

HOW TO BE A HAPPY HUSBAND OF A HAPPY FILIPINA WIFE



“The Importance of
Love, Respect, and Compatability
In an Exciting and Adventurous
Multicultural Marriage”

by **WILL IRWIN**
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Preface

As implied in the title, the focus of this book is on multicultural marriages, in particular marriage between a Western man and a Filipina lady.

Anyone who has been or is married knows marriage is a difficult relationship. What begins as an “In Love” relationship, is tested time and again as individual differences arise and financial, health, and other challenges present themselves.

Adding to a marriage the differences related to two different cultural backgrounds, a marriage can be at times exciting and adventurous, while at other times extremely difficult and testing of one’s patience and willingness to set aside one’s personal cultural habits and beliefs in favor of the spouse for the long term goal of happiness.

The author comes to this subject with a unique qualification to know what he is writing about. He has been a party to two multicultural marriages – first to a Korean national for 19 years, followed by his current wife, a Filipina from Cebu and Mindanao with whom he has been married for 20 years. He has 4 children and 10 grandchildren. All his children have married spouses of other cultures.

Each of his two marriages presented its own unique cultural challenges, as a Korean spouse is miles apart culturally from a Filipina wife – yet the common ground of difficulty, while at the time excitement and adventure, is that very multicultural difference.

Additionally, the author is actively involved in coaching and mentoring men and women who are building their own online e commerce shopping mall businesses on a part time basis by developing subscriber bases of leaders who are building consumer bases. In this role, he is frequently counseling couples who have multicultural, multiracial, or multireligion marriages, as well as one cultural, one race and one religion couples, on the “How to be Happy” and “How to Build a Business Together” in this hectic and pressured environment of the high tech 21st century.

FORWARD

Although many of the matters and conditions that create happiness and long term success in a marriage are the same in a one culture marriage as in a multicultural marriage, the uniqueness of a multicultural marriage presents certain difficult challenges in the path to a happy marriage – challenges which can be turned into strengths and excitement, thereby strengthening the marriage and leading to greater happiness, or if handled wrong, leading to a rapid descent to unhappiness and a divorce.

The most miserable people in the world are not single people. No, the most miserable are married people who realize their marriage was a mistake. This book is dedicated to helping you (i) not make a mistake in the first place by the wrong selection of your mate, and (ii) achieve and increase on a daily basis the happiness of being married to a happy Filipina.

This book is comprised of four parts.

Part One

This is a discussion of the definition of “Happiness” (what does being a Happy Husband and what does being a Happy Filipina mean; and what is a Westerner and what is a Filipina – i.e., what is their nature). What is the myth versus the reality of a Westerner and a Filipina?

Further, what is the perception of a Westerner in the eyes of a Filipina and what is the perception of a Filipina in the eyes of a Westerner? Part One provides us with knowledge of WHAT the other person considers happiness, which is necessary to advance to a search of HOW to then achieve that happiness.

Part Two

This section deals with the different stages of love – the “being in love” stage and the “mature love” stage. Knowledge of the different love stages assists with maintaining contentment, harmony and joy as your marriage moves through the different stages of love.

Part Three

This section is an in depth discussion of the unique issues, both upside and downside, of a multicultural marriage – in particular one between a Westerner and a Filipina. This section stresses the importance of being honest with oneself as to compatability – “fitness” so to speak, of each spouse to the other.

Part Four

This is the “How To Be Happy” section of the book – the meat of the book providing the recipe for being the Happy Husband of a Happy Filipina.



PART ONE

Chapter I: Definitions

What is Happiness?

Dictionaries define happiness as being in a condition of enjoyment, or characterized by well-being and contentment. Those are nice pretty words, but when trying to separate fact from fiction as to what is a state of enjoyment, well being and contentment, one must first learn what are those conditions.

A Westerner is programmed from his youth onward that true happiness generally comes from one or more of the following: (i) material possessions, (ii) high academic or professional achievement, (iii) a grand reputation, (iv) lots of pleasure, and (v) freedom and independence. Thus, for him these become the “key drivers” by which he measures his success.

