

8 Red Flags & Hidden Signs:

When a Spouse's Secret Life = Emotional or Psychological Abuse

This checklist is based on the abuse education taught by Anne Blythe of Betrayal Trauma Recovery and aligns with industry-standard domestic abuse training. If your spouse has led a hidden sexual, financial, or emotional life that you were unaware of, it may not be a 'marriage issue' — it may be emotional and psychological abuse.

- **1. Secret Sexual Behaviors or Porn Use**
He hides pornography, affairs, or secret online sexual activities. You are denied the truth needed to make informed choices.
- **2. Sexual Coercion via Deception**
You consent to intimacy without full awareness of his actions. This is not informed consent — it's manipulation.
- **3. Gaslighting Your Reality**
You're told you're overreacting or imagining things when your instincts sense something is wrong.
- **4. Withholding Emotional Safety**
He withholds affection, stonewalls, or uses silent treatment to dominate the emotional environment.
- **5. Chronic Lying & Deception**
You discover a long-term pattern of deceit that undermines your sense of reality and trust.
- **6. Blame-Shifting & Minimizing**
He frames his betrayal as a mutual issue or blames you for his choices.
- **7. False Front / Two Lives**
He maintains a public persona while living a secret private life, keeping you in the dark.
- **8. Prolonged 'Stuck' Recovery**
You've spent years trying to recover, feeling stuck or spinning. The abuse was never named — so it couldn't be healed.

If you recognized several of these patterns, you may be dealing with covert emotional or psychological abuse. You are not alone, and what you're experiencing is real. For more, visit BetrayalTraumaRecovery.org or PattyKlochko.com.