

HOW TO CATCH A CHEATING LOVER

Stealthily catch a cheating lover when they least expect it



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The image shows a diverse group of young adults in a classroom setting, all giving a thumbs-up gesture. The background is a bright, modern classroom with large windows. The text is overlaid on the image in white and red.

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1

OUR CHEATING HEARTS

We prefer honesty in our relationships, but reality doesn't always measure up to our expectations. Cheating is an everyday occurrence.

Some cheating isn't even considered cheating. Football games are won by trick plays and earn quarterbacks the title of hero, along with multimillion-dollar salaries. Other cheating is entertaining, like the magician's repertoire of card tricks, sleight of hand, and beautiful women who disappear or survive being sawed in half. Military strategy often involves camouflage, which throughout history has won wars, going back to the Trojan horse in ancient Greece.

Most cheating however is undesirable, whether it's a gambler trying to beat the casino, the student who cheats on exams, the citizen who fudges numbers on a tax return, or the CEO who pays himself a multimillion-dollar bonus while shareholder profits plummet. But perhaps the most disappointing, and personally painful, cheating is that which occurs among lovers and spouses. An unwritten expectation of fidelity is the core of our sexual relationships.

We expect our partners not to cheat. Sometimes lovers release each other from that expectation, as in the 1960s and '70s when "open" relationships and "free love" were part of a sexual revolution that valued experimentation. The vogue continues to a much lesser degree in the twenty-first century. For the most part, when two people are in a committed relationship, monogamy is not only implied, it's assumed. One mate at a time is the expectation when you've given your heart and soul to another.

Fidelity, unless mutually exempted, rules adult sexual relationships and helps bind two persons together. Infidelity, or cheating, is a serious threat to that bond and when suspected needs to be addressed seriously. Cheating rarely can be ignored. The injured party might try to ignore their suspicion, shove it to the back of their mind through some complicated form of self-preservation coupled with denial. But such a defense mechanism rarely works either short or long-term.

The gnawing reality lurks in the background, only to resurface. Cheating when faithfulness is expected by the partner signals something beyond sexual indiscretion is wrong in the relationship. There's a break in the emotional fabric of the relationship, too. Whatever is wrong will not heal itself.

A cheater lives a life of deception based on tricks that go unnoticed. A cheater's success depends on how well they sustain a hidden life. A victim of cheating only survives to the degree they can discover what is being hidden. Whether surviving ultimately means ending the relationship or healing it, knowing how to catch your cheating lover is the first step. The practical information presented here will help you along your journey.

2

CHEATING IN CYBERVILLE

Technology has changed relationship cheating forever. Mobile phones, PDAs, beepers and computers make it easier than ever before to cheat on a lover or spouse. Email, instant messaging, chat rooms, dating websites, social networking and text messaging mean the cheater doesn't have to leave home and wander bars to meet a potential partner.

Legitimate online dating sites do not allow married people to use their services, but nothing can be done to keep users from lying about their marital status. Other companies specialize in targeting married persons and lure them to their websites with ads that romanticize infidelity and downplay monogamy. Email spam further entices potential cheaters who might never have thought of being unfaithful but are easily tempted to see what's out there on the World Wide Web.

Whether deliberately looking for a fling or innocently surfing the Web's romance filled waters, an endless source of willing partners is instantly available for online cheating. Cyberspace provides a safe, seemingly risk-free atmosphere in which to travel, without worries of being seen together in public. Whether at work or at home, a cyber-affair is always convenient, just a mouse click away, even if your spouse or lover is in the next room. Once cyber cheaters connect, the Internet provides a convenient means for the relationship to continue.

Many people do not consider cyber cheating an actual affair because the participants might never meet face to face or have sex. But a cyber affair, even under those circumstances, is in the least emotional cheating.

Time and energy are spent with another individual outside the main relationship. The cheater is taking something from their loved one and giving it to another, depriving the spouse or lover of their total involvement. Even when there is no sexual contact, there's an emotional attachment to the comfort that is found logging onto the Internet and finding fulfillment of one sort or another. A need is being fulfilled by a third party and the cheater is depriving the partner of that role, not to mention presumed trust. William Shakespeare said, "A rose by any other name would smell as sweet." An affair by any other name still stinks.

It's a widely held belief among relationship experts that cyber affairs result in real-time sex more often than not. According to surveys by WomanSavers.com, of those who've had an online affair, one-third admits that so-called innocent cyber flirting eventually goes from email and chat-room conversation to telephone calls and finally a sexual encounter. Another study by the Fortino Group shows nearly one-third of all divorce litigation results from online affairs. Odds therefore are not good that a committed relationship can survive online infidelity. One out of three cyber relationships is probably going to escalate into much more than an innocent way to spend time online. Cyber cheating is not the same as online solitaire, even when it involves avatars in an alternate reality. Ultimately it's between real people who must face the stark realism of heartbreak and damaged relationships.

Technology indisputably enables a cheating lover. The good news is it's far easier to catch a cheater with today's technology. What previously took months even years to uncover can now be learned in less than a week.

3

CHEATER PROFILE

- TOP TEN TRAITS

Is everyone a potential cheater? No. But a large number of people think nothing of cheating on their partners. Some are more likely to cheat than others. Psychologists and relationship experts believe that cheaters have certain characteristics in common. Looking at personality traits, family history and past experiences, you help you recognize a cheating heart and mind.

LIKELY CHEATERS HAVE....

SEXUAL-SOPHISTICATION

People with active sex lives prior to a committed relationship have a hard time settling down. They're far more likely to stray outside a relationship than someone who's had little sexual experience.

RISK-ATTRACTION

Some people find cheating a thrill. The excitement, deception and intrigue feeds them. When presented with an opportunity to cheat, they just can't seem to resist. They need constant watching because it's always easy for

them to cheat.

PARENTAL CHEATING

This is not to say cheating is genetic. But it tends to run in families. A child raised in a household where cheating took place often grows up and considers it normal for partners to be unfaithful to one another.

OCCASIONAL CHEATERS HAVE....

BAD MANNERS

When a person is discourteous regarding, say, a simple "thank you" or appropriate "excuse me," it's because they simply are not considerate of others. This includes their attitude toward animals as well as people. A tried-and-true adage is "love me, love my dog." Some cheaters simply don't have regard for anyone's feelings but their own. Someone who always puts themselves first is unlikely to consider how cheating is going to make their partner feel. They're just downright rude.

