

# **Family Matching**

**Handbook**

**Second Edition**

**FFWPU**



*Rev. and Mrs. Sun Myung Moon*



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for World Peace and Unification

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# Introduction

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This updated handbook provides a clear, practical, step-by-step guide to the matching process. It is not intended as a rulebook or absolute mandate. It does provide ideas, recommendations and experience-based insights for candidates and parents to develop a clear plan for the matching process, creating the foundation for a healthy, lasting relationship with a marriage partner.

The process and policies outlined in this handbook are based upon the international matching guidelines of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification. The information and resources come from the experiences of successful parent-supported matchings, and some of our most capable and experienced Matching Advisors. The teachings of Rev. and Mrs. Sun Myung Moon, our True Parents, are the foundation of this manual. We are confident that parents and candidates will find inspiration, encouragement and a wealth of wisdom about the matching process.

This handbook provides helpful suggestions for how matching candidates can prepare themselves, and how to know when to begin. It offers ideas and tools for the sometimes uncomfortable process of getting to know a prospective match. Doubts about the matching process, fears about how to make it work, how much to involve parents, taking a more active role in the process

— all these and more are addressed in these pages. We encourage parents to study it together with their children.

We are pioneers of a new tradition of matching and Blessing, inherited from our True Parents beginning in 2001. It is essential that candidates and their parents understand the heart of this process.

Our Heavenly Parent's original design is that children grow in the love of their parents, developing a strong sense of their identity, value and character, and learn to love in the context of their family. These are the foundations for healthy and lasting marriages. Seeking and finding an eternal partner should also be guided by the love and wisdom of supportive parents. The investment of parents is meant to invite God's presence more powerfully than the guidance of any distant authority, even True Parents. When Father matched the earliest Blessed Children in 1986, he told them that he was only doing this on behalf of their parents, and that eventually parents would grow into that responsibility and role. Now is that time.

The purpose for this parents' matching tradition is to bring joy to our Heavenly Parent by realizing the ideal of love, and to bring happiness to our children. Our challenge is to find that heart and motivation, and to develop a process that will allow God to be present and to guide it. This simple handbook, when read thoroughly and considered prayerfully, will help guide and inspire both parents and candidates.

This second edition is the result of the efforts of many gifted and inspired individuals. The primary writers

were Marjorie Buessing and Phillip Schanker, and Debby Gullery provided major editorial input. We appreciate the research and editorial support from Kyunga Orr, Maio Baiocco, Leighton and Crescentia DeGoede, and the helpful contributions of many others, too numerous to mention. Most of all we are grateful to True Parents, Rev. and Mrs. Sun Myung Moon, who invested their lives to establish the tradition of the Marriage Blessing and teach the value of God-centered families as the foundation for strong communities, healthy societies and a peaceful world.

—Family Federation for World Peace  
and Unification, USA, 2013





# Overview and Guidelines for the Matching Process

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Every parent and candidate should become familiar with the policies, qualifications and process outlined below. Details for each step are provided throughout this handbook.

## ***I. Important Policies***

- A. Parents have a central role in guiding and supporting the matching process. If candidates or parents need help, Matching Advisors, advocates or other mentors can provide additional support.
- B. Each candidate's input and priorities should be encouraged and respected.
- C. Families should only communicate with one candidate and one family at a time.
- D. The prospective couple has the final say in the matching decision.
- E. A candidate's situation and background should be honestly disclosed before concluding a match. There should be no secrets or hidden past.

## ***II. Recommended Qualifications for an Applicant to Become a Candidate***

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- A. Matching Age—18 minimum to begin; 20 or 21 is recommended. Parents should not initiate any matching process or begin communicating with other families until their child indicates he or she is ready.
- B. Divine Principle Education—candidates should have a good understanding of the Divine Principle and its application, as well as the importance of spiritual life. It is recommended that candidates be familiar with the contents of the *Exposition of the Divine Principle*, and agree with the principles of *The Family Pledge*.
- C. Completion of Application Process by Candidate—If candidates are not ready to complete the application process, they are not ready to begin the matching process.
- D. Completion of a Purity Interview—with a pastor trained for this or their qualified representative. There is a path to the Blessing for every candidate; that path also depends upon their situation.
- E. Completion of Level 1 and 2 Blessing Workshops

