

The Decision Clarity Guide

Navigating the Decision to Stay or Leave with Honesty and Dignity

PURPOSE

This tool is not designed to make the decision for you. It is designed to ensure that whatever decision you make is made with honesty, clarity, and the kind of intentionality you will not regret on the other side of it. Complete it privately and honestly. Share it with your counselor.

INSTRUCTIONS

Each partner completes this tool independently. Do not share your responses with each other until you have worked through them with a professional counselor. Answer every section as honestly as you can — not as you wish things were, but as they actually are right now.

PART 1 — WHERE I AM RIGHT NOW (Complete Privately)

My honest position regarding this marriage right now:

- I want to stay and do the work of recovery
- I want to stay but I am not sure I have the capacity to do the work
- I am genuinely uncertain — I have not decided
- I am leaning toward leaving but have not committed to that decision
- I have decided to leave

The primary reason for that position:

The thing that is making this decision the hardest:

The person or pressure that is most influencing my thinking right now:

PART 2 — THE HONEST ASSESSMENT

Rate each statement from 1 (not at all true) to 10 (completely true):

My spouse has taken full and genuine responsibility ■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 ■ 6 ■ 7 ■ 8 ■ 9 ■ 10

The affair has ended completely and verifiably ■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 ■ 6 ■ 7 ■ 8 ■ 9 ■ 10

I believe my spouse is capable of real change ■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 ■ 6 ■ 7 ■ 8 ■ 9 ■ 10

I am willing to do the personal work recovery requires ■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 ■ 6 ■ 7 ■ 8 ■ 9 ■ 10

I still have genuine care for this person ■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 ■ 6 ■ 7 ■ 8 ■ 9 ■ 10

My safety — emotional and physical — is not at risk ■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 ■ 6 ■ 7 ■ 8 ■ 9 ■ 10

I have access to proper professional support ■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 ■ 6 ■ 7 ■ 8 ■ 9 ■ 10

I can envision a future with this person that I would want ■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 ■ 6 ■ 7 ■ 8 ■ 9 ■ 10

The number above that concerns me most — and why:

The number above that gives me the most hope — and why:

PART 3 — IF YOU ARE CONSIDERING STAYING

Answer only if staying is genuinely on the table. Skip to Part 4 if it is not.

Check every condition that must be true for you to stay with genuine willingness:

- The affair has ended completely — all contact, all connection
- My spouse has taken full responsibility without minimizing or deflecting
- My spouse is in individual counseling and committed to sustained personal work
- Full transparency has been established and is being maintained
- I am in individual counseling and have proper support for my own healing
- We are in couples counseling together with a qualified professional
- I am choosing to stay from genuine willingness — not obligation, fear, or guilt
- I believe the marriage can become something I actually want — not just tolerate

The condition above that is currently unmet and must change:

What staying would need to look like for me to have genuine hope:

PART 4 — IF YOU ARE CONSIDERING LEAVING

Answer only if leaving is genuinely on the table. Complete honestly — this section is not a test of your faith or your character.

My honest reason for considering leaving:

Check any that apply to your situation:

- The betrayal was not a single event but a sustained pattern of deception
- My spouse has shown no evidence of genuine accountability or change
- My safety — physical or emotional — is at risk
- The damage to my mental and emotional health makes continued presence harmful
- The affair is ongoing or has not been fully ended
- I have done the work of genuine consideration and I do not have the capacity to stay

If you are leaving — leave with integrity. How this ends will follow you. Seek legal and professional counsel before making any final moves.

The one thing I need to resolve before I make this decision final:

The support I need to navigate this well:

PART 5 — THE COMMITMENTS I AM MAKING RIGHT NOW

Regardless of the decision you are moving toward, check every commitment you are willing to make right now:

- I will not make a permanent decision from a temporary emotional state
- I will engage professional counseling before this decision is finalized
- I will be honest with myself about my real reasons — not the ones that sound better
- I will not use the children, finances, or reputation as weapons in this process
- I will treat my spouse with the dignity I would want for myself — regardless of what they did
- I will seek wise counsel from people who are committed to my long-term wellbeing
- I will give myself permission to change my mind as clarity develops

"I am not making this decision in the worst moment of my life. I am choosing to move toward clarity with honesty, support, and the kind of integrity that I will not regret — whatever I ultimately decide. I owe that to myself. I owe that to my children. And I owe it to the weight of what this decision actually means."

Name: _____

Date: _____