OPPOSITE-SEX "PALS"

A cheater often has lots of close friendships with members of the opposite sex, including ex-lovers. It only takes one of those best-friend situations to blossom into an affair and destroy an existing relationship. This person feels if you're "just friends," it's safe to cheat and you probably won't get caught.

CHEATING PEERS

'Birds of a feather flock together.' A person who hangs around with people who cheat is soon to be cheating as well. There's a camaraderie among cheaters; they support each other's exploits and often share secrets about their sexual encounters.

SERIAL CHEATERS HAVE....

CHEATING-ITIS

This person cheats at everything in most areas of their life. They lie not only to their lovers, but to their parents and friends as well. When they were students, they probably cheated on tests and stole books from the library. A toxic flaw in this person is the constant white-lie. Someone who tells lots of lies about little things usually lies about big things, too.

PAST CHEATING

'History tends to repeat itself, and tigers don't change their stripes.' Sure, there's such a thing as a reformed cheater, but it's rare, and only after extensive psychotherapy or a life-changing cataclysm. Seldom does someone with years of cheating suddenly become a model partner. This person has an Olympic-gold medal in covering their tracks, and are not ashamed to recount their past cheating to a current lover.

BAD-REPUTE

This serial cheater is terrible at concealing their past and has a

background that would make Casanova blush. The bad-boy/girl reputation follows this cheater wherever they go. Everyone knows about this person, everyone except their current partner. Often people will approach the innocent party and come right out and ask if your lover, or spouse, is cheating on you, too. Usually, when you're being cheated you're the last to know.

ALPHA-CHEATERS HAVE...

(a category all their own)

INFIDELITY-MANIA

This is perhaps the most potentially dangerous partner of all, because cheating is a life-long compulsion....OCI (Obsessive Compulsive Infidelity). There are people, men and women alike, who believe monogamy is an unnatural state and there's nothing morally wrong with being unfaithful to someone who presumes your trust and exclusivity. OCI's truly believe cheating is an antidote to boredom, or any shortcoming, in a relationship. This serial-cheater will have an affair at the drop of a hat and knows how to hide everything. Catching this one is hardest of all.

It's unlikely anyone has all ten traits, but several often occur in combination. Two to four traits are common. Yet even a single trait, when predominant, can indicate that your loved one is cheating. Familiarizing yourself with traits in a cheater's personality can go a long way toward helping you find the truth when you suspect cheating. Forewarned and forearmed, you will be better equipped to catch your cheating lover or spouse.

4

INVESTIGATION 101- BASICS & GUIDELINES

If you've ever fantasized about living the life of a sleuth, here's your chance. Investigating a cheating lover is no different than investigating any case you read in newspapers, see on TV or watch on film. Your most fundamental tools are your eyes and ears. You only need to hone your observation, listening and information gathering skills. With the methods and tools suggested here, you'll be using the techniques employed by detectives and private investigators for ages. You don't need to be James Bond or Agatha Christie. All you need is a desire for the truth and the willingness to persevere until you find it.

Catching a sneaky, lying, conniving cheater can be accomplished by anyone with a little determination and effort. A few rules and guidelines used by professional investigators will get you started, and well on your way to uncovering the truth about what's really going on in your relationship.

INVESTIGATOR BASICS

DOS....

- **Trust your intuition**

If you think there's cheating, there's a good chance it's taking place. Have faith in your ability to uncover the truth, dispassionately and thoroughly.

- **Stay calm**

Face reality, and accept that it's possible your partner is cheating.

- **Be observant**

Take off the blinders, and notice all the little signs that are staring right at you. Notice, for example, if your lover is on edge or acting guilty, disconnected, less fun, or telling you how miserable they are. These subtleties are important.

- **Listen to what other people are saying**

If your partner is cheating on you, someone else knows and there's sure to be gossip. Just make sure it's not idle gossip before you act on it.

- **Discuss boundaries**

Know what's important to your partner, what they value. If a person says it's okay that Ryan or Kate is cheating, they probably think it's okay for everyone to cheat.

DON'TS....

- **Don't make accusations without evidence**

If your partner is innocent, you'll only hurt their feelings. If they're guilty, you'll just be warning them to cover their tracks better, and making it harder to catch them. Don't confront your partner until you are 100% positive they're cheating. Confronting a loved one with cheating, whether they're guilty or innocent, has the potential to change your life permanently.

- **Don't monopolize**
Don't think you can limit cheating by monopolizing your partner's time; it will only make them want more time away from you.
- **Don't even consider going after the third party**
It will only make your partner defend them. Cheating is between you and your partner. If something were not wrong in your relationship, there wouldn't be any cheating.
- **Don't ask your friends or relatives to spy for you**
You run the risk of their wanting to spill the beans to the cheater to help save your relationship, or worse yet take sides against you.
- **Don't think this problem will go away on its own**
Face the unpleasant fact this person doesn't mind hurting you....and don't be afraid to consider dumping them.

INVESTIGATOR GUIDELINES

- **Keep a journal or calendar**
Record collected evidence, dates, times, places. Also keep a diary of your partner's activities, people he sees, excuses, etc. A micro-cassette recorder is a professional detective's gadget-of-choice. It can be slipped into a pocket and is easily available for taking notes whenever you find a valuable piece of evidence, and for recording reminders to yourself. This information will be useful to compare against any bills or credit card receipts you find.
- **Study simple techniques of lie detection**
A library book is all you need. Learn how to interpret physical signs like eye contact, vocal tone, facial expression, sweating, twitching, etc. Note speech mannerisms that reveal lying, such as delayed

response to questions, avoidance techniques, excessive speaking, exaggerations, use of humor or sarcasm an evasive ploy when questioned.

- **Learn how to follow someone without their detecting you**

Use a car whenever possible, wear a disguise, take binoculars and a still-camera, preferably with telephoto lens. Never follow a suspected cheater when they're leaving the home you share; if they're guilty, that's when they're most cautious. Always have a back-up story ready in case you're spotted.

- **Make allies**

Stay friendly with your partner's friends and converse with them often to learn if your partner is truthful about how much time is spent with them.

- **Telephone**

Call often, whether your partner says they're at work or "out with friends." Note background noises, or if there's an uncomfortable tone in your partner's voice because someone else is present.

