

Matching: Dealing With Myself As I Am In Order To Get There All In One Piece

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Photo date and location unknown

Disclaimer: In this story, I am not going to use the names of the sisters involved. Some may know who they are. What I am telling is my own recollection, and I certainly don't recall everything. Their story is their own to tell, and it could be quite different than mine. And while I'm willing to say that these things happened, I'm not sure I'm getting them in the right order.

My first blessing was broken. I was at the seminary, working in the kitchen and studying. Once a week I took the train down to New York to see Patricia Detlefsen, who did a therapy called Core Energetics. It involved doing physical exercises to tap into emotions locked up in your body, and it helped me get in touch with myself. It also helped me see what unconscious choices I had been making, and now they could become conscious.

Since joining the church, I had been kind of holding my breath and going full speed ahead, trying to be what I wanted to be, instead of dealing with myself as I am in order to get there all in one piece. I was just beginning to learn how to do that, and the process still goes on.

So I was spending a lot of time working on my own emotions, good and bad. One thing that happens is that your narrative at some point starts to shift from 'Here's what they did to me', and turns into 'Ok, what am I doing now?'. Digesting experiences means breaking them down into things you can use as fuel to live your everyday life, just like digesting food does the same thing. I realized that to get there, I had to start from where I was rather than from where I wanted to be.

In the kitchen at UTS I had a cheap tape player and a collection of tapes that I listened to while I cooked. Nice thing about being the cook: nobody wants to upset you, everybody wants you to be happy. So while cooking I played African highlife music, Andean folksongs or sappy love songs by the Shirelles or Sam and Dave. I would be singing love songs, imagining I was singing to my future bride. My emotional life was richer and no one said a thing about some of the 'fallen' love songs I played. I guess they liked the food.

It was a long time between matchings in those days, and you never knew when the next one was coming. Wait times were measured in years. It is quite different now, when people know when the next Blessing ceremony will be held. Then, you kept your head down, did your mission and tried to not think about it too much. One day it would come, meantime there were people you didn't like to get along with, jobs you didn't want to do, indemnity to be paid.

There was a tradition at the seminary of making public announcements during mealtimes. You rang a little bell and waited for people to be quiet, then made your announcement. I imagined ringing the bell and saying "I've got some exciting news and some boring news. First, the exciting news: there's going to be a matching next Saturday. Now, the boring news: it's going to be a sock matching. If you've got single socks, bring them to the laundry room on Saturday at 11:00 and we'll see how many of them we can pair up." I didn't have the courage to actually do this. You had to be there to experience the surge of tingling anticipation that arose when even the possibility of a matching came up.

But the announcement did come one day. Dr. [Edwin] Ang said, in his inimitably slow manner, that there was to be a matching in New York in 10 days' time. There was an immediate hubbub. Several

seminarians were 'blessed singles', whose spouses had left them, the church or both. Others were single candidates.

The matching was to start the day after my regular therapy group, and I thought that was great. Do a good therapy session, get everything out, and be good and ready. We gathered in Pat's little room at the New Yorker, and most were in a serious, prayerful mood. Not me. I had things to work out. I was pounding away, change was falling out of my pocket, and I was feeling more than slightly unbalanced.

I drove my rusty red Subaru wagon into the city rather than take the van with everyone else. I parked far away as it was cheaper and I'd probably be there for a couple of days. It was getting harder and harder to focus on what I was doing, and walking long city blocks didn't help, with dope peddlers and hookers on every corner.

Finally, I got to the New Yorker, seething with brothers and sisters from all over the world. When the matching started, I was yo-yoing between anxiety, hope and despair. Who would I get matched to? I started thinking of one sister at the seminary that I didn't know that well, but we'd eaten ice cream once and had a good conversation. I was riding a roller coaster. One sister from the seminary came to where I was and said President Kim (David Kim) wanted me to come to the front. I told President Kim the name of the sister I was thinking about.

Up I went and next to Father there was another sister from the seminary. I knew her and we got along well, but she had a teenage daughter who was a handful at times. Father asked me "She got baby. Is baby ok?" I wasn't ready for this, all I could do was make a face like "I don't know". Father immediately started grabbing sisters who were standing up, taking one by the elbow, looking at her, and pushing her aside, then grabbing the next one.

I was cringing inside. Not only was I not prepared to be in front of Father -and how many times in your life was that going to happen? - but these sisters now looked to me like a motley collection of the physically and spiritually deformed. I was shuddering inwardly.

Now, at this point you probably want to judge me. Go ahead, I had to analyze what I was doing later and face it, or I wouldn't still be here. I was clearly not where you wanted to be during a matching.

One thing I've noticed from hearing many matching testimonies is that many people ride an emotional roller coaster, from elation to misery, and only when they reach a 'zero point' of letting go does Father match them.

I saw Father motion to one sister to stand up, and she turned to her friends and gave them a giddy grin like "Here I go! Wish me luck!" Father was facing the other direction, and without looking he gestured for her to sit down again.

Well, I was oscillating from +200 to -350, emotionally speaking. Finally, Father pulled out one sister and indicated we were matched. We bowed and walked to the balcony to talk it over.

We exchanged names and she pulled out a folded paper. "I hope you don't mind, I prepared some questions." "Go ahead." I don't remember them all. Present mission was one. Maybe spiritual children. "Have you been on MFT?" "Yes, I did 5 years." "Good, that shows stick-to-it-iveness. And, ah, are you, do you have problem with...I don't know how to ask this." "Am I gay? No." "Ok, thanks."

