Is it Ever OK to lie to Your Lover?

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Abstract
The healthiest relationships have a high degree of trust. However, it is surprisingly easy to be deceptive in an intimate relationship. Research has shown that about 10% of interactions between intimates contain deceptive elements, like exaggerations, excuses, or other lies. Not surprisingly, these have a distancing effect. But are all deceptions damaging? Isn’t it kind to protect each other from painful truths? It may depend on the motive.

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Some theorists argue that all lying is inherently narcissistic, even when people claim they are doing so to protect the feelings of another. Their position—a cogent one at that—is that you are deciding for another person what he needs to know about his world. You are making an assumption that you know better than him about what is best for him. And while there may be times this is true, we know the inherent dangers of assumptions. So if telling another person the truth could be damaging, but lying is inherently self-serving, is it ever OK to lie? That’s not for me to decide for you. However, Is it ever acceptable to twist the truth, and if so, when? Christobel Hastings unravels the politics behind spinning a yarn… Let’s be honest: we all tell lies. From tall tales to throwaway fibs, while many of us grew up obeying the do-not-lie prohibitions of our parents, in reality, the world is rarely so black and white. In childhood, we are told ‘prosocial lies’ to protect us from hard truths, such as parents lying to their children about the tooth fairy, or preserving a sense of stability by pretending Paw Patrol isn’t on TV. And as we grow older, we develop the capacity to tell white lies. Borne from a place of empathy and compassion, we learn to prioritise another’s person’s feelings, and endeavour to protect them from unnecessary pain.