- **Make surprise visits and depart from your usual routine**

Show up at your partner's workplace unannounced, or come home unexpectedly from shopping or work. Make a special announcement that you'll be working late, but come home early.

- **Set a few simple, but tactical traps, to aid your investigation**

Once you've begun uncovering evidence, you'll come up with ways of your own to uncover whatever information you need to prove you're being cheated. Here are a few examples of simple set-ups that help catch a cheater.

- **Send a gift without a card**

If your partner asks you if you're the sender, they're not cheating. If there's no mention, the odds are pretty good they're involved

with someone else.

- **Fake a trip with friends**

Then watch your house from a distance to see who visits when you're not expected, or if your partner doesn't come home at all because you're away. Call the house to see when and if anyone answers.

- **Ask someone to hit on your partner**

Make sure it's only an acquaintance, not a friend who might want to help you by intervening, nor a mutual friend who might be tempted to tell all and warn your partner. If you don't know anyone who can help, you can hire someone for a small price. A local actor or drama student at a nearby college would be good choices.

- **Check the bed**

If you suspect someone's been sleeping in your bed when you're not home, make an identifying fold in the covers, or plant something inside the covers that will fall or become dislodged the next time the bed is used. This is a sure way to catch any dalliance when you're not around.

- **Monitor his monitor**

If you're worried about excessive online activity, mention it to your partner. If they say their activity is harmless, or make light of your concern, ask if you can sit beside them while they're 'innocently' surfing, visiting networking sites or participating in a chat room. If there's no cheating involved, your partner will welcome your involvement and interest. If they're unwilling to let you participate in their online relationships, you can be sure there's cheating involved, either online or in real time.

5

SEARCHING FOR TELL-TALE SIGNS

When the gnawing feeling that your loved one is cheating won't go away, it's time to begin a serious search. By familiarizing yourself with common signs of a cheater's demeanor and lifestyle, you will be better equipped to discover whether your lover in fact is involved in an extracurricular relationship. The characteristics of a cheating lover apply equally to males and female. A cheating boyfriend, cheating girlfriend, or cheating spouse will exhibit the same behavioral signs and patterns.

There are many clues that indicate your twosome has become a threesome. No one sign, or any one area with several signs, indicates there's an affair behind your back. But a combination of signs needs to be taken seriously when looking for evidence that will lead to catching someone who indeed is unfaithful.

PERSONAL INDICATORS

- **Energy**

People who are cheating often exhibit a sudden, unexplainable surge of energy. Actually, it only seems unexplainable. The source of all that newly found vim and vigor is partially endorphin related. Clandestine affairs can be thrilling and exciting, especially to the serial cheater. The mystery, the intrigue, and the risk are intoxicating. Especially in the beginning, it can make someone feel

"alive again," renewed and refreshed. Or, the cheater simply needs to muster more energy to constantly keep covering their trail. Lying and cheating on a daily basis are hard work.

- **Exercise and weight-loss**

Suddenly your partner begins to "get in shape." Maybe they join a gym or health club and never invite you. Either there's an affair already established, or your partner is trolling the treadmills looking for someone. Health-clubs are prime pick-up locations. Or, perhaps your partner has started buying what seems like every piece of exercise equipment, gadget or diet pill sold on late-night TV. People having affairs often start working out at home, or outside the home, and improving their physical appearance and enhancing their attractive factor.

- **Sleep**

New awake or goodnight times usually accompany cheating. Whether it's to accommodate more time away from home, or provide more time alone on the computer, the cheating spouse or lover's sleep schedule changes. Anxiety over an affair also can disturb sleep patterns.

- **Diet**

People having affairs frequently acquire new tastes in food, often influenced by a new lover. Suddenly, a person begins eating differently. Buffalo wings get replaced by escargots. Not only does the usual can of beer become a glass of wine, or vice versa, you might notice a difference in alcohol consumption. Either there's a need to keep pace with a new person, or someone might be using progressively more alcohol to help them deny they're living a lie.

- **Hair/Grooming**

A change in hairstyle and personal grooming often occurs in a person who is cheating on a relationship. Suddenly one's gray hairs begin to matter when there's a new lover. It's not unusual for the

person to change their hair color completely, or go from long to short hair. It's also not uncommon for a slob to become the epitome of neatness. The cheating party no longer enjoys their scruffy, unkempt appearance and has a desire to present themselves in the best light possible.

- **Fashion**

A person having an affair often begins dressing differently, and starts buying new clothes. One's wardrobe goes from "ugh" to stylish. Hipper, trendier or more youthful clothing appears. Either your partner wants a new "look" for a new love life, or your mate is being influenced by someone else's style. If a denim and leather wardrobe morphs into silk and satin, it could be an effort to please a new lover.

- **Fragrance**

If your loved one is using a new cologne, it might be part of an overall makeover to create a new image. Or, it could be a new perfume that was a gift from a lover. When people have a reason to make themselves more attractive, perfume or cologne is one of the first places they start. When a person is making a change in their love life, they tend to change many things; some seem inconsequential, but when added together, they all mean something. The sum often is greater than the parts. It goes without saying when your partner has not changed their fragrance, but smells differently, it's always the residual smell of someone else's cologne or perfume. The nose knows how to sniff out a cheating lover.

- **Jewelry**

If your man or woman is wearing unexplained, new jewelry it can be a dead giveaway they're cheating. Jewelry is one of the first gifts lovers give each other. It doesn't matter if it's expensive, because the sentimental value might be a far more serious threat to your relationship than an 18kt gold watch. Likewise, the absence of

jewelry on your lover or spouse is also notable, especially if it's a piece of jewelry which you had given them and they are no longer wearing. Why? Is it lost? Is your partner not wearing it because they don't want to be reminded of you while they're cheating? When a spouse is cheating, the first thing to go is the wedding ring. In the case of a married woman, she begins wearing her wedding and/or engagement ring on the right hand, and offers no logical explanation for the shift.

- **Lifestyle**

When one's taste in entertainment, say, goes from comedy clubs to ballet...or your partner suggests a night at the opera when movies and pizza are all you've ever done on a Friday night...you might be witnessing the influence of a secret lover. Or, all of a sudden your partner's taste in music goes from Bruce Springsteen to John Mayer, or they suddenly trade in the Volvo for a Corvette, without forewarning or discussing it.

