

Wife having an affair



*Jo Ann
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FAMILY MATTERS

Dear Jo Ann:

I have been married for 12 years and have two wonderful children, ages 8 and 6. I am 36. My husband is successful in his business and works long hours, including time on weekends. When home, he is tired and gets annoyed easily. He rarely has a kind word to say to me or to the children. My marriage was parched. I was lonely, loveless and not feeling good about myself. Then I met Jim who thinks I'm wonderful, intelligent and sexy. We have been having an affair for the past 4 months and I am happier than I've been in years. But I am not ready to end my marriage and am deathly afraid that my husband will figure out why I've been in such a good mood lately. On the other hand, I don't want to give up Jim. If my husband finds out, what are the consequences of my relationship with

Jim? Suzy T.

Dear Suzy:

Feelings of loneliness in marriage are not uncommon. What you do with them makes all the difference. When couples have children and establish an economic base, priorities and focus change to the well-being of the children and development of economic safety for the family. It feels so different from the courtship phase because it is. To the degree that expectations of family life

match what is happening, the couple will be happy. You are not. What have you done about it? Have you tried talking with your husband and requesting more time, attention and sex from him? What are his reactions? Does he know how unhappy you are and that the marriage is in trouble? Have you participated in Marital Therapy? You have been short-sighted in selecting an affair as your method of becoming happy. It is temporary and dangerous to the nest you have built. There can be no winners here. No orgasm or tender word is worth the devastation of your family. There is no room in a marriage for a third party. If it is your intention to repair your marriage, you must give up your lover. Make your first task becoming happy with yourself within the framework of your marriage. Determine what you want from your marriage. Talk to your husband. Let him know how you feel. Tell him the marriage is in danger. If he is not hearing you, pursue counseling. Don't give up on your marriage or your husband. Find healthy productive ways to generate stimulation and pleasure in each day; exercise, volunteer, take classes. It sounds as if you need ways to validate yourself. To expect all of your needs to be met from your marriage is a common and a tragic mistake.

Jo Ann Volk Lederman is executive director of South Miami Psychology Associates. In private clinical practice for 25 years, she specializes in marriage and family therapy, couples therapy, infertility issues, behavioral medicine and business consulting. To contact address email to JoAnnVolkLederman1@juno.com.