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Q: Can Our Marriage Survive an Affair?

A: My spouse and I are trying to recover from an affair. Our conversations are explosive and turn into blaming sessions. How do we move forward? How should we talk about it? Can we survive this crisis?

Couples can certainly recover and positively transform their relationship after an affair. Initially, the hurt partner may have a period that is very emotional. During that period, conversations tend to center on the anger and pain that comes from the betrayal. It is also common for the hurt partner to seek details about the affair. These conversations are usually detrimental and lead to further hurt.

Consider doing couple therapy to assist you with exploring both spouses' perspectives and needs. It will assist in rebuilding safety and allow for honest and respectful conversations to occur.

However, if you want to discuss the affair, try these questions instead of fishing for more hurtful details:

1. What did the affair mean to you? What did you get out of it?
2. Were you looking to have an affair or did it just happen?
3. Did you feel entitled or guilty?
4. Did you discover new things about yourself or recovered lost ones in that relationship?
5. Were you hoping the affair would help you stay in our relationship or help you leave it?
6. What do you value about our relationship?
7. How can we make our relationship better for both of us?

Manon Dulude PhD, RP assists couples in recovering from affairs. She can be reached at 905-873-9393.

youngdentistry
 SMILE CARE

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Q: Now that the stork has delivered me a baby, when should I bring the little guy to the dentist?

A: Congratulations on your new arrival! As a father of two young children I know the joy that parenthood can bring. I also know the absence of joy when sleep is disrupted and permanent markers are used to decorate the new couch. But even bleary-eyed parents can all agree that their child's health is a priority in their lives. I subscribe to the Canadian Dental Association's recommendation that a child should be seen within six months of getting their first tooth or before their first birthday. At this age, let's face it, they are really tiny and probably not that cooperative to verbal commands. But that is ok! Sometimes all we do is let them ride in the chair and get a quick glimpse in their mouth while they sit on a parent's lap. If they cry a bit, at least their mouth will be open. Often times, this can be done in conjunction with a parent's regular visit.

Chances are that things will be developing normally and we will send 'Junior' on their way. If there is something abnormal, early detection can improve outcomes and prevent small problems from developing into big ones. It will also give us a chance to discuss things like appropriate diet and oral hygiene practices and how things will change and develop as the child gets older. Early visits will also get the little one used to coming to the dentist and make it less stressful as we include more things like cleanings and fluoride into the future. So don't just bring in the baby photos, we want to see the little guy in person!