



Is He Commitment Phobic... *or is it me?*

Dear Dr. Tina:

"I have been with my boyfriend for a little over 3 years. I have recently brought up the topic of marriage. A few months ago he told me that I complete his life and that he can't imagine his life without me, but then he says he not ready for the marriage "commitment".



He says that it has nothing to do with me. He also says that he knows that I would make a wonderful wife and mother. Unfortunately, I take it so personal and become so depressed. He does NOT understand why I am so harsh on myself. I feel like if he doesn't know if he wants to get married than he doesn't "love" me as much as he says he does? We basically never argue and we are the best of friends. I couldn't ask for a better boyfriend. Why is he so scared and why does he say he can't imagine my life without me, but will not propose marriage. I'm not saying that I want to get married at the moment, but a promise of marriage would be nice. Can you please help me out? I'm so depressed. I don't understand?? He said that he would go to counseling with me. Help me please. What should I do? Should I drop the subject and keep dating him or what????"

Sarah (F) 25
Los Angeles, CA US
Together 3 years

Dear Sarah:

You may not realize it, but you're sending mixed messages about whether you really want to be married or not. You're blaming yourself for his lack of commitment, and you seem to be fighting with yourself about whether you want the commitment or the relationship. I suggest you take him up on his offer to go for counseling, and even get some counseling on your own.

Consider the picture you're presenting to him. Why would he want to marry you when you're depressed and upset? Get yourself together, and figure out what you want. Do you want marriage Whether it's with him or without him? Are you willing to be with him even if you're not married? Pouting, being emotionally upset, and making demands are not mature and effective ways to build a working partnership.

[Tina Tessina, PhD](#)

Read Dr. Tina's Latest Book:



It Ends With You:

Grow Up and Out of Dysfunction (New Page Books 2003)

This book examines not just the statistics that show that children of divorce can't keep their own marriages together, or children of alcoholics gravitate to dysfunctional partners, but why people have these problems, how they come to be, and, most importantly, what they can do to fix them.