### ***III. Recommended Stages of the Matching Process***

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#### **A. Preparation**

- Parents' spiritual and educational preparation
- Candidate qualification and preparation
- Develop a Family Matching Plan
- Practical and financial preparation

#### **B. The Matching Process**

- Find candidates
- Choose one candidate and family to consider as a possible match
- Recommend a candidate to your child, once all parents are in agreement
- 21-Day Introduction Phase– for each candidate to discover who the other is and decide whether to begin to communicate with the matching in mind
- 25-Week Communication Phase– A clear period of communication for the couple to take ownership of the matching decision. Seven months minimum is recommended, with a maximum of one year if the process becomes stalled. Candidates are free to say yes or no at any time in cooperation with their parents. This is not dating. Prospective couples should work to develop an intentional friendship.
- Finalize the match or, if the process ends,

take time for reflection and evaluation, revise your matching plan as needed, and begin the process again.

### **C. Becoming a Couple**

- Plan a commitment ceremony (take time and develop this together)
- Hold a commitment ceremony, report it and announce the match
- Grow as a couple, with support from parents and the community
- Attend a Level 3 “Start Smart” Blessing Workshop as a couple
- Prepare for and participate in the Blessing Ceremony



# True Parents' Guidance

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## *Guidance from True Father*

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### **The Value of the Blessing**

“In the entire life of True Father, do you know what the most valuable thing I can imagine is? It is the Blessing. For all of you, the ultimate gift in human history is the Blessing. The value of the Blessing cannot be exchanged even for the world. The Blessing is one man and one woman, centering on God's will, becoming true father and true mother, producing true love.”

“Your ideal partner is the person who will be your companion on the road to the ideal world.”

“The perfection of a man and woman's love is the perfection of the universe. The day this love was broken, the universal order was destroyed and the vertical world was broken. Therefore, you must know how important marriage is from the providential viewpoint. Through true love, man and woman gradually get closer to the center of the eternal world. Man and woman centering on God will unite into one in the center. Man and woman centering on God, giving and receiving love, will become one and will give birth to sons and daughters. Sons and daughters who are born as the fruit of love,

through give and take action centering on parents who are one with God, will produce the four position foundation.”

“A man should know that the woman standing in front of him is God’s daughter and humankind’s daughter. If you can love her as a woman who is loved by humankind and love her as God’s beloved daughter, you are qualified to be her husband. But otherwise you are not.”

“It is the same for women. Do not think, ‘He is my man.’ Before saying that he is your man, think of him as God’s son and a man representing the masculinity of humankind. You will pass if you are a woman who can love him more than humankind does and more than God does.”

“You should have a creed that you get married not for your own sake but for the sake of your partner. It is wrong to expect to receive a talented person or a pretty person for your spouse. Once human beings understand the principle of living for the sake of others, they should embrace the idea that they will also get married for the sake of their partners. By our marriage standards, a husband should have the conviction that no matter what his partner is like, he will see her as the most beautiful and smartest person.”

“Unless you decide that you will love your partner like God, like humankind, and more than anyone else in the world, you cannot be restored to the heavenly kingdom. If you, as a man, do not know how to love a woman, you cannot love God and humankind.”

“In the mineral, plant and animal kingdoms masculinity and femininity – that is, the sexual organs – are reserved for the sake of one’s partner of love. Adam and Eve did not know this. Then why do the sexual organs exist? For love. Thus male and female exist in order to find love.”

“If all men and women admit that their sexual organ belongs to their spouse, we all would bow our heads and become humble when we receive our spouse’s love. Love comes to you only through your partner. There is no love other than love for the sake of others. We must remember that we can find absolute love wherever we absolutely live for the sake of others.”

“When a man and a woman become husband and wife, the important thing is how to achieve unchanging unity between them. When they sing of eternal happiness in such unchanging unity, this is eternal happiness. The standard of an ideal heart of love can only be established with an unchanging subject.”