- **Finances**

Cheating costs money, and new charges start appearing on credit card and phone bills. Florists, clothing stores, jewelers, hotels, car rental, and airlines often appear. Additional email accounts, online dating services, pre-paid cellphones, and new electronic gadgets are also expenses which can be related to cheating.

RELATIONSHIP CHANGES

- **Sex**

It's extremely rare for a cheater's sex life not to be changed by a secret dalliance. The cheater's appetite for sex with their old partner can change even before the new affair includes sex. The cheating spouse or lover will either want more or less sex with the regular partner. Often there's a request for experimental sex,

signaling desires that never before needed to be met. Sex might also become mechanical, often accompanied by little cuddling, hugging or hand-holding outside sex.

- **Together-time**

A person who's cheating spends less time with you, and when you're together it's not the same. There's usually a distance between you, with the other person off somewhere daydreaming. They just aren't "there" with you, like it used to be. Either they fail to hear a question, or answer with a grunt. The cheating lover is usually thinking about somewhere else they'd like to be, often with someone other than you.

- **Absence**

Excuses for leaving the house abound. The cheater becomes a master at them. There are sudden or extended trips to the store, often at odd hours. Excessive dog-walking becomes obvious. Any time away from home is a perfect opportunity for a brief meeting or phone call.

- **Friends & Family**

Suddenly the cheating lover prefers the two of you spend more time in groups. Your weekends alone together disappear. Romantic dinners give way to pot-luck suppers with nearly everyone you know, or picnics with three generations of family. On the other hand, when a person is cheating, they might lose complete interest in your relatives, children, or long-time friends. They don't want to be with them any more than with you, preferring to be with someone else. Where children are involved, the cheater often begins to shirk shared responsibilities, like care taking, car pooling and meal times. Worse yet, your partner develops an entirely new set of friends that doesn't include you. They prefer to party without you, promise to be home before midnight, but stagger in at 3 a.m. smelling freshly showered, or of someone else's perfume or cologne. You can be pretty sure this was not a late business

meeting, or an innocent night with old school chums.

- **Gifts**

It's an old cliché, but true. A cheating partner invariably begins buying you gifts for no apparent reason, when the real purpose is to alleviate guilt. Gold jewelry, unexpected flowers, expensive clothing, sentimental cards, favorite food and candy are staples of the unfaithful man or woman.

BEHAVIOR TRAITS

- **Fantasizing**

A cheating lover is living a fantasy. They believe they can be in a committed relationship, have a secret affair, and never get caught. Once the fantasy starts, it spills over into other areas of their life. Grandiose business schemes or serious talk about relocating permanently to Tahiti creep into the conversation. Reality and fantasy morph into one huge blur.

- **Discontent**

The cheating person often displays mood-swings exclusively in your presence, going from overly pleasant and ingratiating to irritable or defensive. It's not unusual for them to complain of boredom with your life together. A cheater will say things like 'I need more space' and 'I feel so trapped,' or vaguely claim 'something's missing in our relationship.' Out of the blue, a cheater will want to "hypothetically" discuss breaking up or a trial separation.

- **Lying**

When you question a cheating partner about specific events, things never really add up, and their answers raise even more questions. Liars often avoid looking you directly in the eye and frequently shift their eyes. They will blush, stutter, stumble over their words,

hesitate in their speech, hold their breath, or twitch. A lying person often fumbles with objects and drops things. They'll over-react and use drama to distract you from your question and avoid telling the truth.

- **Evasiveness/curtness**

When a cheating spouse is living a lie, they become evasive and curt in casual conversation. They want to reveal as little information about themselves as possible, to avoid the risk of letting something slip and inadvertently cause suspicion. They constantly change the subject rather than answer a simple question like "Have you seen so-and-so lately?" Mr. or Ms So-and-so might not be their lover, but might somehow be connected, so they're not safe territory for a person who's unfaithful.

WORK HABITS

- **Schedule**

When someone is cheating on you, their work schedule allegedly changes. They begin leaving the house earlier in the morning, and coming home later at night. The routine changes to accommodate extracurricular activities, whether it's spending time with a new love or just needing more time alone. A nine-to-five desk job suddenly requires long explained absences from the workplace. Or, sometimes a cheater actually will be working more, if only to be anywhere other than home, or to make extra money for wooing a new lover.

- **Access**

All of a sudden, your partner is not reachable at work; either they're not at the workplace or they're in meetings and "can't be disturbed." Your phone calls go unanswered, and so does your email. The mobile phone gets turned off, or is "out of range." No

longer does your partner call you in the middle of the day, just to see how you're doing. In addition, you're specifically asked not to drop by if they're working late.

- **Workload**

There are marked changes in the nature of a cheating person's job description. More travel is required, longer and farther trips are suddenly necessary. Furthermore, you are no longer invited to tag along on a business trip. There also might be an increase in after-work and dinner meetings that used to occur infrequently, if at all.

PHONE SIGNALS

- **Hang-ups**

Everyone gets hang-ups on their home telephone, and everyone always will. Some are innocent wrong numbers placed by people too rude to identify themselves, or apologize. But if there's a noticeable increase in hang-ups, usually around the same time of day, or in the middle of the night, you need to pay attention to them. Anything beyond the normal or usual number of hang-ups could mean there's cheating in your relationship.

- **Answering Machine**

If your answering machine has an increase of calls without a message, is another sign of a cheating situation. If the message on the machine was recorded by the person who's cheating, someone might be calling just to hear their voice. If yours is the voice on the machine, the cheater's lover might be wanting to listen to your voice. Whatever the reason a cheating third party does not leave a message, when you start getting a lot of them, it's another clue for you to consider.

- **Mobile Phone**

A person who's cheating tends to become nervous when their cell phone rings your presence, and they'll try and hide the caller-ID screen. In addition, you'll probably notice an increase in calls that go unanswered when the two of you are together. Text messaging might also increase, because it's a perfect way for cheaters to communicate even when you're around. Take particular note of your partner's face if he reads a text message in front of you. If it brings a warm and fuzzy smile to their face, it's probably not a business-only message. In this case, it's more likely you're witnessing cheating first-hand.

- **Phone cards**

A person who's cheating sometimes purchases a pre-paid, disposable mobile phone or pager which they believe will facilitate private calls and communication. If either of these appear suddenly, and there's no business reason for them, recognize this is typical among people who are hiding an affair.