A Filipina’s key drivers of happiness generally are one or more of the following: (i) material possessions, (ii) high academic or professional achievement, (iv) lots of pleasure, (v) recognition, and (vi) strong and harmonious family relations. Whereas Westerner’s pride themselves on their independence, a Filipina’s sense of self is derived from her family.

The Filipino family is at the core of her existence. To be alone without her family would be considered the ultimate curse.

It is only after years of “climbing the ladder” and “running the race” that one finally realizes that happiness is not a destination (such as an amount of possessions, titles, and positions) but rather is a state of being during the “journey” to the destination.

Once we finally get past the surface (usually after much self inflicted pain and suffering), we finally come to the realization that the true meaning of happiness is comfort, contentment and joy!

However, then the real question becomes not what is happiness, but rather “How do we achieve Happiness”, and more specifically in this book, how do we ACHIEVE happiness in a marriage between a Westerner and a Filipina?

Before getting into how to achieve happiness in a marriage, we need to inquire further as to what specifically provides a Western husband happiness (comfort, contentment and joy).

We will then look at what specifically provides a wife happiness. In preparing such a list, there is always the problem of dealing in generalities, which is unfair as each person is a unique individual with unique emotional needs, but as a starting point in dealing with how to achieve happiness in a marriage it is good to become aware of the “key drivers” of happiness for a husband and the “key drivers” of happiness for a wife.

Based on my many years of being a husband, first to a Korean lady and then secondly to a Filipina, combined with years of observation of both happy marriages and unhappy marriages, and years of counseling with married couples, I have summarized below what I have found to be these “key drivers” of happiness.

What is Husband Happiness?

- Financial security – lots of money in the bank
- Sex – lots of it
- Great health
- Great personal relationship with wife – she being his best friend
- Being fulfilled – which to a man is through his career
- Continuous respect and affirmations from wife

What is Wife Happiness?

- Financial security – lots of money in the bank PLUS not debt
- Communications – lots of it

- Great health
- Great personal relationship with husband - he being her best friend
- Fulfilled as a woman – a child and a harmonious, peaceful home
- Continuous confirmation of love from her husband
- Leadership by her husband

Comparing these two lists, it becomes obvious that both husbands and wives seek financial security, great health, and a great personal relationship where each is the best friend of the other. Further, it is clear that major differences exist as to the importance of in a marriage of (i) sex, (ii) communication, (iii) respect for the husband, (iv) continuous expression of love for the wife, and (v) significant differences as to what brings fulfillment as a husband and as a wife.

Further, with all of these drivers, and the challenges they present in working to find happiness in a marriage, it is never because there is too much of these conditions present (such as too much financial security, too much sex, or too much communication) – it is always because one of the marriage partners deems there is too little sex, communication, or money.

Still further complicating matters is that coming into a marriage are two unique individuals who are required to somehow cleave together into one, not competing with each other, but completing each other – taking their individual and unique strengths and “covering the backside” of the weaknesses of their spouse.

The crux of the matter therefore in HOW TO achieve happiness in a marriage comes down to how to serve one’s spouse so as to provide him/her attainment of each of the “key drivers” of happiness, join together into a relationship which creates a condition of comfort, contentment, and joy - while still maintaining one’s individual uniqueness as a human being. Whew – what a challenge this has been throughout history.

Now, add to this that in a multicultural marriage each party comes to the table (into the marriage) with a completely diverse data base of experiences as to what is morally right and wrong behavior, what is socially acceptable and unacceptable behavior, what are important and significant customs and mores, what is an appropriate conflict resolution

style, what is appropriate dress and tone of communication, and on and on – all the myriad of cultural differences which surface (most commonly in times of stress and conflict).

Further, each multicultural spouse has a certain perception of the other they bring into such a marriage.

PART TWO

Chapter III: What is Love?