“You should not defile your purity during your adolescence, the precious time when you can overcome and indemnify the bitter failure of Adam and Eve who lost their purity during their youth. In preserving that purity, which is pristine and of great value, you should have the mind and determination that even if you had to live alone for a thousand or ten thousand years, your love would never be misused.”

### **Parents’ Role in Matching Their Children**

“I want you to understand that you are the pioneers of the tradition of the future. You are making the mold for others to fit into. I want you to prepare your home and

*"You may be thinking, 'It is only Father who can do the Matching, not us;' however, that is not so. You are all able to do the Matching, because God, who is supporting me, is also supporting you, just the same."*

clan for every eventuality. You must be ready to learn and take over the tradition."

"You may be thinking, 'It is only Father who can do the Matching, not us;' however, that is not so. You are all able to do the Matching, because God, who is supporting me, is also supporting you, just the same."

"The promise between the Blessed Family and me is fulfilled when the Second Generation born to that family receives the Blessing."

During a speech at a recent celebration of the True Day of All Things, Father confronted a church leader who was taking an active role in recommending a spouse to a member of the Second Generation. Father admonished him saying, "How can you leaders take responsibility for the eternal lives of the Second Generation?" Father gave authority over and responsibility for matching Second Generation to their parents, not to the leaders, not to the church, and not to Second Generation."

"In the dispensational view, the vertical connection is eternal and more important than the horizontal, which is temporal. That's why parents must be a part of choosing the mate. This doesn't mean that parents should arbitrarily choose partners for their children, but rather the parents should be involved, representing heaven, in order to ensure the harmony of the vertical and horizontal relationship. This is the meaning of the Blessing."

## **True Father's Words on Matching**

“The ideal partner (ideal mate) in Father’s mind is completely different from the ideal partner we imagine. The ideal partner that True Father thinks of is a match of completely opposite types, such as spring and fall types, summer and winter types, etc. True Father says, ‘When a North-pole type person is matched with a South-pole type person, then out of such a couple a child will be born who has a huge capacity to embrace the entire globe.’”

“More than anything, one’s love partner should establish an ideal harmony and balance. You should think that the person who appears as your beloved spouse is a son or daughter of God, whom He truly loves, and that therefore He may come disguised as the ugliest person. If you love your husband or wife with those eyes, it has the same significance as loving God’s son and daughter.”

## **Candidate's Attitude and Heart in the Matching Process**

“The term ‘ideal spouse’ is very good, is it not? Until now, you have thought that an ideal spouse is like this or like that. No matter how good your partner is, you will not find his or her value unless you have within you the quality to do so. Do you understand what I am saying? Where is your capacity to discover whether or not your spouse is excellent? Without you yourself being the best, you cannot find the very essence of your spouse’s excellence.”

“It is through the merit of investing myself that my partner is moved and comes to appear as an object with



value. God created heaven and earth not just to see them as they are. He created in order to love, with heart as the basis. In the same way, the only thing that matters in re-creation is acting with the heart as the guide. Even though Adam and Eve are small, in the world they are not seen as small but big.”

“Until now, wives have put themselves at the center, and husbands have put themselves at the center, with both wanting to be served. This has been destroying relationships. Since the basis of love does not come from me, but from my spouse, if I am to possess that love, I must sacrifice myself for that love. Love requires patience and absolutely demands sacrifice.”

“Men naturally pursue women, but for what purpose – to receive love or to give love? That is the most important question. It is a serious problem that American people have not understood how universal law works. You should never think, ‘I’m so glad I’m getting married because now my life will be easier. I will have someone to... serve me.’ But all of a sudden, that is not what happens and you start to complain, ‘Hey, what’s happening here?’ Your first concept was wrong; you are not supposed to get married in order to make your life easier. You should think that your life will get tougher, but you should be willing to do it in order to give love.”

“Love cannot be realized by oneself. Where does love come from? Love does not come from me but from my spouse. Since love comes from my spouse, I must bow my head and serve her. This is where the heavenly principle of living for the sake of others originates. When something highly noble comes to me, I must honor and serve it in order to receive it. We must live

the philosophy of living for the sake of others.”

“Let’s say there is a good-looking person among the blessing candidates. He or she might look splendid on the outside. But what is important is whether or not that person has the value to exist in the future in front of the will of God. That is the primary question for the partner whom that person meets.”