ONLINE TENDENCIES

- **Password**

Cheaters have their computers password protected, or locked, so you can never use them. If you ask permission to use their computer, they won't give you the password, but insist on logging in for you. If they do give the password, they'll soon change it.

- **Email Accounts**

Several different email accounts on the same computer are common when someone is cheating. This is how they receive emails from the person with whom they're cheating, or from dating websites they're using to meet new people. A separate account might exist solely for chat rooms.

- **Internet Usage**

People who are cheating often spend unusually large amounts of time on the computer, mostly late at night after you've gone to bed, or early in the morning before you awake, or when you're not around. If you're in the house and happen to enter the room, they'll typically switch screens or close browser windows. When you ask a simple question like "Find anything interesting on the 'net?" you'll get an abrupt "No," or they'll change the subject.

- **History**

People who want to hide their internet tracks will continually clear their history and frequently remove cookies. There's never a trace of any sites they've visited, even ones that are not sex or dating related.

6

COLLECTING CLUES

Even the most cunning cheater is careless and forgetful at times. Looking for clues in all the right places invariably leads to valuable evidence that will help you catch a cheating lover. Here's where to 'look for love in all the wrong places.'

POCKETS/PURSE/WALLET

Check jacket or coat pockets and turn them inside out. Don't forget jeans, sweaters, shirts. Take everything out of a wallet or purse, including paper money and credit cards to see if anything is in between. You might find a receipt, scrap of paper or ID card with a phone number and name scribbled on it. People write on anything when they're in a hurry. The best time for this search is when you expect the other person will be gone for a long period of time, for instance, when they're at work. You don't want to get caught red-handed, with everything spread out. You can have a quick look when they're in the shower, but that would not be a good time for an extensive search of wallet or purse.

CLOSET

Lot's of things fall on the closet floor, especially when someone hangs up their pants or jeans. Look behind any shoes or luggage on the floor, in the

corners, and hard to reach places. Keep an eye out for anything unusual, like credit card receipts, matchbooks, ticket stubs, or notes. Don't forget to check shelves, especially higher ones, even if you need a stool to reach them. Top shelves are favorite hiding places, especially for a box of love letters or financial papers. People hide things in places they think you'll never look because they're inconvenient. The least likely place is probably where you'll find the best evidence.

HOME OFFICE/DESK/WASTEBASKET

This method of investigation could be called "in-home dumpster diving." People think if they rip something into little pieces and throw it into the trash, no one will ever know about it, that it's disappeared never to be found or seen again. Sometimes you have to go through the trash and collect bits of ripped paper and tape or glue them together, even if it takes two hours, to find the incriminating evidence you need. Torn pieces might at first look like an official interoffice memo on yellow legal paper, but when you piece them together, they might reveal a suggestive or flirtatious note to a coworker. Even though it was ripped up and never sent, it shows intent, or might be a first-draft of a note that actually did get sent.

Look through the desk, for any notes from a third-party, perhaps inside a box of stationery or business cards. Leave no desk drawer unopened; search thoroughly, and often.

Carefully examine any personal items related to work -- briefcase, date book, organizer, address book. Remember, a cheater often records their lover's phone number under a pseudonym, code-word, or another person's name.

CAR

Things always get left in cars. Look in the glove compartment, under the seats, in cup holders, behind the visor, under floor mats and in the trunk. Check ashtrays in the front and back seats for notes, tissues, small personal items. Are there cigarette butts when your partner doesn't smoke? Check for hairs on the seat or headrest. Are the seat positions, especially on the passenger side, the same as they've always been? Has someone other than you or your lover been driving the car? Check the radio and CD's to see if your partner's taste in music has changed. Are the stations set the same as they always were? Is there a CD by a musician your partner has never liked before?

Keep track of mileage. Know the distance between home and work. Check the odometer at night and record the mileage. The next night, check it again. Excessive mileage could mean a rendezvous either during lunch, office hours or on the way home from work. Too little mileage might also be a clue that your partner never even went to work that day and spent it with a lover.

If it's ten miles to the office, every time your lover goes to the office, whether in the morning or back to work after dinner, the odometer should read roughly twenty miles more. Sometimes your partner has to go back to work at night if there is an emergency or an urgent meeting is called. If the return and the mileage is nowhere near a roundtrip's distance, you'll be safe to assume there was no trip back to the office. If the normal twenty-mile roundtrip is only ten miles, you'd be smart to check within a five-mile radius of your home, especially for motels or restaurants, and try to corroborate this finding with any credit card charges. Starting with the odometer often leads to more evidence.

WORKPLACE

If your partner owns their own business and you have access to the keys, getting into the office will be easy. There's always an extra set of keys to someone's business, or find a way to duplicate them. Wait until they leave work and no one else is there. Enter with a large bag or small piece of luggage for "office dumpster diving." Rummage through desk drawers, file cabinets and trash cans. When you're home alone the next day, examine the trash and anything else you found. You never know when you'll come across a love note, hotel receipt, airplane ticket, photographs, etc. Be on the lookout especially for handwritten notes, because most office communications are printed.

When your lover or spouse doesn't own their business, you have to invent an excuse for access to an office or desk in a large, busy place. Visit when you know your partner won't be there, pretending you were in the neighborhood and forgot they were out that day. Think of an excuse to use their phone or leave a note; call anyone, even listen to a dial tone, while pretending to look through desk drawers for paper or pen. Have a good story ready, in case someone walks in, like wanting to leave a surprise love note.

People having affairs think its safe to hide photographs and personal correspondence at work. Big mistake on their part. They're also sloppy about leaving notes to or from the third party lying around at work, along with gift, restaurant and hotel receipts. Scoop up anything suspicious, and don't forget the trash. Just as at home, torn handwritten notes found in the trash can be pieced together and provide valuable clues to what is going on with a cheating lover.

JOURNAL

We live in a cyber world, but many people still keep handwritten journals and diaries. Men and women alike often have a need to express their feelings and tell the whole truth when they're living a lie. There remains a need to set things straight, to tell the story "the way it is." It's a perfect place to confirm suspicions or dispel them.

Think carefully before reading someone's personal writings without their knowledge. It's always a violation of trust. If you find nothing, you will have to live with what you've done, and risk the other person finding out. However, if you do find something, it will more than justify your invasion of privacy. After all, the other person violated your trust first with lies and deception.

