

Steps for Each Disclosure Letter: Betrayer

Please note that this process usually takes 3-6 months

- Set up a cotherapy session with you, your therapist, your partner, and their therapist to ensure that all four of you are on the same page for the structure of the disclosure. Complete the Disclosure Process Worksheet for Betrayers as part of that session.
- Complete any timelines, exercises, or questionnaires your therapist determines will be helpful for the letter you're writing.
- Using the timelines, exercises, and questionnaires as a guide, write your letter (it is vital that you do not withhold information in this part of the process as this step helps to create a foundation upon which trust can be rebuilt).
- Share your letter with your therapist, then work to incorporate any edits needed (this will probably require 5-6 drafts of the letter).
- Answer the questions provided by your partner at the end of the letter (even if they are answered in the letter as well).
- If your partner has requested it, have your therapist share your letter with the partner's therapist for feedback, then work to incorporate any edits needed.
- Schedule your polygraph (if applicable).
- Use the Plan for the Day of the Disclosure Worksheet to determine what your partner would like from you immediately following the disclosure. Please note that we structure this part of disclosures around worst case scenario as we can always step the level of distance and support down from what we've set up, but it is difficult to step it up if additional support is needed.
- Process through your fears around this process with your therapist. Include a discussion relating to worst-case scenario so you have a plan set up in case it is needed.
- Set up the disclosure session, along with the support you'll need following the session. Set up a follow-up session with your therapist within a few days of the disclosure session.

Steps for Each Disclosure Letter: Partner

Please note that each letter usually takes about 3-6 months

- Complete the Disclosure Process Worksheet for Partners.
- Set up a cotherapy session with you, your therapist, the betrayer, and their therapist to ensure that all four of you are on the same page for the structure of the disclosure. Refer to the Disclosure Process Worksheet for Partners for details that may be helpful.
- Create a list of questions you want answered on the disclosure. Know that it is not your responsibility to try to “ask the right questions” to ensure the disclosure is complete. Review the questions with your therapist to ensure you are asking for information that will be helpful for you. Once your list of questions has been reviewed, have your therapist send it to the betrayer’s therapist.
- Complete a Plan for the Day of the Disclosure Worksheet to determine what you would like from the betrayer immediately following the disclosure. Please note that we structure this part of disclosures around worst case scenario as we can always step the level of distance and support down from what we’ve set up, but it is difficult to step it up if additional support is needed.
- Process through your fears around this process with your therapist. Include a discussion relating to worst-case scenario so you have a plan set up in case it is needed.
- Set up the disclosure session, along with the support you’ll need following the session. Set up a follow-up session with your therapist within a few days of the disclosure session.

General Disclosure Structure

- Plan approximately three hours for disclosure sessions.
- Take separate cars to the session.
- Do not wear your favorite outfit, listen to your favorite music, eat your favorite food right before leaving, etc. We don't want to create additional trauma triggers around things you enjoy. This does not happen with every disclosure, but it is an easy step to take to protect you, so we recommend it. There may be exceptions to this direction if you wear or bring items that help provide you with support (i.e., jewelry or clothing that reminds you of a friend).
- Check in briefly with your individual therapist.
- Meet together (betrayer, partner, both your individual therapists) in the room the partner feels most comfortable holding the disclosure in.
- The betrayer or their therapist gives the betrayer and both therapists a physical copy of the disclosure.
- The partner's therapist gives the partner a pad of paper and a pen.
- The betrayer reads the disclosure verbatim. The partner can pause the letter reading at any point to write down questions or thoughts but does not verbally express them during the letter reading. Brief clarification questions may be asked to reorient the partner to the information (i.e., "Do you mean the vacation we took to ___?" or "Do you mean John Doe or John Smith?"). If at any point the partner needs a break to process, the reading is paused, and the partner can process with their therapist individually while the betrayer stays with their therapist.
- Once the letter is read, along with the answers to the partner's questions at the end, the partner and the betrayer each meet individually with their therapist to give the partner time to begin to process what they might need. During this time, the partner and the partner's therapist consider what, if any, clarifying questions the partner has for the betrayer. Additionally, the partner may have more in depth processing requests, which can be written down and given to the betrayer's therapist so the betrayer can process through them.
- When the partner is ready, all four meet again. The partner asks the clarifying questions, and the betrayer answers them in that session. If there are additional processing requests, the partner may ask the betrayer to process through them, but the answers to those aren't given in the moment – the betrayer does the work to do deeper processing around them and they are presented in a later session.
- Once all clarifying questions have been asked and answered, the partner and betrayer each process individually with their therapist. The plan for the 72 hours immediately following the disclosure is followed unless the partner decides the space planned for is not needed (in which case, those changes are discussed first individually between the partner and their therapist and then with all four).
- Both betrayer and partner meet with their individual therapists within 72 hours of the disclosure to determine their needs moving forward.