*Where does love come from? Love does not come from me but from my spouse. Since love comes from my spouse, I must bow my head and serve her. This is where the heavenly principle of living for the sake of others originates.*

“Therefore, our marriages are for the sake of our descendants. Thus, even though candidates might appear unsuitable in some way, the problem is how to match people so that their children inherit only their parent’s good points.”



## *Guidance from True Mother*

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“The first responsibility is for one to become the master of True Love, truly free and thanking God for the freedom of love and knowing how to cultivate and control oneself. This responsibility for a love relationship should not be taken merely because of law or social convention. Instead, a person should establish responsibility through his own self-control and self-determination within the life-committing vertical relationship with God.

“Second is one’s responsibility toward the object of love. By nature, people do not want their spouse’s love to be shared with others. Horizontal conjugal love, which differs from the vertical love between parents and children, loses its potential for perfection the moment it is divided. This is because the Principle of Creation requires husband and wife to become one in absolute love. Each spouse has the responsibility given by love to live absolutely for the sake of the other.

“The third responsibility of love is toward children. The love of parents is the basis for children’s pride and happiness. They would wish to be born through the total and harmonious unity of their parents in True Love, and they would wish to be raised in that kind of love. The most precious responsibility of parents is not only to rear their children externally,

*The Principle of Creation requires husband and wife to become one in absolute love. Each spouse has the responsibility given by love to live absolutely for the sake of the other.*

but also to offer them life elements of True Love that can perfect their spirituality. This is why the family is so valuable. The daily experience of the heart of true children, true brothers and sisters, true spouses, and true parents cannot be acquired in any place other than the true family.”

*“True Parents and True Family”*

*September 21, 1996*

“Where does true love start? It starts from true parents. This is the Gospel of Gospels. No matter how many good words exist in this world, and no matter how wonderful the term ‘husband and wife’ is, there is nothing better than the words ‘true parents.’ After all, if true parents do not emerge in the fallen world, true husband and wife cannot come about.

“When we bear the fruit of true love and enter the eternal spirit world as a loving couple, we will be embraced by God’s eternal love. We then truly become one with God.

“Even though the physical body grows old, as long as we live as husband and wife centering on true love, our spiritual body will actually become younger! This means that the longer we live, the more handsome or beautiful our spiritual body becomes.

“Why then do we get married? Very simply, we marry in order to resemble God. God exists as a being of dual characteristics. In God, the dual characteristics are completely harmonized as One. When God’s dual characteristics manifest in our world, they do so as man and woman.. Accordingly, at the proper time, a man and a woman are like a seed. They unite to become one.



Thus, husband and wife return to God. Together, we are a reflection of our Heavenly Parent's original nature.

"We need marriage because it is the true way to develop our love. In marriage, we ripen as a seed of God. Our entire life should be centered on true love. We should be born in true love; we should grow in true love; we should live centered on true love, and we should return to true love when we die.

"The way of true love is life for the sake of others. This is the purpose of a holy marriage. If we take any other path, we are taking the wrong direction for eternal life."

*"Blessed Marriage and Eternal Life"*  
*Mother's Speaking Tour- April 1-16, 1998*



## **The Significance of the Marriage Blessing**

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The tradition of the Marriage Blessing and Blessed Families developed from the life and teaching of Rev. and Mrs. Sun Myung Moon. According to the Divine Principle, our Heavenly Parent's essence is love, and the motive for Creation is to give that love to God's children, and to experience joy as we love one another and return love to our Heavenly Parent who gave us life. The family is the first institution created by God, and is the channel of God's love into the human experience. Healthy and harmonious families raise children of goodness, who become men and women of peace.

The Scriptures convey that our original ancestors were created not as Protestant or Catholic, not as Muslim, Hindu or Jew, but as husband and wife. The world's great faiths unanimously affirm the importance of marriage and family. God's image, Genesis 1:27 teaches, is male and female. The divine union of man and woman through a Blessed marriage reflects our Heavenly Parent's image more fully, and invites God's presence more powerfully, than any man or woman alone. The family is sacred, and the Blessing recreates God's original love, life and lineage.