Always give careful consideration before invading someone's privacy. Proceed only if your suspicions are strong enough or there are other clues to warrant such a transgression on your part.

BILLS & FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Check phone bills, both house and mobile phones. Look for late-night calls and unrecognizable phone numbers.

Check bank statements for unusual withdrawals or deposits; notice any checks made to a realtor or landlord you don't know, to see if your partner is providing housing for someone else. Carefully go through credit card statements and note any unrecognizable travel charges for airplane tickets or hotel. Look for restaurant charges that seem excessive or non-business related. Check store charges for expensive gifts that you didn't receive, especially jewelers, clothing boutiques, and florists.

7

TELEPHONE SLEUTHING

The telephone remains a major source of communication in a computer driven world, and is frequently essential for carrying on an affair. Technological advances have made it easier for everyone to stay in touch, including people who are cheating. The mobile phone, beeper, PDA, handheld wireless device, and text messaging all play a roll in getting in touch with a secret lover. When you are trying to gather evidence on a cheater, there are several tools and resources to help you find out who is calling who. Some are included with your phone service, others need to be purchased separately.

CALLER ID

This service, offered by most phone companies, reveals a caller's number, sometimes their name, when the phone is listed. Most newer phones are equipped with a screen that displays incoming numbers. If you have an older phone without a screen, you need a separate caller ID box, which you can purchase from your telephone company or electronics store. Telephone companies who also provide cable TV service are able to display caller ID information on your television screen.

The person with whom your partner is cheating might call your home and hang up when you answer. Caller ID will identify that caller, when their number is not unlisted or blocked. Also, a cheating partner, who is careless or forgets about caller ID, is often caught when they lie about

where they are when they call you. Even if they are calling from an unlisted number, caller ID can help you catch a cheater in a lie. Say your partner's work number always displays on your caller ID screen. If they lie about their location and your screen is reading "private" or "unknown" caller, you'll know they're not at work.

Caller ID works whether or not you answer a call or are present at the time. Most devices store as many as 100 incoming numbers until they're deleted. This can help you know who is calling and who your partner might be speaking to when you're not around.

REDIAL

For outgoing calls, this handy button on your phone will redial the last number called, whether pressed immediately after the call or hours later. It's a good way to see who your partner is calling when you're not around. Or, if you are witnessing excessive phone use behind closed doors, especially late at night, you can use the redial button the next day after your partner has left for work. If your phone has a screen, you can get the number and sometimes the name of the person who's cheating with your lover, provided the number is listed and unblocked.

***69**

This telephone company service will automatically redial the last number that came into a phone, whether you press *69 immediately after a hang-up call or hours later. If you've been away from the house, and your partner felt it was safe to take a call from a secret lover, you'll know it. When you suspect cheating, it's always a good idea to check which calls came into your phone during your absence. As with caller ID, this features

does not work with unlisted or blocked numbers.

***67**

While gathering evidence from your own phone, whether at home, work or using your mobile phone, always press *67 before dialing. It's safe to assume the party you're calling has caller ID, a common service these days. You don't want your number showing up on someone else's caller ID screen. If you have a private listing, your number is automatically blocked, but it's still a good habit to use *67 whenever you're sleuthing. You might find yourself in a situation where the only available phone has a listed number that can be traced to you. You don't want to get caught doing the catching.

REVERSE PHONE SEARCH

If you have a suspicious phone number, and want to find out to whom it belongs, you can utilize an Internet search engine designed specifically for this purpose. This is an excellent way to research numbers you find on scraps of paper, on a phone bill, caller ID, * 67 or *69, using the same resources employed by professional detectives and lawyers.

A number of online companies provide access to databases containing millions of records related to landline, mobile, and even unlisted phone numbers. This information is collected from public information and confidential sources. A reverse phone search will give you the name of the person, the exact address, other phone numbers belonging to the person, the person's address history, and satellite maps. These websites allow you to look up one number at a time, and also offer memberships that give access to an unlimited amount of numbers. For additional fees, these

services provide background checks on any name you uncover.

TELEPHONE MONITORING

It's illegal for private individuals to record or listen to someone's telephone conversation without their knowledge.

A tempting supply of bugs, taps, recording and listening devices, mobile phone Bluetooth software, etc. is easily available for spying on a cheating lover or spouse. These can be purchased at electronics stores, and readily online. Their use however is highly frowned upon, even by professional private investigators. There are so many legal ways to catch a cheater, you don't have to risk going to jail.

Furthermore, any evidence gathered this way cannot be used as evidence in court cases where cheating results in divorce.

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CYBER-SNOOPING

A cheating lover or spouse can be involved in an online affair, using the computer to find dates, communicating with a secret lover through email, hooking up in chat rooms, or networking on social sites. Whichever activity, there are several resources to help you identify cyber-cheating and catch the culprit.

EMAIL ADDRESS FINDER

If you discover an email address while investigating your partner, you can use an Internet search engine to find out the name, address and phone number of the person who owns the account. This reverse search is similar to a reverse phone search. Email search systems access the same databases used by law enforcement and licensed private investigators, and this kind of record search is entirely legal. You get immediate access to the information you need simply by typing an email address into a template.

You can also use an email database to do a direct email address search. If you find a person's name on a slip of paper or elsewhere among your partner's possessions, simply enter the person's name and you will have instant access to worldwide databases with millions of email addresses.

If you have the name of a person you suspect is cheating with your partner, you can also use these same search engines to conduct background checks that will tell you a person's work history, driving

record, criminal record, court documents, etc. You have the option of a one-time search, or you can purchase a membership with unlimited searches.

COMPUTER MONITORING SOFTWARE

In recent years, people have begun using sophisticated technology to uncover whether their partner is having a cyber-affair, or otherwise communicating with a secret lover via computer. Computer monitoring software has come a long way in recent years. Invisible software is able to gather information about a computer's activities without the knowledge of the user.

Before you conduct computer spying on a suspected cheater, know that it's only legal to investigate a computer if you have shared ownership, or if you advise the computer's owner in advance that you will be monitoring their activity. Become familiar with laws governing computer privacy in your state or jurisdiction. Following are some of the computer activities you are able to monitor with special software.

