

WOMAN TO WOMAN WEBINAR SERIES

Presented by Harvest USA Women's Ministry

Ellen Mary Dykas, Presenter

**Participant Handout for *Helping Wives Begin to Heal After Sexual Betrayal*****This webinar will address:**

- What is sexual betrayal like for a wife?
- Steps for walking forward
- First steps of compassion & wisdom to offer (*Overview*)
- How to start biblical support groups for wives (*Overview*)

1. What is Sexual Betrayal Like for a Wife?

a. Shattered Dreams: a fractured marriage is revealed

b. Learning the Truth: exposure and disclosure

- Husband: shame/guilt, defensiveness, relief
- Wife: Shock, profound grief, shame, fear, rage

c. Reacting and Responding

- Shock
- Pain (trauma-grief, anger, confusion, false guilt)
- Fear
- Trust is shredded apart

2. Beginning to Walk Forward - A Personal Journey into a Garden of Gethsemane

- Betrayal by those closest
- Go-to companions "fell asleep"
- Alone in pain and fear

- Crying out to God
- Eventually able to say: “Your will Father, I will trust You.”
- Rising up and going forward by faith, including forgiveness

Three aspects of moving forward

a. Grieving with Gospel Hope

- Marriage fractures can be healed, *but there is no guarantee this will happen on this side of heaven*
- Beauty can come from ashes, *but what is done is done*
- Ongoing death to self, *not my will/dreams/desires, but Yours*
- New life can come from the mini-deaths she is experiencing

b. Surrender and Repentance

- “Not my will...”
- 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10

c. Standing Up and Walking Forward by Faith

- Pursuing Christ and his word with vigor
- Refusing to enable, accept or hide his sin
- Courage to walk in the light and confront sin
- Loving her husband by allowing consequences of sin to unfold
- Trusting God to provide for her (helpers, kids, finances, housing)

First Steps of Compassion & Wisdom

a. Key qualities for helpers

- Desire to serve and love through patient listening
- Anchored in the gospel’s grace and wisdom

b. DON’Ts for helpers

- Avoid

- Spiritualize her pain
- Give excuses for his sin
- Put any blame on her for his choices and sin Offer false hope or make promises that aren't biblical
- Ever say:
 - *At least it's not _____*
 - *What's your sex life like? How often do you have sex with your husband?*
 - *Don't you know that most men struggle with this?*
 - *This isn't about you (NOT right after the disclosure!)*

c. DOs for helpers

Consider the *immediate needs*

- Comfort her
- Give her the benefit of the doubt!
- Listen and learn so as to know her
- Acknowledge her pain
- Find out what she needs NOW
- If you are a man, connect her with a trustworthy, wise and compassionate woman

Consider the *long-term needs*

- Side by side friendship (prayer, presence, encouragement, challenge)
- Discipleship/counseling (individual and marriage)
- Children
- Financial help
- Accountability for her and for husband
- Guidance on staying or not, if husband is unrepentant
- Coaching on finding "safe" people

2. Starting a Biblical Support Group

a. Potential obstacles

- Husband opposed to his wife participating
- Women's ministry leaders oppose
- Leaders in your church aren't on board

- Spiritual warfare
- b. What it IS
- Safe place with a climate of grace for women to:
 - Be known in their suffering
 - Walk through suffering in Christ-centered community with others
 - Encouraged, comforted and challenged
 - Discipled in their relationship with Christ
 - Receive help in taking practical steps of faith and obedience
 - Focused on hope of Christ and the hope of the gospel
- c. Groups are best facilitated with two leaders who are:
- Women who love God and have compassionate hearts towards hurting wives
 - Able to facilitate and guide discussion with gentleness and boldness
 - Willing to study and invest time into knowing the women
 - Not in the throes of their own pain regarding a husband's sexual betrayal!
 - Willing to be transparent regarding their personal neediness of Christ
 - Ability to build 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 bridges to group members
- d. How to begin a group:
- Pray and seek prayer support
 - Seek pastoral counsel and support
 - Publicize and invite
 - Meet 1-1 or 1-2 with interested women
 - Establish confidential location, materials and schedule
- f. What happens in the group:
- Spiritually mature facilitators guide the group
 - Guided discussion (bible, books, articles, etc.)
 - Prayer

- Encouragement
- g. Closing Thoughts
- We **must** engage this as an area of ministry in our churches
 - How can your church grow in pre-engagement discipleship that is realistic and infused with gospel hope?
- h. **Harvest USA Partner Ministries** is here to help your church be trained in gospel centered ministry regarding sexuality! **Contact JIM WEIDENAAR: jim@harvestusa.org**

Resources

True Betrayal (online resource), by Brad Hambrick (www.bradhambrick.com)

When a Husband is Addicted to Pornography, Vicki Teide (Book and mini booklet)

Hope After Betrayal, by Meg Wilson

How to Act Right When Your Spouse Acts Wrong, by Leslie Vernick

False Intimacy: Understanding Sexual Addiction, by Harry Schaumberg

Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands, Paul Tripp (one of the best books I know on how to come alongside hurting people)

She's Got the Wrong Guy: Why Smart Women Settle, Deepak Reju (This is one of the best books I've read for single women. It is a must read, I'd go so far to say, for any woman who longs to be married!)