BETRAYAL TRAUMA CHECK-IN

After the *Discovery*

For anyone reeling after finding out a partner lied, cheated, or kept a secret life, and wondering why it hurts this much.

You're not crazy. *You're hurt.*

Betrayal trauma is what can happen when someone you depend on for love and safety breaks your trust in a deep way. That might be an affair, hidden pornography or sexual behavior, a secret relationship, or serious lies about money or addiction.

Because your brain treats that person as "safe," the discovery can shake your whole sense of reality. Many people experience symptoms that look a lot like PTSD:

Intrusive images
Thoughts and pictures you can't turn off

Hypervigilance
Checking, scanning, never fully relaxing

Self-doubt
"How did I miss it? Can I trust myself?"

> **How to use this check-in:** on page 2, mark how often you've experienced each reaction since the discovery. Page 3 helps you notice gaslighting and safety concerns, and page 4 explains what your answers may mean and what helps.

This check-in is not a diagnosis. It's a way to put words to what you're going through. Take breaks if you need to. If filling it out brings up a lot, that makes sense, and it's okay to come back later.

If you don't feel safe

National Domestic Violence Hotline: call 1-800-799-7233 or text START to 88788, 24/7, free and confidential.
Thoughts of harming yourself? Call or text 988. **In immediate danger?** Call 911.

Since the discovery...

Fill in one circle for each reaction, thinking about the past 2 weeks.

Reliving it

	NOT AT ALL	A LITTLE	OFTEN	MOST DAYS
Images or thoughts of the betrayal pop into my head when I don't want them	○	○	○	○
I replay conversations or old memories, searching for clues I missed	○	○	○	○
Songs, places, dates or a phone notification bring it all rushing back	○	○	○	○
I have nightmares or upsetting dreams about it	○	○	○	○

On high alert

	NOT AT ALL	A LITTLE	OFTEN	MOST DAYS
I check their phone, location, accounts or browser history	○	○	○	○
I feel jumpy, on edge or unable to relax, especially around them	○	○	○	○
I find myself scanning for lies or the next shoe to drop	○	○	○	○

The emotional storm

	NOT AT ALL	A LITTLE	OFTEN	MOST DAYS
Waves of anger or rage	○	○	○	○
Deep grief, sadness or crying spells	○	○	○	○
Feeling numb, shut down or disconnected	○	○	○	○
Shame or embarrassment, like this says something about me	○	○	○	○
Feeling like I'm going crazy or can't trust my own judgment	○	○	○	○

Body & daily life

	NOT AT ALL	A LITTLE	OFTEN	MOST DAYS
Trouble falling or staying asleep	○	○	○	○
Changes in appetite (eating much more or much less)	○	○	○	○
Physical symptoms like a tight chest, stomach problems or headaches	○	○	○	○
Trouble focusing at work or being present with my kids	○	○	○	○

How I see myself

	NOT AT ALL	A LITTLE	OFTEN	MOST DAYS
Blaming myself, my body or my worth for what happened	○	○	○	○
Comparing myself to others	○	○	○	○
Pulling away from friends or family, or feeling like I can't tell anyone	○	○	○	○

How many did you mark
"Often" or "Most days"? _____

How many of those were in
Reliving it or On high alert? _____

Gaslighting *& safety* check

After a betrayal, it's common to be told you're overreacting. These questions can help you notice patterns.

	YES	NO	NOT SURE
My partner denies or minimizes things even when I have proof	○	○	○
I've been told I'm crazy, paranoid or overreacting for asking questions	○	○	○
Details keep coming out a little at a time ("trickle truth")	○	○	○
I'm blamed for what they did ("If you had... I wouldn't have...")	○	○	○
I feel like I'm doing all the work to repair the relationship	○	○	○

Is your safety at risk?

	YES	NO	NOT SURE
I feel afraid of my partner or how they'll react	○	○	○
My partner has threatened, pushed, hit or hurt me	○	○	○
My partner controls my money, phone, friends or where I go	○	○	○
I've been pressured or forced into sexual activity I didn't want	○	○	○

If you answered "Yes" or "Not sure" to any safety question

You deserve to be safe. Please reach out to the **National Domestic Violence Hotline** (1-800-799-7233, or text START to 88788) to talk through your options confidentially. Call 911 if you're in immediate danger.

What I need right now

Space, information, support, rest, time to decide? Write it down. Your needs matter here too.

What your answers *may mean*

Several "Often" or "Most days" answers, especially in Reliving it or On high alert

Your nervous system may be responding to the betrayal as a trauma, not "just" relationship stress. That's a normal response to a real injury, and it's very treatable. Trauma-focused therapies like EMDR and Accelerated Resolution Therapy (ART) can help your brain process what happened so the images and alarm bells quiet down.

Fewer "Often" answers, but you still feel shaken

Betrayal hurts, whatever your score. Talking it through with a therapist can help you make sense of what happened, rebuild trust in yourself, and decide what you want next without pressure.

What helps right now

You don't have to decide today

Stay, leave, forgive? Those questions can wait until you're on steadier ground.

Tell one safe person

Secrecy feeds shame. One trusted friend or family member can make a big difference.

Take care of your body

Eat something, drink water, step outside, sleep when you can. Your body is in survival mode.

Protect your health

If the betrayal was sexual, consider talking to your doctor about STI testing. It's a common, caring step.

What happened to you matters, *and you can heal from it.*

Lotus Rose Counseling offers trauma-informed therapy for betrayal, including EMDR, ART and IFS, in person and by telehealth. You don't have to have it all figured out to reach out.

lotusrosecounseling.com · 801-642-4244