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Infidelity Excuse: I Fell Out of Love...and just love being in love

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I find this dilemma rather common for younger couples, probably mid or late 30s and younger.

Usually one reports, "falling out of love" and is truly disturbed by this shift. He/she (and this is not merely a female problem!) wants to "recapture" those feelings.

This person has found a "significant other" who has stirred those dormant feelings and this person once again "feels in love."

They are determined not to "settle" for a less than an ideal relationship, which means, of course, feeling the love feelings.

Here are some Key Points for this kind of affair. (The 6 others are outlined in my E-book.)

1. Unfortunately, our culture (movies, songs, romance novels, soap operas, romance comedies) teaches us that this is how it's supposed to be. "Falling in love" is the norm – the implication being, that if it doesn't happen, or if it goes away, something is wrong – with you, your spouse or the marriage. A good relationship must first unlearn a great deal.

2. The person who was driven to find "that loving feeling" (reminds me of a song...) usually experiences a high degree of guilt and conflict. He/she is often married to a "good" person and the desire to "find that loving feeling" seems selfish (which it is) and immature (which it is). Intuitively (and this person usually has a great deal of intuition and sensitivity) it is known at another level that he/she is not on the right path.

3. This person usually has a need for drama and excitement. Life easily becomes a soap opera. Emotional juice from the fall-out of emotionally intense relationships reigns rather than living life from the core of who one is.

4. There is little understanding, or perhaps healthy models, of the shifts needed as a relationship matures. For example, "falling out of love" usually happens when the attractors become the distractors. For example: His love for fun and spontaneity, which drew her initially to him, becomes irresponsibility. Her stability and calm, which drew him initially to her, become control.

5. The person "looking for love" is actually looking for the ideal, someone out there, who will project back to him/her that he/she is OK. No, more than OK, close to perfect.

6. This person needs to be adored, or think another adores him/her, because there is a lack of inner strength and solid identity. The other becomes my world, because I lack a world. Being "in love" is the panacea for my emptiness.

7. Sexual intercourse does not need to be a part of these relationships. Sexual activity may indeed END the relationship or at least move it to the point where the attractors become, again, the distractors. The idealized images may be held together by long phone calls, gifts, holding, love letters, e-mails, etc.

8. This type of affair often occurs when there is a "lull" in the marriage relationship. The responsibility of raising children, starting and maintaining a career, paying bills, etc. become the focal point for the couple. Romance becomes a foreign word. People are especially vulnerable for this type of affair after the children are in school and/or the oldest child reaches early adolescence. (There are good reasons for this, from a family systems perspective, but I won't get into that here.)

Tip: If your spouse is struggling with this type of relationship, make sure you hold and care for your self. Your spouse does not have the capacity to do this for you (or anyone) at this point. Yes, you are ok. Her/his affair says less about you and much more about the emptiness within her/him. It is time for you to know you better. Model for him/her what it means to be a person with a core, with integrity, with boundaries, with values, with meaning, with purpose and actively figure out what your needs are, and get them met. Maybe she will ask questions. Maybe she will not. Maybe soon. Maybe later.

For more information on the different kinds of affairs, what causes them, the probabilities of them ending a marriage and what you can do about it, my site.

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