice some or all of your triggers are gone completely.

When you think particular thoughts, you may continue to have worried or fearful **initial** reactions.

What can change is the intensity and how long you stay in that place of jealousy. The transformation is when you are able to recognize a jealous thought or feeling and you lovingly care for yourself and almost effortlessly move through that potentially difficult moment.

“Put more of your energy into what you **DO want** instead of on the ‘threat’ and on what you fear will happen--what you don't want.”

No more jealous meltdowns or outbursts.
No more all-consuming worries, fears and suspicions.

It all happens when you put more of your energy into what you DO want instead of the “threat” and on what you fear will happen--what you don't want.

Make Your Shift of Focus

When you make a conscious decision to make your primary focus and goal to build confidence and love and accept yourself more, other things that you want join your vision of your desired future.

Unfortunately, for many and maybe for you too, this shift in focus doesn't happen. Your jealousy and the dynamics in your relationship that seem negative take front and center stage. This leaves you feeling stuck and miserable...which makes resolving tricky situations that much harder to navigate through.

You've been so fixated on doubts, worries, fears and suspicions for so long, you have a difficult time thinking and talking about what you really do want instead.

When you focus on what's wrong, you're just creating more of what you don't want—and making it even bigger.

John discovered this just in time to make a change and save his marriage.

Here's his story...

John worked in a city about one hour from his home so he had a two-hour commute each day. During this time, he played audio-tapes or listened to the radio but inevitably, his thoughts would go to what his wife was doing at her job and who she was with.

He even made up stories in his mind that she was texting an old boyfriend while she was working because he knew she liked to text her friends. She'd told him many times that she wasn't texting anyone at work, let alone her ex, but a part of him didn't believe her.

He would often arrive home from his commute feeling frustrated and upset even before he stepped through the door because he'd let his thoughts run away with him all day long.

He knew he had to do something to change his thoughts or he would lose his marriage because his wife was getting more and more angry with him every time he brought up his suspicions.

And, she was pulling away from him in every possible way, including texting more with her friends.

On his commutes to and from work, John began to remind himself about why he loves his wife and what he appreciates about her. Whenever his mind drifts to worrying about his wife texting with her ex, he pulls his thoughts to the last time they really had fun together and how that felt to him.

Instead of thinking his wife was cheating on him, he focused on what he wanted—which was to be closer and more connected to her.

It didn't take very long until he began to see a difference in how he acted not only toward his wife but his kids as well. He wasn't angry when he came home from work and he was more fun to be around.

He and his wife began having fun together again and actually went out on a date. His wife began to relax around him again and enjoy his company—and return his affection. She even began texting less when he was home.

Appreciating and focusing on what's going right and what you want instead of allowing your untrue, negative jealous thoughts to take you over does work and we invite you to try it in your own life.

A Wandering Eyes Shift...

A partner's seeming inability to stop his or her "**wandering eyes**" is an issue that many couples argue about and even break up and divorce over. It's definitely a jealousy trigger and one where it's difficult to focus on what's wanted when it's happening.

Here's how we recommended a shift in focus to a woman who is struggling with a partner's "wandering eyes"...

Joan's "radar" was on constant high alert when she and her husband Ted were out together. Although he had never given her any reason to mistrust him, because she had been "burned" in past relationships by cheating partners, she was constantly on the lookout for it to happen with Ted—like it did in her previous relationships.

Anytime he even looked casually in the direction where other women were standing or seated, Joan went ballistic and accused him of having "wandering eyes" and it was disrespectful to her. Ted, of course, denied her accusation and for awhile was understanding because of her past history but lately, he was tired of it and they fought about it.

When she came to us, we suggested that because of her past, she was always on high "terror" alert when they were out together and that if she became discerning, she could bring a "normal" response to the situation.

We taught her to catch herself when she felt herself going into high "terror" alert by recognizing her pounding heart and tight belly, assessing the threat of the alert by referring to Homeland Security's scale, and if the threat was much lower than she automatically felt, to focus on what she wanted which was a close, loving relationship with Ted.

The next time they were out together and Joan felt the familiar heart pounding and tight belly because she thought she saw him glance at a beautiful woman across the room, she immediately told herself to access the actual threat by going through the Homeland Security's scale: Low threat (low risk) =green; Guarded threat (general risk)=blue; Elevated threat (significant risk)=yellow; High threat (high risk)=orange; Severe threat (severe risk)=red. As she did this every time she felt anxious, she discovered that the threat level was always green and when she focused on that and what she wanted with Ted, she could relax and have fun.

Focusing on What You Want Can Even Help You When the “Threat Level” is High...

This technique of focusing on what's going right and on what you **do** want can even be helpful in the most painful of situations, like when you know without a doubt, that your partner is cheating.

Especially in a worst-case situation like being betrayed by infidelity, it's powerful to keep your energy and attention pointed toward what you want for yourself now and in the future. It can make an emotionally painful decision and transition much easier.

Putting your attention on what you DO want isn't about sticking your head in the sand or pretending a break in trust isn't going on.

