

What Drives a Cheating Woman's Behavior?

Women who sexually or romantically cheat do so for a variety of underlying interpersonal and psychological reasons, the most common of which are listed below:

- **She feels neglected, ignored, or under-appreciated.** A woman who feels more like a housekeeper, financial provider, or nanny than a wife or girlfriend is more vulnerable to finding an external situation that brings attention and appreciation *for who she is* rather than the functions she performs.
- **She has low self-esteem.** Women who suffer with chronic self-esteem and/or mood disorders—some genetic, some resulting from early childhood trauma or neglect—are more likely to seek validation through romantic and/or sexual activity. Being pursued sexually is a way for these women to feel worthwhile, desirable, wanted, needed, and loved.
- **She has enough sex, but craves more intimacy.** More so than men, women feel valued and connected to their relationship partner through non-sexual emotional interaction such as touching, kissing, cuddling, gift-giving, being remembered, and most of all via meaningful communication. Women who aren't getting this kind of intimacy with a primary partner will sometimes seek it out elsewhere through sexual/romantic relationships. These same women may also engage in impulsive and/or addictive behaviors like compulsive overeating or spending to compensate for the emptiness they feel.
- **She wants revenge.** A woman who feels disempowered by her relationship can use sex with someone else as a way to retaliate. For the woman whose spouse or partner has broken her trust in any number of ways—cheating, lying, spending a large amount of money foolishly, etc.—retaliation via outside sex/romance is sometimes an option.
- **She is lonely.** Women who find themselves with a lot of time alone at home while caring for young children, and also empty nesters, who sometimes feel a lack of importance and meaning once children are grown and gone, may use affairs and sexual liaisons to fill the void. Women who have spouses or partners who are gone for long periods of time for work—they're in the military, for instance—may also find themselves using sex and affairs to fill what feels like an untenable emptiness.
- **She is bored to tears.** Sometime women miss the excitement of the early, "honeymoon" stage of a relationship. They crave the dopamine/oxytocin fueled rush evoked by new romance and the obsessiveness of thinking about another person 24/7. A healthy, stable relationship, in which intimacy is built slowly over time, lacks the excitement they crave, so they seek the "high" of new romance by engaging in affairs.
- **She is not having enough sex to suit her specific needs.** Healthy adult women fully enjoy good sex. They enjoy the physical act as much as men do, and they also enjoy the feelings of being wanted/needed/desired that partner-sexuality can evoke. Women are not martyrs; a sexless relationship may not be acceptable for

some, even when the lack of sexual interaction is due to the male spouse's medical or related issues.

- **She wants out.** In troubled relationships it can be easier to find a fast exit strategy than to work on an existing partnership. Rather than proactively breaking up, some women engage a new romantic/sexual partner, thereby giving their significant other a reason to end it (after learning about the affair).
- **She is moving on, but doesn't want to be alone.** If a woman views her current relationship as over, she may begin one or several new relationships, thereby ensuring that there is someone waiting in the wings as her committed partner exits.
- **She is a sex or relationship addict.** Some emotionally troubled women engage in a constant, never-ending stream of sex and romance (often involving drugs and/or alcohol) as a means of controlling how they meet their emotional needs. Such behavioral problems most often are the result of early sexual trauma and profound abuse that leaves these women unable to be faithful to a spouse or significant other, even though they may intellectually wish to do so.
- **She expects too much from a long-term, primary partnership.** Some women have unreasonable expectations about what a long-term spouse or partner should offer. Narcissistic and emotionally immature, these women expect their significant other to meet their every single need, while also being mind-readers in terms of knowing what those needs are. And when their partner inevitably fails them, they feel justified in seeking attention elsewhere.
- **She lacks women friends.** Some women, especially those who have experienced early maternal abuse or neglect, will dismiss and undervalue their need for solid, supportive female friendships/community. Instead, these women will seek to meet their emotional needs through attention from males, often by having sex and affairs. Other women are seen as competitors to be devalued, dismissed, or avoided. The attention of men is what matters.

NOTE: A number of these "reasons" can be addressed and eliminated by a spouse that is proactive and will work to preserve the bond of the relationship. Other of these "reasons" must be may not be apparent to a spouse and must be recognized and addressed by the woman who sees herself in these descriptions. Either way, every husband and wife has an obligation to one another to work to preserve the relationship if at all possible. And remember, cheating is not inevitable nor is it unpreventable.

Read the entire article at: <http://blogs.psychcentral.com/sex/2012/06/women-cheat/>