Historically, some form of nuclear family lies at the heart of every great civilization. Sociological studies demonstrate that the healthiest way for children to be raised is by the parents who gave them birth, in a committed and lasting relationship. The current crisis of family breakdown is damaging to children, and detrimental to society as a whole.

Religions in general agree that the suffering of humanity stems from spiritual ignorance, alienation, or sin; in other words, separation from God and ignorance of who we truly are. But Rev. Moon's special insight is that the confusion and breakdown of love in the family is the root of the problem.

That breakdown also has its roots in our first ancestors. The Genesis story, in fact, tells of history's first dysfunctional family: hiding from God, blaming and mistrusting each other, and creating a family in which a jealous and angry elder brother killed his own younger sibling. This family, the scriptures teach, is the root of the entire human family. Whether one considers Adam and Eve as historical individuals or archetypes, the story of the Garden of Eden is clearly reflected in the human experience. Love is the source of humanity's greatest hope, happiness and ideals, yet its immature and selfish abuse has been the cause of our greatest unhappiness and pain. The vast array of social, economic and political problems that have plagued humanity can be traced to the moral corruption and contradiction within our human nature, which is likewise rooted in the breakdown of the family.

The Marriage Blessing established by Rev. and Mrs. Moon is therefore much more than a wedding ceremony. It is an instrument of salvation and healing, a framework to resolve the contradiction in our nature inherited from the fall, and to reestablish the foundation for God's original love, life and lineage. The ultimate purpose of all religions is the restoration of true men and women, and the recreation of our Heavenly Parent's ideal for the family.

The Kingdom of God that Jesus taught us to pray for "on earth as it is in Heaven" begins with rebuilding the family as it was intended in the Garden of Eden. That is the purpose of the Marriage Blessing.

When Jesus called Rev. Moon in 1935 at the age of 15, charging him with the mission of carrying the Lord's earthly work to completion, the rebuilding of the family and the Blessing of marriage was at the heart of that call. This is the essence of their mission as "True Parents": sanctifying families, creating a new lineage and tradition where God's love and Blessing is the center. Beginning from Rev. and Mrs. Moon's own Blessed marriage in 1960, this Blessing tradition has spread to millions of families and homes throughout the world. Transcending their followers, it has become an interreligious affirmation of the universal importance of marriage and family, more fundamental even than our faith traditions.

*The Marriage Blessing established by Rev. and Mrs. Moon is therefore much more than a wedding ceremony. It is an instrument of salvation and healing a framework to resolve the contradiction in our nature inherited from the fall*

Just as the Heavenly Parent's love and guidance was meant to be the center of the first couple's relationship, parents' support and guidance is the foundation for a healthy relationship-building, courtship, engagement and marriage process for their children. Rev. Moon, in his capacity as a "True Father," took this role of recommending marriage partners for the first members of the Unification faith. He has made clear, however, that God's original ideal is that young adults find their ideal spouse with the loving support and guidance of their own parents.

This handbook is designed for all children of Unificationists who are working with the support of their parents to search for and find their eternal spouse. It will help families, and those supporting them, to inherit the beautiful tradition of matching and the Blessing of Marriage. It will give them valuable ideas for developing a healthy approach, and provide prospective couples with the confidence to take ownership of their final decision and make a lasting commitment.

# Preparing for the Matching Process

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## ***FOR PARENTS***

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### **Spiritual Preparation**

#### *Seeking God's Heart and Perspective*

We are seeking to establish a tradition of God-centered love, one that is different from the current practice of self-centered love and sexual freedom. At the same time, our matching tradition is not to gain position, advantage, status, or to serve narrow interests. It is to bring joy to our Heavenly Parent, and create the foundation for God's guidance and involvement in the matching process and in the Blessed marriage.

#### *True Parents' Guidance*

True Father and Mother have spoken deeply about their own motive and methods in matching, as well as their confidence that God will guide parents in the matching process as powerfully as True Parents have been guided. They have also explained what heart, motive and approach parents should take toward the matching of their children. Parents can benefit by reading and reflecting upon their guidance.

