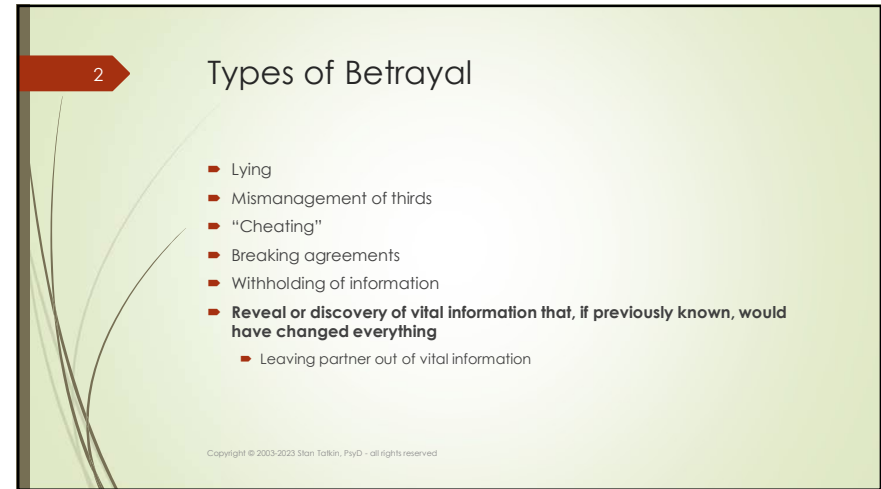


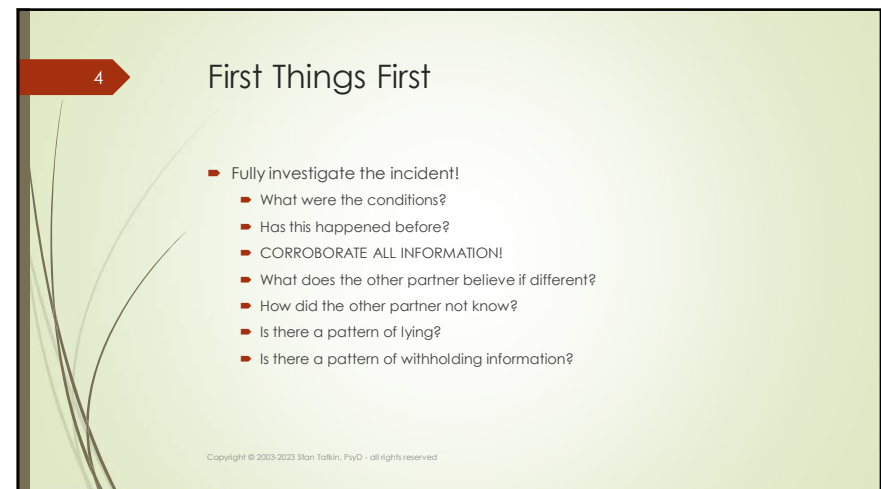
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Discovery of Information That Changes Everything (DICE)

- By far the most devastating to the partner left out of vital information
- Discovery partner (DP) frequently exhibits mild to severe PTSD symptoms
 - Mood instability
 - Flashbacks
 - Sleep disturbances
 - Obsessions/Perseveration
 - Paranoia
- Symptoms can last a year or more depending on circumstances and attitude of secret-keeper (SK)
- The discovery partner's brain will automatically and continually attempt to integrate new information into historical memory

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Discovery of Information That Changes Everything (DICE)

- Trust is decimated along with DP's ability to know the SK and know what is true
- The discovery process can be a single incident or can be multiple incidents along multiple timelines
- If the DP is symptom-free, consider
 - DP is also holding a secret or has withheld vital information
 - DP comes from a FoO where this has happened and is expected
 - DP does not expect transparency
 - Some other previous arrangement by the couple
- DICE can wreak havoc in polyamorous and CNM unions

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Discovery of Information That Changes Everything (DICE)

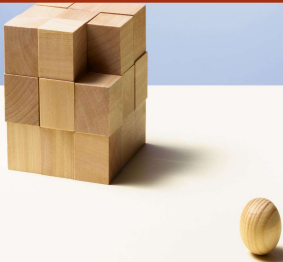
- DICE can include any missing vital information
 - SK has a secret other life
 - SK has a secret bank account
 - SK has a lover
 - SK factual history is false
- DICE is *not* always an indictment of the SK
- DICE refers to the reaction of the DP

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DICE Therapeutic Architecture

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- The architecture suggested is a template only for one-direction only discoveries
- Two-way discoveries follow a different architecture as PTSD symptoms are less likely
- DICE and other betrayal issues are systemic and generally not due to one person's behavior alone
- DICE issues require a specific therapeutic structure, sequence, and set of tasks
- Therapy will likely go for at least one year if successful
- Therapy sessions must be frequent and shorter in length, particularly in the beginning

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DICE Therapeutic Architecture

- Therapist must educate both partners and cast them appropriately
 - PTSD symptoms are real and out of the DP's control
 - Has nothing to do with personality, personal history, or attachment
 - Most or all people will experience the same symptoms
 - The DP can never be sure again if they can trust the SK
 - The DP will feel sick for quite a while

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DICE Therapeutic Architecture

- Therapist must educate both partners and cast them appropriately
 - The DP's recovery is largely in the hands of the SK
 - The DP may decide at any time to quit the union (no judgment)
 - The DP has *all* the power for now – they get to decide the terms of continuance
 - The DP has the right to ask any and all questions of the SK
 - Remember, the main injury is being left out of vital information!
 - Neither the SK (nor therapist) can be the gatekeeper of information going forward

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DICE Therapeutic Architecture

- Therapist must educate both partners and cast them appropriately
 - The DP will have PTSD symptoms (list them for both partners)
 - The DP will be labile – angry, sad, frightened, ashamed, guilty, confused, distrustful, distancing, accusatory, punishing, unpredictable, and threatening
 - The DP will need the couple therapist's support and assurance that sticking with therapy can work but it *will be difficult and painful*
 - The DP's threat system will work overtime and threat cues will expand and heighten due to the "blast radius" of the discovery
 - That radius includes any and all behaviors, smells, sounds, locations, or contexts reminiscent of perceptions captured prior to the reveal of withheld information
 - "You're doing the same thing you did that night before you went out and got drunk."