I am addressing these comments to those who have recently married a Filipina, or plan to soon marry a Filipina. It is this group of people who will have a strong emotional relationship experience during their first 6 months in the Philippines, even perhaps for the first year or two. You will still be in the “Falling in Love” stage of your relationship.

The “Falling in Love” State of Love

This is a period, regardless of our age when we find a new love, that we are emotionally obsessed with each other. We go to sleep thinking of each other, wake up thinking about each other, and long to be with each other. We have that wonderful illusion that our mate is perfect. We think about why our prior marriage was lousy and how this one is going to be just full of marital bliss. Other couples may fight and argue, but not us as we truly love each other. We believe it will last forever. It is an awesome experience, this “In Love” phase of our relationship.

This stage of a relationship is not based on an act of the will or a conscious choice. It is based entirely on emotion. Nature wired us this way so we mate and reproduce without having to think about it so much.

In this phase, we tend to disengage our reasoning abilities, and we do things which, when looking backward, we cannot understand what we were thinking about at the time.

Well, frankly, at that time we tend not to think. We are operating on pure emotion, and we are on cloud 9 as to how much our mate is meeting our individual desires. Our happiness is all about how happy our mate makes us. This period is all inward focused.

However, eventually, usually within a year or two, this phase runs its course and little by little our individual desires, thoughts and behavior patterns begin to exert themselves.

We find, as before, we are really two individuals whose minds have not melted together, and the face of reality begins to separate us from our spouse or girlfriend.

So let's be very, very careful about the decisions we make during this period of time, as it relates to investments, businesses, housing purchases, children, and so forth.

The end of the "In Love" phase is the most critical phase of your relationship, as it is at this point one either withdraws, separates, divorces or sets off in search of another "In Love" experience with someone else.

It is at this point a conscious decision has to be made as to whether one wants to commit and move on to "True Love", the next phase of love.

The "True Love" Stage of Love

True Love is not about us, it is about our spouse. It requires effort and discipline. It is about serving our spouse, expending daily effort to benefit our spouse. It involves the exercise daily of "choice", a way of thinking that is outward thinking, that is based on "what can I do today to make my spouse happy" and "what can I do today to out serve my spouse".

It is not about being right, it is about being happy.

Success with this phase of love is what leads to "Real Love", which is where real marital bliss resides. Our most basic need is not to "Fall in Love", but to find "Real Love", a love that grows out of reason and an act of will – choices, not emotions or instincts. Real love is one that grows out of a "choice" not from a testosterone rush.

To achieve this level of genuine love requires a daily and weekly process, and only gets better and better with time. Such items as (i) understanding your spouse's "love language", (ii) realizing, and then communicating with your spouse, as to how much a man needs respect (and needs to earn such respect from his spouse) and recognizing how much she needs to know she is the most important person in your life, (iii) how to

handle pride and ego, (iv) how to handle decisions about money, and (v) one's "Vertical Alignment" of priorities – these all become of paramount importance.

PART THREE

Chapter IV: Issues of Conflict

What are the Issues – For a Same Culture Marriage

We covered in Chapter I the “key drivers of happiness” for the husband and the wife – the key needs of each, to derive happiness. Next, let’s look at the “key drivers of conflict” in marriage, firstly those that are present in all marriages, whether one culture or a multicultural marriage, followed by a discussion of the major areas of conflict in a marriage between a Westerner and a Filipina.

Once you get the issues of conflict on the table, then you can begin to address how to avoid them and what are the best approaches to conflict resolution. Sooner or later, conflict WILL occur. Undeniably, when there is conflict, there is stress and unhappiness. The question is not will it occur; the real question is how will your approach to conflict resolution – so as to quickly as possible get both you and your Filipina back on track to happiness.

Areas of Conflict Common to All Marriages

1. Leadership
2. Love languages
3. Children
4. Careers
5. Conflicting dreams or lack of dreams
6. Love and Respect
7. Communication
8. Sex

Now, let's look at each of these in more depth individually before we move on to a discussion of how to resolve the conflicts. Conflict resolution is a desirable skill to be learned and honed daily by every Expat who married a Filipina.

