

70 at Blessing and Family Ministry's National Level 2 Blessing Workshop at UTS

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On August 14–16, the Blessing and Family Ministry (BFM) conducted a national Level 2 Blessing Workshop in Barrytown, New York, at the historical Unification Theological Seminary (UTS). The education content was presented by John Williams and Sarah Brown, and was designed to help individuals begin preparations for marriage and the matching process.

The workshop received positive responses overall from participants, with an average overall rating of 4 out of 5. For participants, the high points of the workshop were participating in the presentations and discussions, feeling cared for by the staff, and hearing the testimonies. Each participant expressed that they gained something valuable that they would take away with them. Most participants were pleased with the accommodations and physical environment.

The workshop was refreshingly diverse in its participation, with 70 from all across the United States, including participants from 14 different states.

Staff members for the workshop included: John Williams, Sarah Brown, Jessica Sattinger, Esther Flores, Benjy Uyama, Sammy Uyama, Marina Falconi, Anne-Mary Mylar, Teresa Rischl, and Neil Rischl.



The participants were inspired by the presentations, and many shared gratitude to the staff for their genuine care and sincerity. Overall, the participants had a positive experience, felt clear about how they want to proceed with their matching process, and walked away with something valuable.

Participants had the following to say about their overall experience at the workshop:

“I found that working on my relationship with my parents is important, knowing that every step is a small commitment, and that a matching process that doesn’t work out isn’t a failure, but a learning experience.”

The workshop began on Sunday evening with a presentation from John Williams on *What Do I Bring to the Table?* In the presentation John introduced and expanded on four areas in which a participant can reflect and work on to prepare internally for the matching process and marriage. The four main areas covered were faith, motivation, maturity and the capacity to love. Following the presentation, participants filled out a questionnaire about their vision, values, life purpose, lifestyle, relationships with others, and ability to communicate effectively. After completing the questionnaire, participants met together to discuss the content of the presentation and responses to their questionnaires.

“I have the desire to be honest with my prospective match and always continue to improve myself and my skills so that I can offer her endless joy and love.”



Day 2 of the workshop began with a presentation from John Williams on *Matching Smarts*. During the presentation, John encouraged participants to consider their own blocks and concepts that might interfere with or confuse the matching process for them. Several common challenging situations matching candidates face were presented, and participants had the opportunity to discuss each one, and suggest possible solutions throughout the presentation.



Immediately following the *Matching Smarts* presentation, participants met in gender-specific discussion groups to discuss some of the concerns they have about the matching process and challenges they face in feeling prepared for the matching and Marriage Blessing, as well as shared ideas for how to address challenges. Participants appreciated the time to connect with their own gender and discuss some sensitive issues with one another.



After enjoying some recreation and relaxation in the early afternoon, participants listened to a presentation from Sarah Brown on *My Heritage, My Legacy*, which explored the meaning and the value of lineage and the Marriage Blessing, and encouraged participants to reflect on what kind of legacy they want to leave behind in their life.

“I realized the importance of reaching out for help. What ever problems I’m facing, I can freely reach out and know that I’ll be accepted and guided towards the right direction.”

Participants spent the evening listening to testimonies from young Blessed Couple, Neil and Teresa Rischl, about their matching processes and experience. Through their testimonies, Neil and Teresa were able to impart the wisdom they have accumulated through their experiences with the matching process, as well as dispel some of the fears participants had about their own future processes. Their testimony was a hit with the participants.

“I recognized the importance of conditions and prayer during the time when I am serious about the

matching process, and I want to apply that more to my life. I want to include God and my parents and be more honest with them more often.”



Day 3 closed with a morning session on *Understanding the Matching Process*, which included a presentation, Q & A and discussion. For this session, participants attended either a presentation on the Family Matching Process given by Sarah Brown or the Matching Process for First-Generation Unificationists given by John Williams. Both presentations outlined the stages and steps of the matching process, and offered ideas and suggestions for how candidates and their parents and/or Matching Advisors can develop a clear plan for approaching the matching process.



“I realized the importance of taking full responsibility for my relationship and making a choice every day.”

The BFM staff is grateful to all those who participated in this workshop and contributed to its success, and look forward to continuing to serve the members of the Unification community. They wish the very best to each workshop participant on their journey towards the Marriage Blessing, and offer their continued support every step of the way.



Additional Resources Available

Level 2 Blessing Workshop Curriculum

Does your local community want to host its own “**Preparing for Marriage**” **Level 2 Blessing Workshop**? The BFM has now made it easy to host a Level 2 Blessing Workshop in your local community. Your community can purchase the [Level 2 Blessing Curriculum](#), and it includes everything you need to know about running a successful Level 2 for your community. The education is for anyone who wants to learn more

about the matching process or is preparing to begin the matching process. Included is also a User Manual to support you step by step throughout the curriculum.

Matching Handbooks

During the workshop, participants were able to purchase the *Family Matching Handbook* in English or Japanese, as well as, *Finding the One: A Guide to Matching and Blessing in the Unification Tradition* (matching handbook for first-generation Unificationists). These handbooks provide clear, step-by-step guidance for navigating the matching process. The *Family Matching Handbook* in English and Japanese is currently available online at hsabooks.com. *Finding the One: A Guide to Matching and Blessing in the Unification Tradition* is available in English, Japanese, and Spanish at hsabooks.com.