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DICE Therapeutic Architecture

- Therapist must educate both partners and cast them appropriately
 - The SK *should* show contrition at the onset of treatment
 - Red flag if not
 - The SK will likely be defensive, make promises, continue deceptive behaviors, and may even blame the DP
 - The SK may attempt to make moral equivalency of damage or hurt inflicted previously by the DP
 - Unless there is moral equivalency to the complaint, it must be disallowed
 - Therapist must make it clear to SK that, if they wish to keep the relationship, they will not be allowed to make counter-complaints or conditional defense based on a complaint toward the DP

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DICE Therapeutic Architecture

- Therapist must educate both partners and cast them appropriately**
 - The SK must understand they have no leverage for now and therefore should not attempt to blame, threaten, or otherwise deflect the problem elsewhere
 - The SK, if they wish to help heal the DP, **must** remain fully open, transparent, welcoming, and compassionate with the DP at all times
 - This of course will be extremely difficult to maintain
 - Therapist must support the SK by explaining that, while withholding vital information or lying is human, the destruction of trust is devastating to these relationships and is very difficult to heal
 - The SK is in a very, very difficult position to maintain as both villain and hero, traumatizer and healer
 - The therapy is going to be very difficult and painful as it must be for both partners if they are to learn and be better partners

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DICE Therapeutic Architecture

- Therapist must educate both partners and cast them appropriately**
 - The therapist understands, with judgment, if at any time, the SK wants to quit the union
 - The therapist also assures the SK that sticking with this process can lead to great results
 - The SK's only real reward in the end is that of becoming a better, wiser, more compassionate person who owns the harm they inflicted
 - In a sense, the SK's growth is to wear the "Scarlet Letter" with pride as a willingness to accept what is a characterological matter they are mastering

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DICE Therapeutic Architecture

- Therapist must educate both partners and cast them appropriately**
 - Both partners should be reminded that the suffering they are experiencing will lead to something better than before (secure functioning)
 - Regret is an important experience that leads to learning
 - Without regret, people will repeat (several studies on this)
 - The therapist's job is to ensure the couple does not bend reality in order to shortcut healing

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DICE Therapeutic Sequence

- Full disclosure**
 - Not the same as many formal disclosures performed by sex addiction specialists
 - The DP is allowed to ask any questions of the SK

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17 DICE Therapeutic Sequence

- If the DP's questions seems sparse or too far away from sequencing the event(s), the therapist can take over the inquiry
 - What happened?
 - When did it happen?
 - Who are the people involved?
 - What are their first names?
 - How did the SK get from point A to point B to point C?
 - What were they thinking at the time?
 - Did thoughts of the DP intrude on their actions?
 - When/how did they decide to keep this secret?
 - Why couldn't they tell the DP before they acted?
 - Have they done this before?
 - Anyone in their family do anything like this?
 - Anyone in a previous relationship do this to them?
 - What do they understand about the DP's point of view with the reveal?

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18 DICE Therapeutic Sequence

At some point, the disclosure process must end unless information continues to leak out

- More discoveries

The system should start to settle down a bit when:

- The SK remains consistently non-defensively open and transparent
- The SK allows their partner to be unforgiving, untrusting, or upset over the betrayal
- The SK refrains from blaming their partner
- The SK does their personal work (individual therapy) and demonstrates they are taking responsibility for what happened

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19 DICE Therapeutic Sequence

- As with addicts, the SK will only build trust if their focus is on change for themselves and not to simply get back into the relationship
 - The therapist and DP will be able to know the difference if it's consistent and real
- Therapist begins to hold the DP responsible for their *current* insecure functioning behavior
- When stable, session frequency can relax
- SK repeatedly demonstrates they understand and can articulate the full spectrum of their insecure functioning behavior (pro-self vs pro-relationship)
- Accountability is now fully expected by both partners and emphasis may now shift to the DP's part in all of this

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20 Summary

- Betrayal comes in many shapes and sizes
- The most devastating form is the reveal or discovery of vital information that, if previously known, would have changed everything
- The damage is the withholding of crucial information thereby robbing a partner of choice and agency
- The PTSD that usually results from discovery often lasts at least one year – and much longer if the SK continues to arouse suspicion or distrust with defensiveness, dismissiveness, intolerance of the trauma-induced symptoms ("Get over it"), or lack of full transparency
- The couple therapist must get all detailed facts surrounding the betrayal and set the stage from the beginning as to process structure
 - Including what partners will go through and why

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21 Summary

- This therapeutic architecture is specific to one-way discoveries of vital information. **Any other configuration requires a different therapeutic architecture and plan**
- ✓ Mileage will vary greatly so relax or tighten this structure as appropriate to what is in front of you
- Avoid upside-down developments whereby the SK has all the power/leverage and the DP has none!
- The therapist can only succeed if the DP takes their power and calls the shots
- DP has leverage over the SK, not the therapist
- Therapy cannot reform the SK – then the system – if the DP does not regard themselves as the holder of the terms for continuance

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22 Thank you!

- For PACT Training and Couple Workshops, go to <https://www.thepactinstitute.com>
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