



KANE COUNTY
MENTAL HEALTH COUNCIL

making a difference ...together



Message of the Month

March, 2013

www.kanecountymentalhealth.org

Kane County Mental Health Council

- The Association for Individual Development
630-966-4000
- Aunt Martha's Youth Service Center
630-859-6562
- Delnor Community Hospital
630-208-3000
- Ecker Center for Mental Health Services
847-695-0484
- Family Counseling Service of Aurora
630-844-2662
- Family Service Association of Greater Elgin Area
847-695-3680
- Gateway Foundation/Aurora
630-966-7400
- Greater Elgin Family Care Center 847-608-1344
- Kane County Health Department 630-208-3801
- Larkin Center 847-695-5656
- League of Women Voters
630-365-2138
- INC Board 630-892-5456
- National Alliance on Mental Illness, DeKalb, Kane-South, Kendall Counties, Inc.
630-896-6264
- National Alliance on Mental Illness-Kane County
847-931-4715
- Provena Mercy Medical Center
630-801-2657
- Provena St. Joseph Hospital
847-931-5521
- Senior Services Association
847-741-0404
- Suicide Prevention Services 630-482-9696
- TriCity Family Services
630-232-1070
- VNA Health Care
630-978-9835

Cyber Infidelity: Is it real?

What do you do if you find your partner is cheating with the computer, Facebook, or smartphone? Since the late 20th Century, with the ever-increasing on-line evolution, defining what constitutes cheating has become increasingly harder.

Despite the ever-increasing volume of definitions regarding cyber infidelity, the effect remains the same. The effect of cyber infidelity is the same as that of a typical affair. Even in the absence of actual physical contact, those who have been party to cyber-infidelity feel the same level of pain as if actual physical infidelity had occurred. The resultant pain, however, causes those cheated on to wonder if their own feelings regarding the infidelity are justified as physical contact may not have necessarily occurred. Much of the confusion experienced by the partners of cyber infidelity is due to the uncertainty of the extent of their partners' sexual activity.

So how do couples experiencing cyber infidelity work through the pain? The ability to rebuild trust is the key. The first step is an open caring discussion regarding the extent of the infidelity. They must recognize the pain that was caused, and determine if they wish to continue in the relationship. Recognition of the negative impact cyber can assist the partners in rebuilding some of the trust lost. In the end, only the partners can determine whether they feel that they can rebuild the relationship together or if third party consultation through therapy or couples counseling is needed.

If you or a loved one is experiencing cyber infidelity, recognize that the pain is the same as if a physical affair was occurring. The undermining of trust and threat to the attachment bond is being experienced in much the same way. Recognize the extent of the negative impact and determine if third party consultation is needed. If the answer is "yes", seek help from a trained professional. Cyber infidelity may not be "physical," but the effect is very real.

Kris Thomas

Info Corner: Zitzman, S., & Butler, M. (2009). *Wives' experience of husbands' pornography use and concomitant deception as an attachment threat in the adult pair-bond relationship*. *Sexual Addiction & Compulsivity*, 16(3), 210-240.