



Dear Ask Barry,

I am 40 years old and have been in a long term relationship for over 10 years. About two months ago, I found out that he had been having sex with another man for the past few months. During that time, my partner and I continued to have unprotected sex, as I did not know that he had been unfaithful. About two weeks ago, I decided to go get tested and found out that I had become HIV+. My partner went and got tested and also was positive.

He swore to me that it was protected and that the person was negative. Upon some investigation, I found out that the man he had an affair with, was positive for many years, and that my partner had unprotected sex.

I am trying to come to terms with the betrayal and what my partner has done to my life. How do I deal with being positive and my relationship moving forward? I love my partner, but am so angry I do not think I can ever forgive him for bringing this into my life.

Betrayed and Infected

Dear Betrayed and Infected,

It is not uncommon that when someone is caught cheating in a relationship, they will lie about it, the length of time and what actually occurred. Bringing home diseases is the risk everyone takes when they go outside of the relationship. They tend not to tell their partner for fear of losing them. If the relationship is an open one, at least both parties are aware of the risk and take appropriate precautions.

Unfortunately, the man you loved and trusted, not only betrayed you and your relationship, but brought home a disease that currently has no cure. You are going to go through a lot of emotional swings dealing with it all. Fortunately today, HIV is not a death sentence. As for the relationship, do not stay in it because you think that nobody will want you now that you are positive. If you decide to stay in the relationship, you and your partner have a lot of issues to work through.

Do not feel guilty if you need to leave the relationship, you did nothing wrong, but love someone. Leave your heart and soul open to having love again. Find a therapist to help you come to terms with being HIV+, how to incorporate it in your life and deal with the emotions around it.

Barry