The Three Infidelities

Definition of Infidelity: a unilateral decision to breach a relationship’s overt or assumed agreement of sexual and/or emotional exclusivity.

An infidelity is a divining rod to the individual and couples impasse in growth. All infidelities occur at predictable times in relationships—when the couple is in the developmental phase of Soured Symbiosis.

Two subsets of infidelities:
1. Affairs: an infidelity that denotes an affectional relationship that may or may not include a sexual relationship.
2. Sexual Liaisons: an interpersonal interaction entered into expressly for the purpose of sexual satisfaction; it can be for the satisfaction of one or both parties.

The Three Infidelities:
Each type of infidelity is fueled and initiated by an unrecognized and untamed need—fear, loneliness or anger.

Infidelity of Fear
- The individual is controlled by fears that come from early childhood experiences.
- There are three fears that power an Infidelity of Fear:
  o the fear of intimacy (i.e. their fear of being subsumed in a relationship),
  o a fear of commitment (i.e. comes from much early criticism),
  o or a fear of being unworthy of love (i.e. the experience and subsequent belief that one is not loveable).
- The unresolved Family of Origin (FoO) issues and beliefs are brought to the surface by the present relationship and its necessary demands.
- These infidelities occur early in the relationship and there are usually many infidelities.
- The individual is characterized by low Self Intimacy, limited Conflict Intimacy and resulting variable Affection Intimacy.

Infidelity of Loneliness
- The individual is eventually controlled by a sense of “coming alive” after being in a relationship that has been hamstrung by limited and unsuccessful Conflict Intimacy.
- Usually the loneliness is minimized as the person often unwittingly lowers his/her expectations of closeness and satisfaction in the relationship.
• The sense of loneliness in the primary relationship “goes underground” until the person is surprised to find him/herself attracted to another with feelings of being alive.
• An infidelity of loneliness occurs often after five+ years and is not intentionally sought.
• The infidelity is characterized by low Conflict Intimacy and low Self Intimacy. The Affection Intimacy can appear to be satisfactory.

Infidelity of Anger
• The individual is controlled by a distorted belief that relationships should fulfill all of one’s needs and that relationship disappointments are unacceptable.
• The individual is controlled by a belief that s/he has to protect him/herself. And this belief is longstanding from early life experiences.
• The infidelities occur at any point in the relationship and there are many.
• Low Self Intimacy and low Conflict Intimacy are equal partners in fueling the infidelities.

Why some partners do not betray:
• Sufficient level of Self Intimacy
• Sufficient level of Conflict Intimacy
• Significant level of empathy
• FoO does not include betrayal
• Punitive super ego
• Fear of abandonment