

## **My partner wants to leave**

If your partner has said they want to end the relationship, or to move out for a “trial period”, what can you do?

I have a lot of questions for you:

- Did you know things were bad between you?
- If not, why not?
- If you did, what did you do about it?
- Do you think (or know) another person is involved?
- Has something happened which triggered this – for example a loss or illness?
- Do you think they might be suffering from depression?
- Has something like this happened before?
- Are there children involved?

It is important to understand that I won't try to persuade someone to stay in a relationship if they don't want to. You can tell your partner that if they are willing to come for counselling, I will ask them what is going on, but I won't be trying to twist their arm to stay. And I will ask both of you to agree on the purpose of counselling: is it to fix the relationship? Or is it to understand what has gone wrong, so as to make a decision whether or not to end it? Or is that decision already made?

In this situation, your task would be to persuade your partner to come along. I'll take it from there. I will try to understand what's been going wrong, and ask them if they can temporarily postpone splitting up while they try counselling. I won't ask them to promise anything, except to come along for a few weeks.

It's no good trying to work on the relationship until both partners have agreed to try working on it. Every case is different, but generally I am not interested in simply helping people split up. I would prefer to help you fix things.

If your partner is not willing to attend, then I can work with you as an individual to help you understand what may have happened, and what changes you might make, either in this relationship or your next one.