It's about you remaining true to the kind of life you really want for yourself.

This might mean making changes in how you communicate and interact with your partner, making calm, specific requests and watching for the results that you want—if they don't happen, not explaining the facts away. It might mean doing some personal growth and self-esteem work.

And it may mean keeping yourself healthy and making sure you respect yourself by not making excuses any longer but looking at “what is” instead of what you want it to be.

Focusing on what you want will keep you headed in the direction that's healthy for you instead of staying stuck in what you don't want.

Return to What Works When You Backslide

When healing from jealousy, you want it gone right now. We get that—but the truth is that it takes a series of moment-by-moment decisions on your part to stay focused on what works (what brings you closer and jealousy-free).

Keep at it. Pay close attention to the strategies and behaviors that help you move more easily through a difficult and jealousy-triggering moment.

What truly supports you in changing this unwanted habit?

Is it pausing to breathe and check in with yourself? Is it taking care of yourself with rest, healthy food and nourishment so that you can be clear-minded about whatever is happening? Is it re-reading an inspiring quote from your favorite author? Is it asking your partner to help you with a hug or loving words? Is it re-reading this book and practicing one of our “tools” that we’ve given you that you might have skipped over?

For most people, it is a variety of things that support them in changing a jealousy habit.

Know that you most likely will backslide and have jealousy meltdowns or strong reactions as you go along. This happens with literally any change.

What's most important is that you recognize it when you're falling back into your usual pattern and then do something to change direction.

Know what effectively interrupts your jealousy and helps you get back on track and then do it (as many times as you need to).

Be sure to pat yourself on the back, even for what seem like “little” improvements. This helps build momentum and keeps you pointed toward a jealousy-free life.

These 7 jealousy stopping secrets are a great start to creating more of the love and connection you want.

Remember, the key is to actually try these suggestions and “tools” in your own life (and try them more than once). Allow yourself to open to the marvelous relationship that we know you deserve.

For more information about our Breakthrough Jealousy Coaching, contact us by phone (614-459-8121), [email](mailto:info@nomorejealousy.com) or visit <http://www.NoMoreJealousy.com/jealousycoaching>

All our love to you,

Susie and Otto Collins

PO Box 14544
Columbus, Ohio 43214



Susie and Otto Collins's Relationship Books, Audios and Courses

Relationship Trust Turnaround

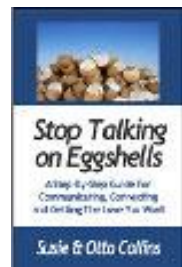
If trust is an issue for you or your partner, here's how to rebuild trust in your relationship or marriage, even after an affair or infidelity.

<http://www.RelationshipTrustTurnaround.com>



Stop Talking on Eggshells

You'll learn how to talk with your partner (or anyone) without fear in this new step by step guide for communicating, connecting and getting the love you want. Visit <http://www.stoptalkingoneggshells.com>



Magic Relationship Words

Over 100 magic words, phrases and sentence-starters to make sure you say it right every time to your partner, spouse or lover. Visit

<http://www.MagicRelationshipWords.com>



Red Hot Love Relationships

Whether you're 18, 80 or anywhere in between...here's how you can discover the secrets to creating a relationship filled with as much love, passion, intimacy, connection and incredible lovemaking as you want!

<http://www.RedHotLoveRelationships.com>



Should You Stay or Should You Go?

Susie and Otto's break-through process for helping anyone make the best decision possible about whether to stay in or leave a relationship

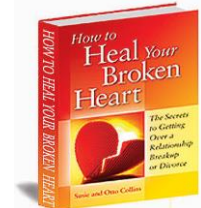
For more information, visit: <http://www.StayorGo.com>



How to Heal Your Broken Heart

Discover how to get over a relationship breakup and divorce. Visit

<http://www.HowToHealYourBrokenHeart.com>

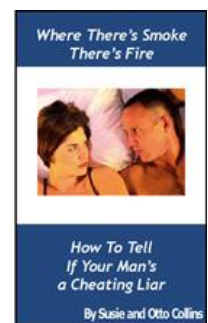


For Women...

Where There's Smoke There's Fire: How to Tell If Your Man's a Cheating Liar

If you're a woman and suspect your man is lying and cheating on you, here's a way to know for sure.

<http://www.IsYourManALiar.com>

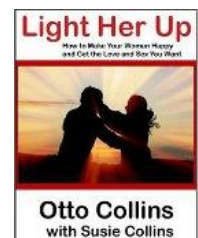


For Men...

Light Her Up

Shows men the love, attention-getting and passion-creating techniques virtually guaranteed to make your woman happy and keep her happy.

<http://www.LightHerUp.com>



A Crash Course in Communicating With Women

The breakthrough new program that shows you exactly how to communicate with your woman in ways that will make her feel totally and completely connected to you AND open her heart, mind and body to you in ways she never has.

Visit <http://www.lightherup.com/CommunicationCrashCourse>