### *Setting Spiritual Conditions*

Husbands and wives can and should establish good conditions to connect with our Heavenly Parent, each other, and the heart of their child whom they will seek to match. It is beautiful to pray together for the future Blessing and happiness of your children. It is crucial to pray together if a child is distant or going through difficulties.

In addition to prayer or other traditional conditions of devotion, we encourage creative conditions that address the real situation of your family relationships. You might determine to set aside time with your spouse or child each week, or find a small way to serve them every day. You may want to call your child daily, communicate words of love and encouragement, or give them a hug. Spiritual conditions together with practical conditions of sincerity and service are a powerful combination.

### *Unity is the Most Important Condition*

Remember, wherever two or more are united in God's name, our Heavenly Parent will be present and active. One important goal of any conditions you set individually or as a family is to get on the same page. For example, instead of telling your child what conditions

*Unity through good communication is the most important condition we can make for God to work.*

you are directing them to set, ask them what they feel would be most important to do, and offer suggestions if they want. Unity through good communication is the most important condition we can make for God to work.



## **Educational Preparation**

In the resources section of this handbook you will find helpful, research-based materials on understanding your child, building communication, or supporting various stages of the process outlined here. Helpful ways to prepare your heart and understanding include:

- Read and study this handbook thoroughly.
- Read Father's words in *Blessing and Ideal Family* or other sources
- Attend Blessing Workshops
- Participate in Parents Matching Convocations—you should attend before your child reaches matching age; we recommend by 16.
- Work with an available Matching Advisor or someone from your local pastoral team when you are ready to begin the matching process.
- Talk to parents who have successfully matched their child.

Make sure that you understand the basic matching process, and the most important do's and don'ts recommended, before you begin.

## **Establish Communication**

### *Husband and Wife*

- Begin early by setting a loving and respectful example in your husband-wife relationship that your children will want to emulate in their marriages.

- Discuss the process with your spouse. Even if one parent takes a more active role, it is important that you agree with one another on how to approach it before you begin.
- Consider your child's situation and readiness honestly. Has your child expressed the desire to go forward? Do you know what is important to them?
- Clarify your goals and priorities. What is most important to each of you in a prospective match? Consider issues such as character, faith, purity, race and nationality. You can discuss as parents when you think the best time to begin may be, but do not begin without your child's agreement and participation.
- When one parent is not present or unable to participate, the active parent can identify an advocate for support, or consult a Matching Advisor.

### *Parents and Their Child*

- Begin early to meet regularly and spend time with your child, so that when it comes time for the matching you have built a real relationship of trust and communication.
- Parents should respect their candidate's input throughout the process and give them ownership of the final matching decision.
- Parents should understand their child's goals, priorities and expectations, and be aware of their maturity and readiness. If a child is ready to give their trust, parents can guide the process. If a

child doesn't fully trust his/her parents' role, or isn't ready to begin, parents should not push or force.

- Parents need to clearly understand their child's level of purity and experience before beginning the matching process.
- Be sensitive in understanding your child's desired degree of involvement. He/she may want you to identify candidates, speak with their parents and make your recommendation, or may want to be more involved in the search process themselves. If they have a suggestion of their own, be sure to consider it seriously.
- If communication between parent and child is strained or difficult, you can seek assistance through a mediator, counselor or Matching Advisor. Listening and communicating are skills that can be learned. The more your child trusts you and feels you understand them, the more deeply they will receive your support and recommendations.

## ***FOR CANDIDATES***

### **How do I know I am ready?**

The most important preparation is internal: faith, motivation, maturity and capacity to love. The matching should be the first entry to the conjugal realm of heart, where love first becomes exclusive, and grows to be deeply trusting. You should enter this realm with a

sense of your own identity and value, which is meant to develop in the love of parents, and the capacity to love and relate well with others, learned in relationship with siblings and friends. Faith in God and True Parents is of course important, but each candidate may express this in unique and different ways. Some critical questions to ask yourself:

- What is my interest and intention to be matched? Am I focused simply on finding someone to love me, or someone I can truly love and make happy?
- How deeply do I understand the unique meaning and value of the Blessing? Is it just finding someone to love and committing to be together forever, or is there more to it?
- How comfortable am I communicating with and caring for others?
- Who am I? What are my own goals and plans for the future? Am I looking for someone to “complete me?” What if my spouse’s plans are different from my own?
- What do I expect from my spouse? What do I have to offer?

