

# The State of Betrayal

## Executive Summary

Based on 73,500+ Research Participants Across 50+ Countries

**73,500+**  
PARTICIPANTS

**50+**  
COUNTRIES

**100,000+**  
FULL DATABASE

**Top 1%**  
GLOBAL PODCAST

The PBT® Institute has compiled the world's largest research database on betrayal and its consequences. This Executive Summary presents the five most significant findings from 73,500+ completed assessments. The full report is available at [ThePBTInstitute.com/state-of-betrayal-report](https://ThePBTInstitute.com/state-of-betrayal-report).

**Researcher:** Dr. Debi Silber, PhD — the only researcher in the world to conduct doctoral-level research specifically on how betrayal and broken trust affect human health, performance, and recovery.

### KEY FINDINGS

#### 1 The Gap Between Desire to Heal and Ability to Move Forward

**93%+** want to heal — but don't know how

*Across both datasets, more than 92% of respondents want to move forward from their betrayal but report not knowing how. The median commitment to healing is 10 out of 10. This is not a lack of motivation — it is the absence of a research-backed path through betrayal recovery that addresses its specific, distinct nature.*

#### 2 Post Betrayal Syndrome® Is Near-Universal

**99.43%** report emotional symptoms

*96.9% of respondents report physical symptoms. 98.57% report mental symptoms. More than half report 16 or more emotional symptoms out of 20 possible — simultaneously. PBS® is not a rare or extreme response. It is the near-universal experience of people who have been through significant betrayal.*

#### 3 Betrayal Has a Measurable Physical and Cognitive Cost

**73%** report low energy and disrupted sleep

*Nearly 3 in 4 respondents experience low energy and sleep disruption directly following betrayal. 82% feel overwhelmed. 73% cannot focus. 68% cannot concentrate. These are not incidental symptoms — they are physiological and cognitive impairments with direct performance consequences for individuals and organizations.*

#### 4 Betrayal Destroys the Capacity to Trust

**91%** are hesitant to trust again

*91% are hesitant to trust again. 75%+ are actively preventing themselves from forming deep relationships. 94.7% are still triggered by people, places, and thoughts connected to their betrayal. This erosion of trust does not remain personal — it enters the workplace, community, and every subsequent relationship.*

#### 5 Conventional Approaches Are Not Resolving It

**29.76%** have tried multiple avenues and are still searching

*Nearly 1 in 3 highly committed respondents have already tried multiple approaches. Nearly 1 in 4 have worked with a therapist. They've read the books. Listened to the podcasts. They are still not through it. Betrayal recovery requires something specific and distinct — a research-validated path that addresses PBS® directly.*

## SOURCE OF BETRAYAL

SOURCE	%
Spouse	41.66%
Partner	31.5%
Family member	11.74%
More than one person	8.61%
Friend	8.61%
Workplace / Authority	8.61%

## TYPE OF BETRAYAL

TYPE	%
Infidelity	57.85%
Needs above yours	12.02%
Caught in a lie	9.53%
Broken promise	8.05%
Backstabbing	7.76%
Divorce	4.78%

## IMPLICATIONS

### For Individuals

Post Betrayal Syndrome® is not weakness. It is the near-universal, measurable response to one of the most destabilizing human experiences. The Five Stages of Betrayal Recovery™ provides the only research-validated path through it.

### For Practitioners

A significant portion of the people you serve may be carrying unresolved PBS® presenting as depression, anxiety, low motivation, or resistance to change. The PBT® Certification provides training in the only betrayal-specific framework available.

### For Organizations

The most prevalent PBS® symptoms — inability to focus (73%), overwhelm (82%), fatigue (67%), disrupted sleep (71%) — are direct workforce performance impairments. Organizations that understand PBS® can address the root cause of trust breakdown, not just its symptoms.

## Access the Full State of Betrayal Report

The complete report includes all symptom data, full research methodology, Dr. Debi's interpretation of findings, and implications for individuals, practitioners, organizations, and healthcare systems.

[thepbtinstitute.com/state-of-betrayal-report](http://thepbtinstitute.com/state-of-betrayal-report)

## MEDIA INQUIRIES · INTERVIEW REQUESTS · SPEAKING

Dr. Debi Silber is available for media interviews, expert commentary, and keynote presentations on the findings of this report. She brings a rare combination of doctoral research credentials, 100,000+ participant data, and the ability to translate complex research findings into compelling, actionable insights for any audience.

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## Dr. Debi Silber · The PBT® Institute

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