



4 Circle Plan Worksheet for Betrayal Trauma Recovery

💔 Understanding the Impact of Betrayal & Why the 4 Circle Plan Matters

There's no doubt that the people we love most can also hurt us the most. When betrayal is uncovered - whether through infidelity, compulsive sexual behaviors, or secrecy - it can cause deep emotional wounds known as **betrayal trauma**. This form of trauma often mirrors symptoms of PTSD, including anxiety, depression, emotional dysregulation, and the overwhelming replaying of events in the mind.

The healing process is complex, but it's possible. One tool that supports recovery is **Dr. Omar Minwalla's 4 Circle Plan** - a structure that helps the betraying partner identify harmful behaviors, recognize warning signs, develop healthy coping strategies, and most importantly, acknowledge the **relational impact** of those actions.

Inspired by a stoplight metaphor, the 4 Circle Plan promotes clarity, accountability, and empathy. It creates space for open dialogue between partners and supports the process of rebuilding trust and integrity.

This worksheet can be completed individually or with the support of a therapist. Many couples find that doing it together - once emotions are regulated - opens a deeper understanding of what each person needs to feel safe again.

How to Use the 4 Circle Plan

Each of the four circles represents a level of awareness and behavior:

● Red Circle - Inner Boundary Violations ("STOP")

These are non-negotiable, destructive behaviors that break trust.

Examples:

- Contacting an affair partner
- Watching pornography after clear boundary-setting
- Lying, secrecy, deleting texts or calls

Your Red Circle Behaviors:

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● Yellow Circle - Triggers & Rationalizations (“CAUTION”)

These are warning signs that often precede red circle behaviors. They may include thoughts, feelings, or situations.

Examples:

- Isolating or hiding phone use
- Emotional withdrawal
- Justifying behavior: “It’s not that big of a deal.”

Your Yellow Circle Items:

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● Green Circle - Healthy Coping & Recovery (“GO”)

These are the tools and strategies that support your recovery, connection, and emotional regulation.

Examples:

- Attending therapy or group meetings
- Journaling or naming emotions aloud
- Daily check-ins with your partner

Your Green Circle Items:

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❤️🩹 The Other Circle - Relational Impact & Repair

This outer circle is often overlooked. It invites the betraying partner to recognize how their behaviors have affected others.

Examples:

- Naming how secrecy damaged trust
- Acknowledging emotional abandonment
- Understanding children’s exposure to tension or change in family dynamics

People Impacted and the Impact:

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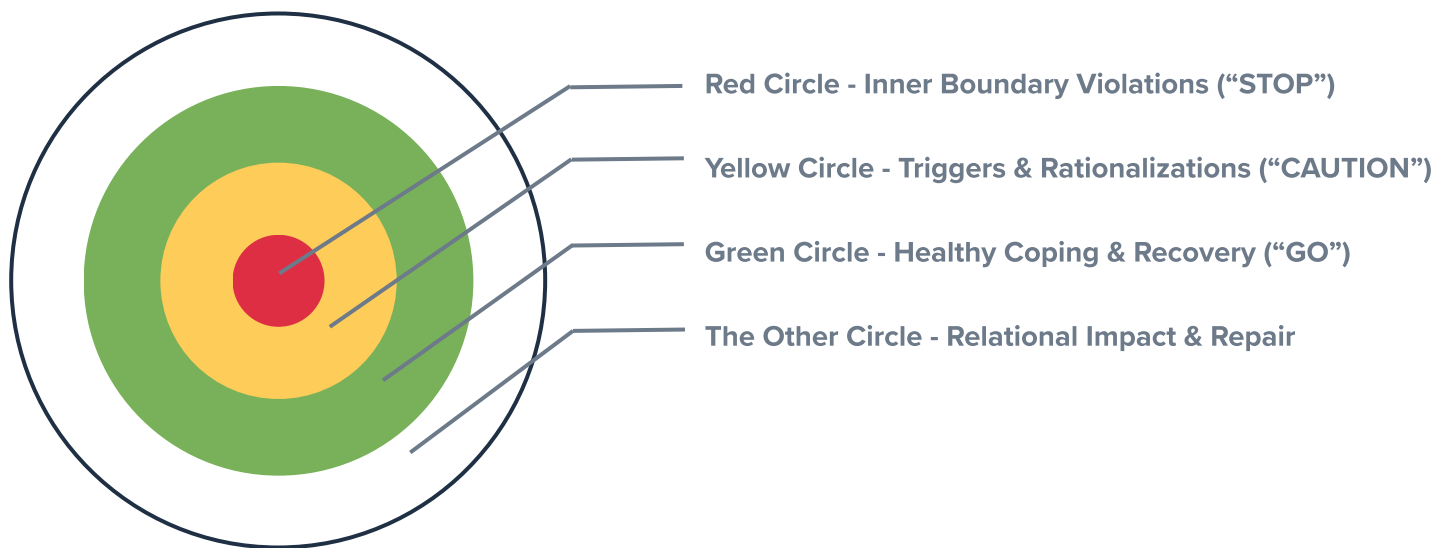


Guidance for Couples Completing the Worksheet:

- Start separately. Reflect and complete your own draft first.
- Share and discuss together with care.
- Use a timer if needed to take turns.
- Be specific. Avoid vague entries.
- Revisit and revise the circles over time.
- Involve a therapist for support with boundaries and healing conversations.

Remember: This worksheet is a tool for reflection and healing. It's not about blame, but about building insight, empathy, and a stronger foundation for repair.

4 Circle Plan



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