

# Fab Abs

## Recent Research Abstracts

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### INFIDELITY

Winek, J.L. & Craven, P.A. (2003) Healing rituals for couples recovering from adultery. *Contemporary family therapy*, 25 (3), 249-266

Recovery from the trauma of adultery is a process that is full of points where the couple can get stuck. We describe an experiential model that utilizes healing rituals. We start with a general exploration of the use of rituals in marriage and family therapy. The key elements of effective rituals are described. We describe stuck points in these relationships including: 1) knowing the details, 2) releasing the anger, 3) showing commitment, 4) rebuilding trust, and 5) rebuilding the relationship. Ritualized interventions are described for each of these stuck points.

Hirst, C. Dangerous liaisons: the impact of infidelity on relationships. *Psychotherapy in Australia v.9 no.4 Aug 2003: 75-80*

As a counsellor with twenty years of experience, the author discusses how infidelity is one of the most common and tragic human realities she has encountered. In this article she looks at the incidence, causal factors, and types of infidelity, as well as its impact and the phases of recovery.

Shackelford, T.K.; Buss, D.M. & Bennett, K. (2002) Forgiveness or breakup – sex differences in responses to a partner's infidelity. *Cognition and Emotion*, 16(2): pp. 299-307

Infidelities - sexual, emotional, or both - afflict many long-term romantic relationships. When a person discovers a partner's betrayal, a major decision faced is to forgive the partner and remain together or to terminate the relationship. Because men and women have confronted different adaptive problems over evolutionary history associated with different forms of infidelity, the existence of sex differences in which aspects of infidelity would affect the likelihood of forgiveness or breakup were hypothesized. This hypothesis was tested using forced-choice dilemmas in which 256 participants (128 men and 128 women; age range = 15 to 25 years, mean age = 18.9 years, SD = 1.0) indicated how difficult it would be to forgive the partner and how likely they would be to break up with the partner, depending on the nature of the infidelity. Results support the hypothesis that men, relative to women: (1) find it more difficult to forgive a sexual infidelity than an emotional infidelity; and (2) are more likely to terminated a current relationship following a partner's sexual infidelity than an emotional infidelity. Directions are suggested for future work on the determinants of breakup and the psychology of forgiveness.