EMAIL/CHAT/INSTANT MESSAGING

Computer monitoring software can help you catch a cheating partner by recording all computer activity, including that of private email accounts set up with an Internet Service Provider (ISP), as well as Web-based e-mail such as Hotmail or Yahoo. The monitoring software tells you if the email was sent or received, date and time the email was sent, its content, plus attachments which you can open. Even if the email is deleted by the person who received it, it's still saved on the monitor program.

You also can monitor instant messaging and chat room activity. You won't have to wonder about who is saying what to whom, because both sides of

the messaging are recorded. Cheating lovers and spouses feel this communication is safer than email because it's not saved. But with monitoring software, a separate recording is made of these activities for your later viewing, whether the cheater deletes them or not.

INTERNET BROWSING

Monitoring software allows you to track all the websites visited by your suspected cheater. If you think your loved one is visiting a dating site and has set up a profile on one of them, you can find out which sites are being accessed. Social networking sites can also be monitored, to see if your loved one is trying to find new relationships or killing time by sharing intimate details of his or her life.

You not only can see which websites are visited, you can also see how much time is spent on a site, what time of day the site is being accessed, and exactly how many visits have been made to a particular web address. This will tell you if you're dealing with innocent surfing, or serious cheating.

KEYSTROKES

The ability to record keystrokes is important not only to see what is written on a computer, but also for capturing usernames and passwords. You'll be able to see what your loved one wrote to another, but also when they change their mind, decide not to say something, and delete it. You even can read a document that never was saved or printed.

SCREENSHOTS

The word-alert screenshot feature of monitoring software is based on a list of words you've created to trigger the screenshot. For instance, your

list might include the words "kiss," "hug," or "sex." Whenever these words are typed by either your loved one or the other party, a screenshot is taken and you can see everything on the computer screen, as if you were right there. This feature is particularly revealing if your cheater is engaging in web-cam chat. You'll not only have a record of the chat, but you'll get to see what the person looks like who's cheating with your partner.

WEB-BASED/REMOTE MONITORING

Most monitoring software can only be accessed when you are physically on the target computer. Latest technology allows you to monitor a computer from another location. Also called invisible or web-based monitoring, this feature allows you to monitor a computer from any other computer via the Internet, once you've installed the software on the target computer. If you leave town, you can monitor a target computer, even if you've traveled thousands of miles cross-country. Or, if the computer you are monitoring is a laptop, it doesn't matter how far it travels you can still record it's activity and access the information.

KEYSTROKE LOGGER/RECORDER

This is a simple device which records and stores every incoming and outgoing stroke on a computer. It's a small, tubular device, about one-inch long, that attaches to the end of the keyboard cable and plugs into the back of the computer.

A keystroke recorder's advantage is it provides access to a computer without needing the password, and will even capture the password. The disadvantage of a keystroke logger is it's visible on the back of the

computer. It's the first place a cheater is going to look if they're trying to cover their tracks. If you want to risk being found out, you can briefly install one of these devices on a computer, if only to get a password. You then will have full access email, browser history, chat room activity, or computer files.

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SURVEILLANCE GEAR

Beyond searching for signs of cheating, digging through trash, and gathering phone and computer evidence, if you want to proceed to more advanced surveillance, here are some gadgets and methods to help you catch a cheating lover.

GPS MOBILE PHONE

You can purchase a GPS-enabled mobile phone anywhere electronics are sold, along with prepaid minutes. Next, you need to subscribe to an online GPS locator service for a nominal monthly fee. Many telephone companies offer this service as an add-on to their basic package.

Once the phone is fully charged, give it to your partner as a gift to ensure the best reception. Or, you can plant the phone somewhere on their person, in a piece of luggage, or in their vehicle. If you're going the latter route, turn off the ringer and hide the phone under a rear seat. You will lose about 10% reception, but you will be able to perform adequate surveillance. Remove and recharge the phone every few days.

You can track the phone online, by logging onto the website of whatever service you've joined. You only have to enter the number of the mobile phone to immediately access its location. A map will appear on your computer screen, telling you where your partner is at that moment within thirty feet. You can see where the phone has been since you first installed it by checking the location history. You're also able to access maps and

directions. You'll know exactly where your partner has been and are one step closer to possibly catching someone who's being unfaithful.

GPS TRACKER

A high-tech GPS tracker is easy to conceal, does not need re-charging, and is considerably more expensive than a GPS-enabled phone. In most jurisdictions, it's only legal to track a vehicle which you own. If you do not co-own your partner or spouse's car, you can install a GPS tracker on your car and lend it to your suspected cheater. Always check with an attorney if you are in doubt about privacy laws regarding the vehicle you want to track.

GPS trackers range in price from \$200 to several hundred dollars. Most fit in the palm of your hand, and operate on size-A batteries which last about one month. You can opt for an active GPS tracker which operates in real-time, sending a location every 5 or 10 seconds. You access this information online and pay a monthly fee. Passive GPS trackers cost less and do not require internet fees, but they only provide tracking history, where your vehicle has been and for how long. To access data you retrieve the unit, attach it to your computer and download the information.

ELECTRONIC VIDEO SYSTEM

Video technology is one of the most rapidly changing industries over the past ten years. It's now used for surveillance more than anything else, not the least of which is trying to catch a cheater. Tiny cameras, known as Nanny Cams, are sometimes as small as a penny, others can be hidden inside a writing pen. Cameras can masquerade as a smoke detector, wall

clock, desk lamp, radio, necktie, or other covert systems. For as little as a few hundred dollars you can set up a wireless spy-camera in less than an hour.

There's a lot of equipment available, but it's not all top quality. There's nothing more disappointing than purchasing a video system that can barely send a signal across the room. Familiarize yourself with video camera fundamentals before making a purchase. Your local electronics store personnel can offer solid advice, and various online sources provide extensive information about their products.

Basically Nanny Cams are mini TV stations, a camera with a transmitter built inside. The camera transfers video via radio wave to a receiver which converts the signal back to video and displays it on a monitor or sends it to a recording device. The components are: camera/transmitter, receiver, and monitor or recorder. If you want to use more than one camera, you will need an extra component, a switcher, to go back and forth between cameras at set intervals. Learn about the output power of a transmitter, and the frequency at which it transmits. The higher the frequency the better. These systems run off a 9-volt battery and/or electrical power.

