

Being matched personally by True Father

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The 2075 couples anniversary is coming up on July 1st. If you've had the unique experience of being matched personally by True Father, let's tell our stories while we can. It's quite different today. What was it like for you?

In December 1980, I was on MFT in Lexington, Kentucky, working in a mall. I spent a lot of time by myself, walking to and from the mall, fixing my dinner around 9:30 at night. One night as I was washing up, alone, looking out the dark window, I suddenly said "I'm not ready for the Blessing!". And I wondered where that came from. I had heard absolutely nothing about one coming up. The next night my commander, Mr Nakai, called me. "Come Nashville, tomorrow. Matching, matching." Laconic even for a Japanese brother,.

Well, I went. Kind of felt like "Who am I to say yes to this? But on the other hand, who am I to say no?" In those years, we had no Blessing preparation workshops, no handbooks. Easily 90% of us were single. Your central figure, who decided who was eligible, was going too. I believe for this matching the requirements were three years in the church. I was six weeks short of that.

But my commander said go, so I got onto the plane and flew to New York, to see the World Mission Center (aka the New Yorker Hotel) for the first time. The place was thronged with family members from all over the globe – Japanese, Korean, Filipino, African, Brazilian, German, Australian, etc.

I remember the huge cheer that erupted from the crowd packed into the New Yorker Grand Ballroom, brothers on the right side, sisters on the left. First thing Rev Moon did after gesturing for us to sit was to make an aisle down the middle of the room, mock kicking people out of the way. We were inspired,

excited, moved, giddy, prayerful. And after two years of being yelled at for following 'that Korean brainwasher', I was seeing him for the second time.

I had heard how Rev Moon had an intuitive, spiritual sense of who should marry who. One that he had been using since he was a child, when people would seek out his advice on their choice of spouse. Being a spiritualist and dabbler myself, I was keen to see how he did it.

The first thing he did was to ask if it was anyone's birthday. One brother and sister put their hands up. He looked at them, then flicked his hands together, and off they went to talk. I was outraged. What!!! Because it's their birthday! How is that spiritual?

Next he asked for foreign missionaries to line up in the center, men and women facing each other across the aisle. Which I should mention was only three or four feet wide. I was sitting on the side, towards the back, and all I could see was Father's legs moving, followed by David Kim's, and couples coming out of the line from either end. I couldn't see what he was doing.

Next he called for MFT captains. Same thing, they line up, he goes up and down matching people. The matched couples went up the stairs to a little terrace area where translators stood by, to discuss their matching. If they accepted it, they came down and waited to bow to True Parents, signifying accepting their match. If they refused the match, they went back into the ballroom to try again.

Not long after this, he gestured for me to stand up. I stood up, in my corduroy fundraising jacket and best polyester pants. "Mansei, Sam!" Janet, a sister from my team, whispered. He grabbed my lapel with one fist and frog marched me up the aisle, where he pointed at a group of sisters standing by the side wall. One by one, they gestured "Me?" and he shook his head until one sister got the yes.

I still have the corduroy jacket, decorated with red streaks from wet wood roses.

We went up into the balcony, found out she spoke English, and waived off the translators. We looked shyly at each other. "What's your name?" "Sam. What's yours?" "_____." Awkward pause. "What do you think about the matching?" she asked. "I trust Father." was all I could think to say. "What about you?" "I trust Father." "What do we do now?" "I think we go bow." That was our discussion.

We waited until there were three couples there and one of the attendants signaled to Father, who turned. We bowed to him, a full kyung-bae, both hands to the forehead, all the way to the ground. There was a smattering of applause. Then we went to sign a registry, got congratulated several times, searched for our shoes among the thousands against the wall, then emerged onto the mezzanine of the hotel lobby, where a large crowd was waiting to see the newly matched couples emerging.

In Unification Church culture at that time, we didn't date or look for partners. We worked as hard as we could on our missions, and waited for the sudden summons to come to a matching. A summons which could take years and years to come. So a popular pastime was joking about what kind of spouse you'd get.

For all the exoticism possible, I was half expecting to end up married to a sister with a bone in her nose. I certainly loved other cultures more than mine. So who did I get? A sister who could have been my cousin.