How To Rebuild Trust in Your Marriage

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Whether it be infidelity, lies or broken promises, these are major problems that invade your marriage. The trust between a husband and wife is severely damaged by such deep betrayals. However, this does not mean that the marriage isn't salvageable. Rebuilding trust in your marriage can be challenging when your spouse has done something significant to breach your trust.

Trust in an intimate relationship is about feeling safe with another person. When something happens to cause one, or both, of you to feel unsafe with each other due to a one-time event or series of events, trust is eroded.  It takes much time and effort to reestablish the sense of safety you need for a marriage to thrive.

**Here are a few suggestions and help for rebuilding trust in your marriage:**

1. Make a decision to love by trying to let go of the past. Stop obsessing about the situation which broke the trust between you and your spouse.
2. Decide to forgive or to be forgiven.
3. If you are the one in your marriage who lied, cheated, etc. show that the errant behavior is gone by changing your behaviors. That means no more secrets, lies, infidelity, etc. You must be completely transparent, open and forthcoming.
4. Together, set specific goals for getting your marriage back on track. Talk openly about these goals and check in regularly to make sure you are on track.
5. To rebuild the trust in your marriage, both of you must renew your commitment to your marriage and one another.
6. The wounded spouse must share the pain. The other spouse must acknowledge the hurt caused by the devastating experience of being lied to or cheated on. The other spouse must also feel the pain of their partner and show that it matters. This empathy will be healing.
7. Listen completely to one another and with your heart, not just your head.
8. Be honest. You must be able to understand and state why the bad behavior occurred. You can't just say "I don't know."  You must work hard to know why it happened and why it will not happen again.
9. Avoid using words that can trigger conflict. Use non-blaming 'I' statements and do not say always, must, never, or should.
10. Take responsibility for your own actions and decisions. Defensiveness will only perpetuate the conflict or crisis.
11. Be open to seeking counseling to have a better understanding of what caused the trust to be broken. Also be open to self-growth and improvement. Read self-help books on your own and together about how to rebuild trust and strengthen your relationship.
12. Remind one another that you each deserve open and honest answers to your questions about the affair or betrayal.

**General Tips:**

1. Recognize that rebuilding trust takes time. It will not happen overnight. There is no right or wrong amount of time, but you will know when you get there.
2. It is okay to remember and discuss the incidents and the betrayal. You may not forget what happened, but the pain attached will eventually go away if you are actively working on it.
3. Be aware of your innermost feelings and share your feelings with one another. You can comfort each other regardless of who the victim or perpetrator is.
4. The little things are just as important as the big things.

**What You Need:**

* Time
* Patience
* Honesty
* Commitment
* Love
* Forgiveness

If you find that it is still quite difficult to rebuild broken trust, a therapist can help you process what happened, why, and how to move forward. There are several forms of treatment for couples that are designed to re-establish trust, communication, and connection that can be especially helpful. You may even end up with a more solid marriage after going through such a crisis.