Another consideration is whether you're going to record audio. It's perfectly legal to record video images of another person in your home or on your property, if there is no expectation of privacy, say in a bathroom. But it's never legal to intercept their oral communication. If you end up using your spy-cam video in a divorce case, you don't want to risk having it thrown out of court because you also recorded audio. You probably are best off with a video-only camera for spying on a suspected cheater when you're not around, or they're behind closed doors. If you haven't recorded audio, you won't have to worry about an angry cheater suing you for invasion of privacy when you present your evidence.

The cutting edge of spy-cams and surveillance is the PVR, personal video recorder. These are digital camcorders which can be hooked up to record a spy-cam, and can easily be carried covertly in your pocket. Most PVRs

can double as a still camera, tape recorder, or MP3 player, others contain video games. Another new device is the personal-security digital video recorder. It's a stand-alone unit which can be placed in a room and only becomes activated by motion detection. You don't need a VCR or software. For playback, simply plug the unit into the jack on your TV with an ordinary video cable. The unit is about the size of a cigarette pack.

If you want to record outdoors, walking along the beach, at a restaurant or in a store, consider the "spy-cam mobile phone," which is a dummy phone that has been hollowed out to contain a camera and battery. You need to stash the receiver and recorder in a nearby location while you walk around with the "phone" in your hand. Or, you need a second person to carry the receiver and recorder. You might appear to be carrying a mobile phone, but every time you point it at someone or set it down, you're actually videotaping what's going on around you, even if you're looking in the opposite direction. Other variations of spy-cam dummies can be improvised using an aerosol spray can, a cigarette pack, headgear, or any other appropriate disguise. An ordinary camcorder inside a paper bag is another reliable option for outdoor videotaping when you're trying to catch a cheater in the act.

NOTE:

Mobile phones and wireless handheld devices have undergone massive technical advances over recent years. Many new models record video, as well as take photographs, but they still lack the capability for reliable surveillance. They are becoming smarter and smaller each year, but even the latest 5-megapixel mobile-phone cameras do not have the range to be useful in surveillance work. These phone/camera/music player/web browsers have great potential for surveillance, but conventional spy-cams provide the best video to date and can be concealed the easiest.

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HIRING A PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR

Whether to hire a private investigator to help catch a cheating partner is a big decision. Consider that some cheaters are expertly skilled at lying and covering their tracks, especially if they feel you're suspicious. Cheaters are often professional liars, and you might need professional help to get to the truth.

A private investigator is an excellent way to discover the truth because the investigator is not emotionally involved and will be more objective and impartial than you. Even usually clear-thinking people trying to catch a cheater on their own become so upset by what they uncover that they lose perspective and objectivity. Other people are naturally suspicious and paranoid, and can see infidelity where none exists. In both instances a private investigator is a good idea. A professional has the advantage of knowing how to investigate a cheater without imagining things that aren't there. The worst thing anyone can do is falsely accuse an innocent partner of having an affair.

Another reason to hire a PI is for your own well-being and sanity. It's not always a good idea to witness the affair yourself. When you have an urgent need to learn the extent of an affair or identify your cheater's lover, being faced with stark reality might affect you more adversely than you expect. Scorned lovers have been known to lose their cool and do things to harm themselves or others. Emotionally fragile people who suspect cheating should not hesitate to get someone to do the dirty work for them

The PI is an experienced professional who has been trained in surveillance

and uncovering evidence. A professional has more resources and owns the proper equipment. A private individual, trying to figure out if their partner is cheating, can waste months of valuable time because they lack the proper investigative tools and skills. Furthermore, the PI has a government license to gather evidence and conduct surveillance and is aware of laws governing such activity.

If you're married, and you feel your situation might end in divorce, hiring an investigator is a smart decision. When there are children involved, whether or not you're married, it's always wise to have a professional investigation when you go before a judge to discuss custody issues. A thorough investigation might also help you determine to which extent you want a liar and cheat in your child's life at all. In court hearings, it's always a plus to have a PI testify on your behalf and present concrete evidence that won't get thrown out of court by the judge. You might find lots of evidence on your own, but some of it might have been gathered illegally.

The major drawback to hiring a private investigator is cost. Investigating a cheater can be expensive. Depending on what you need, rates begin around one-hundred dollars per hour, and go up from there. If you live in a large city, hiring a PI can cost tens of thousands of dollars. Fees are less in smaller towns but hourly rates anywhere can add up quickly. In the end however the expense might be worth every penny. You will have to decide if this is a situation where you don't want to be 'penny wise and pound foolish.' Not hiring an investigator might end up costing you more in the long run, both financially and emotionally.

Once you decide to hire an investigator, know there are different areas of private investigation. Make sure you select a PI whose expertise is infidelity investigation. Preferably, get a recommendation from an attorney or friend you trust. Or, check your local yellow-pages directory or search online for an investigator who specializes in domestic, matrimonial or spousal investigation.

CONCLUSION - NOW WHAT?

You've done all the work, collected the evidence, maybe even hired a private investigator. There's solid evidence you're the victim of a cheating lover or spouse. Now you have to decide what you're going to do next. Do you want to work on your relationship? Or do you want this person out of your sight forever?

There's no easy solution. Someone's cheated on you. You might be dealing with years of commitment, children, friends, relatives, and finances. Your next step could make a drastic change in your life. It's difficult, confusing and scary. On one hand it would be easier to look the other way and forget about what you've learned. On the other, you have to make a decision about what is right for you, do you stay or do you go?

Heavy emotions are natural when you discover your partner is cheating. Early reactions are disbelief, anger, jealousy, revenge and guilt to name a few. Be sure your emotions aren't clouding your thinking and influencing your decisions. Step back and give yourself as much time as you need to calmly and rationally confront your partner. Don't react emotionally and don't overreact. It's easier said than done, but take time to pull yourself together, think rationally, and decide how to proceed in your best interest.

Confide in a close friend, or seek professional counseling. If you're married, consult a lawyer, especially if there are children involved. Consider your options and the consequences. You might be willing to forgive and work to heal the relationship, but once confronted your partner might decide to leave you and be with the other person.

The only thing you can be sure of is yourself. Keep strong to your belief that you want and deserve a peaceful, loving relationship based on

honesty and trust. With that in mind you are well on your way to re-establishing your relationship with a cheating partner by whatever means it takes. You will find a way to forgive and forget, if that is what you want. Or you will emerge strong and energized, able to face the future and start a new life.

All endings are new beginnings. Rediscover your hopes and dreams. Above all, have no regrets. A search for truth is never in vain.