Leadership

When I look back on my marriages – firstly, my failed first marriage, and then secondly, my successful second marriage, this issues of leadership has been like night and day between the one that succeeded and the one that failed. When I counsel one culture marriage couples regarding conflict in their marriage, this one conflict area frequently arise as the number one area for concern.

The basic issue here is who is going to be the leader of the family – the husband, the wife, or both? There needs to be one “head” of the family. Any living organism which has two heads is called a monster, and a marriage where both spouses are trying assert “headship” results in a monster marriage.

Overall there must be one leader, although my experience confirms that each spouse can be the leader certain “subordinate” areas of a marriage where he or she has greater expertise. In such cases, the other spouse needs to submit to the “leading” spouse who has the expertise in that area.

However, what I am primarily writing about here is that after the input and opinion of each spouse is put on the table for discussion, and it is time for a decision – it is the man who MUST step forward and make the final decision. Too often I see men demanding to be the leader, but not exercising leadership. Leadership is not a title or rank or something you designate yourself to be – it is something given to you by the follower.

Remember, one of the key drivers of happiness for a Filipina is a husband who leads.

Final Comments

Remember, a happy marriage is something you work at every day. A true love is a mature love, and once the “in love” phase passes, the glue that will hold your marriage together is a better and better understanding day by day of how to make your spouse happy. When the spouse is happy, you will be happy. It is not about the spouse making the changes to make you happy – you cannot force lasting changes on anyone. You can only change yourself, and then sit back and wait for the person to change in response to your changes.

My best wishes to you and your Filipina. May you forever live the life of a Happy Husband married to a Happy Filipina.

About The Author

Will Irwin is a graduate of Purdue University (B.S) and University of California (Master in business). He is a certified public accountant and has held job positions as the chief financial officer of several companies, as well as the CEO and president of a NASDAQ publicly listed company.

For the past 32 years he has been an entrepreneur, starting and operating businesses in the USA, Fiji, Papua New Guinea and the Philippines. He has resided in both Hawaii and the Philippines for the past 20 years, in Honolulu and Maui, and in Butuan City, Davao and Cebu City.

The author's entrepreneurial start up and operating experience over the past years include (i) a chain of Arby's fast food restaurants, (ii) chain of retail clothing, shoes and gift stores in Hawaii, Alaska and California, (iii) retail furniture store in Arizona, (iv) manufacturing and export businesses in Fiji, China, Thailand, and the Philippines, (v) sawmill business in Papua New Guinea, (vi) logging business in the Philippines, (vii) wholesale beverage distribution business in Fiji, (viii) export business in the Philippines (mango juice, banana chips, shell craft jewelry, furniture, prawns), (ix) convenience grocery stores in Alaska, and (x) hotels and general mercantile stores in remote Eskimo villages in Alaska.

Will now splits his time between the Ko Olina resort in Honolulu and a house in Butuan City, with a soon to be built home on the Palos Verdes golf course in Davao City, and a beach home to be built on Calicoan Island.

His current business activities are focused on (i) a direct selling health/fitness and skin care business in the Philippines, (ii) an online E Commerce shopping mall business, and (iii) a Philippine based online business dedicated to providing business and personal assistance to Expatriates desiring to retire in the Philippines, which includes business and tax consulting services.

The author has been married to a Filipina (from the Visayas) for 20 years. He has 3 children and 10 grandchildren. As discussed in this book, the author writes and consults not from theory, but from experience, having not only vast experience in business, but also in the hardships and challenges of life, having overcome (i) lymphoma cancer, (ii) malaria, (iii) dengue fever, (iv) back surgery, (v) a prior marriage and divorce, and (vi) personal bankruptcy.

He is age 65 and full of energy, good health, and a passion to add value to the lives of others by helping people overcome the chains of “not enough money, not enough time, and not enough love” by mentoring them in the process of achieving their dreams of adventure, excitement, financial peace of mind and loving relationships in their life – focusing exclusively on people retiring in the Philippines.

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