So there I am, in all my emotional fragility, and she says intensely "I've had two broken blessings, so if you're going to say no, please do it right now and get it over with so I can go back in and get matched again." 'Woah', I thought, 'I've been trumped. I had a broken blessing, she's had two.' Plus, this emotional intensity at a point when we barely knew each other was shocking, and made me want to....back away. Which made her want to demand more clarity, which made me want toback away.

I could see a cycle forming, and it wasn't a positive one.

"I don't know, you've got a temper."

"Well, we can agree to be nice to each other."

She was also the spitting image of my mother. She looked exactly like my mother's college picture. And my relation with my mother wasn't something I wanted to reproduce.

So, in short, I was an emotional wreck at a point where you do not want to be an emotional wreck, making a life changing decision. Not knowing what else to do, or afraid to admit where I was, I went along. We bowed to True Parents, even though my gut was sinking, and we went out into the mezzanine.

Where there was a great whoop, and photos being snapped. She had her own cheering section for her to get rematched, and more than one told me 'She's been through a lot, take care of her.' 'What about me?' I thought, but didn't say.

We went out to get something to eat. I felt awful. Standing on the corner of 35th and 8th, I just couldn't take another step. My guts, my heart and my feet felt like lead. "I don't think I can go through with this. I'm not ready." "What?!? After we bowed to True Parents?" "I know."

Back inside we went, and she found her Japanese leader, who got in my face and told me I had no faith and that's what he expected from the seminary/cemetery.— I thought, great, not only have I made a fool of myself, now I'm dragging the seminary down with me.

Then he told me to go and pray for an hour, then come back and give my answer. I agreed and stumbled off to find a place to pray. I went to Pat's therapy room, but there was a sister in there sobbing inconsolably in someone's arms, so I just shut the door and looked elsewhere. I found a spot and tried to pray, but it was like - have you ever blown up a balloon and just let it go instead of tying it off? Where it jets around in wild circles while the air blatts out of it? Well, that is what my emotions were like, and I just could not find a calm place.

So I went back to the meeting place and told her "You may hate me for the rest of your life, and I don't blame you if you do. I can't go through with this. I'm not ready. You should go back in."

So she went back in and I didn't. I'd already made a spectacle of myself, being congratulated by so many and then having them hear that I was now abandoner #3. I was deeply ashamed, I wanted to dig a hole and climb in it. I didn't want to look anyone in the face or have anyone look at me. But most of my classmates were from the same mission as this sister and knew her. There was an open line to the seminary from the New Yorker, relaying each new match as they came out of the ballroom. So news of our matching was already out there.

It was a long walk back to my car, and a longer drive back up to the seminary. What the hell had I just done? After waiting for years, I had utterly blown it. I had just stood in front of the messiah, my emotions out of control, and given a pledge I couldn't keep. And given CARP another reason to diss the seminary.

When I slunk into UTS, people greeted me with "Congratulations!!!" "Uncongratulations." was all I could say back. One brother asked me over the pool table "What happened?" and all I could say is "Hey, man, take a look at a fool."

I took a lot of long walks. There were a lot of mornings where I woke from a dream feeling relaxed and then my life came crashing down on me..."Did I really do that? Yes, I did....." Somehow I had to find a way to live this down. I wanted to disappear, but I couldn't. I felt like I should wear a sign around my neck in public, something like "absolute idiot overemotional sinner"

One thing: I was absolutely determined to be blessed and I had to figure out what went wrong. \Once I looked at it, it was pretty obvious. My emotions, that I'd been working on so diligently, were strong. That's not a bad thing in itself, but my emotions were stronger than my faith. My idea of preparation was to work on my inner feelings and maybe pray a little. Hence I was careening around the matching out of control. To navigate the matching and blessing process, your faith has to come out stronger, if even by a little. I had been putting my faith second to my feelings. So, an absolute lesson learned.

Nobody, and I mean nobody, could have told me I wasn't ready for that matching. I wanted it really badly, but that is not the same as being ready for it. The only way I could have learned this lesson was after the fact.

But at least now I knew what to do to get ready for the next one. Whenever it was going to be.....

As a side note, I now had to look at the sister that Father originally wanted to match me to, the one with the daughter. In class every day. At lunch, with her fiance. I tried to think of something to say. All I could think of was "I just want you to know, I'm jealous as hell and I wish you both well." She laughed, but it was still quite awkward. But a month or two later, when the surge of Heung JinNim channeling came around, her fiance got kind of overwhelmed. She asked me if I could take care of him for a day or two, and I agreed. We had what I called an 'old man' weekend, where we slept a lot, took it really easy and ate a lot. Got grounded. He was quite grateful, as was she, and all awkward feelings vanished. I don't know if it was her idea, or God's, or both, but it certainly worked.

And as another side note, years later I was wanting to make up for my guilt towards the sister I rejected, so I fundraised \$100 and got a money order, put it in an envelope and sent it to her and her husband. I don't remember what I wrote, but it was something like I know it's been hard, please use this for something you need. I signed it "Joseph Bleaux" (Joe Blow, aka Joe Schmo). A week or so later it came back to the South Carolina center where I was, with a note stating we don't need or want your help, we're fine thank you. As I hadn't included a return address, it's pretty clear they figured out it was from me. Only thing was, as I'd signed the money order "Joseph Bleaux" and put their names on it I now couldn't cash it. I may still have it somewhere.

You can always learn something. Next episode: the matching that worked.