It may not ever be possible to feel truly ready. However, there are some things we suggest you reflect upon:

- a sense of your own identity and self-worth
- your own social skills
- self-control and the maturity to put others before

yourself when needed

- a career or study plan
- a fundamental faith in God and the ideal of the Blessing

To help assure and support these, the following objective qualifications have been established:

### *Age*

We recommend entering the matching process no earlier than age 18, but 20-21 is much better. For some, even that may be early. True Mother has raised the minimum age for candidates for the Cheon Il Guk Matching to 21, noting that maturity and ownership of one's faith is crucial before making such an important decision. Time and maturity are helpful, and it is never a good idea to match our children young simply to prevent them from temptations. It is, of course, important for parents to maintain good communication with their child as they pass through the dangerous teen years and the challenging environment of college. We do not encourage that you rush. If a candidate is still hesitant or lacks interest by the age of 24 or 25, it is important to discuss their reasons.

### *Divine Principle Education*

Candidates for the matching should have a good understanding of the Divine Principle and its application, as well as the importance of spiritual life. Currently, some ways to accomplish this education are:

- Watch the entire DP on DVD/video, and discuss it with a parent, pastor or small group.

- Read the *Exposition of the Divine Principle* and demonstrate comprehension with a parent or pastor.
- Work with your pastor and ministry team to organize a workshop or study group that covers and discusses the entire Principle.
- Participate in a complete *Original Substance of the Divine Principle* workshop.
- Participation in an experiential program that includes a complete study of the Divine Principle can also accomplish this.

To organize one of these programs, or for additional ideas, contact your local pastor or ministry team.

### *Blessing Education*

The international standard is completion of a Blessing Workshop within two years prior to the Blessing. In the USA, three levels of Blessing education have been developed:

*Level 1: Discovering My True Self*—for those 16 and older, the program focuses on personal growth, becoming a marriageable person, and the ideals of the Marriage Blessing.

*Level 2: Becoming an Ideal Partner*—for those preparing to enter the matching process.

*Level 3: Start Smart: Growing as a Couple*  
—for engaged couples.

Completion of Level 1 is recommended, and Level 2 is required to enter the matching process. Level 3 is required for all matched couples before the Blessing.

### *Completing a Purity Interview*

Set up an appointment for your purity interview with a pastor trained for this or their qualified representative. This interview is designed to help you leave your past completely behind you, receive the forgiveness and grace of God and True Parents and enter the Blessing with a renewed and pure heart. Your Blessing is a serious commitment and a new beginning, and should have no secrets. A mutually trusting relationship is a solid foundation for the Blessing. The content of your confession will remain confidential with your interviewer. Only the 3rd page of signatures will be included in your application, and this paper will be destroyed once you are Blessed. Full disclosure of past problems is helpful for your personal renewal and to assure the best possible condition for a good marriage. Answer the questions honestly and in detail.

### *Completing the Application Process*

The application for matching and Blessing is completed entirely online, and can be found at [www.familyfed.org/bfd](http://www.familyfed.org/bfd). It consists of three steps:

Step 1: All applicants should complete the online application to qualify as a candidate before beginning the matching process.

Step 2: After concluding a match, candidates need to upload their matching report and couple photo, and submit all online application information to the National Blessed Family Department.

Step 3: At the time of the Blessing, as long as all information has been previously submitted,

candidates simply need to register for the event, in addition to completing a 7-day fast and submitting their Blessing fee.

### *Photographs*

Upload at least three high-quality digital photos (candidate head and shoulders, candidate full-length, and a family photo). Parents and Matching Advisors will be prayerfully considering potential matches while looking at candidate photos. It is important to put your best foot forward by preparing photos that convey your personality, character and quality.

### *Candidate Profile*

A candidate profile conveys information about the goals, dreams, values, interests and character of a candidate. It is part of the online Blessing application and may also be filled out on “Matchbook.” (see Appendix 3) It can be helpful for other parents seeking to understand more about you as a person. This profile should be completed by the candidate, not by parents on behalf of the candidate.

All these steps will assist in the thoughtful preparation of candidates and their parents, and increase the assurance of their readiness to begin the matching process. The further along a candidate is in the application process, the more other parents can be sure that they are serious, and prepared.

## **Spiritual Preparation**

A healthy spiritual life is the best foundation for a successful matching process. Here are some ideas for developing your spiritual life:



**Inspire** your spirit and deepen your relationship with God, by celebrating at Worship Service each Sunday. In addition to prayer and traditional conditions of devotion, we encourage creative conditions that address your real situation and family relationships.

*In addition to prayer and traditional conditions of devotion, we encourage creative conditions that address your real situation and family relationships.*

**Empower** your life and relationships by making a point to always learn something new. Start by deepening your understanding of the Divine Principle as your foundation, to develop into the person our Heavenly Parent intended you to be. Building upon this, create a lifestyle that encourages personal maturity, healthy relationships, and fosters spiritual growth.

**Connect** to your family and community. Communicating with your parents and family is vital during this time. Your local Youth or Young Adult Ministry is a great place to connect and develop your spiritual life.

**Contribute** your talents and passions. By tithing and sharing your gifts as a volunteer, you give God the chance to work through you to touch the lives of others. You can mentor young people, support youth or young adult ministry, or serve the church, community or a cause that you believe in.

**Share** the teachings of the Unification faith and the value of the Blessing, and practice making them a part of your daily life.

## **Character Preparation**

As mentioned, it is important to enter the matching process with basic maturity and a sense of self-identity. Working on personal growth and character development is a smart way to prepare for a relationship. Living a spiritually and physically healthy lifestyle is an important way of taking personal responsibility.

## **Communication and Unity with Parents and Siblings**

For God to guide your parents and bless your own inspiration or suggestions, your unity and communication with your parents is important. Take the time to meet with them regularly, and build a relationship of trust and communication. You should convey your own priorities and preferences, based upon your trust in God, True Parents and your own parents. If you are calculating or controlling, or hiding a secret desire or situation, this process will fail. It is important that your relationship with your parents is honest and open. You need to share your level of purity and relationship experience with your parents before the matching process can begin.

Developing good relationships with siblings is good practice for creating harmony with your spouse. It is also important to decide whether your brothers and sisters will be involved in your matching process or not. Siblings can be a helpful part of your matching team.

If for any reason your parents are not present, unable to participate, or the trust relationship is broken, talk with an elder, mentor, or someone you trust. An advocate or Matching Advisor can help foster unity between

you and your parents, or stand in an advisory position to support you, working with your parents as much as possible.

## **Develop a Personal Presentation**

As a deeper level of information, you can prepare a **brief autobiography, photo montage, or other creative expression of yourself and your family**, to share with those parents who are seriously considering you as a candidate. This will help them to understand who you are.

## ***Practical and Financial Preparation***

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A beautiful way to prepare your child's heart while also preparing for the costs of matching and Blessing is to encourage them to set up their own personal Blessing Fund when they are young—to “save for my future spouse.”

Consider and prepare for Blessing expenses well in advance.

## **Blessing Fee**

*Preparing the Blessing fee is an important expression of preparing internally for the matching and Blessing process.* It is an offering to be made by each candidate, as a sincere and substantial condition to receive the Blessing, and all of its historical value for their family and lineage. This condition was established by our True Parents, on whose authority and foundation the Blessing is given. The amount has been set internationally for each nation or region of the world. Spiritually, these funds be-

long to True Parents. Traditionally, a small portion of the fee is used to cover the costs of the actual Blessing events, and the remainder is used only for the education and support of Blessed Families and Blessed Children. Contact your pastor for the current amount and additional information.

The Blessing Fee must be fully prepared before participating in the Blessing.

### **Other Expenses to Consider**

Candidates should consider and prepare for the costs of travel, as well as expenses for formal Blessing attire, Blessing rings, and other accessories. If you are considering an international match, be prepared to travel in order to meet personally and develop your relationship.

Taken together, these expenses add up to a large amount, but are still far less than the cost of the average wedding.

It is helpful to have a career path or gainful employment, and a personal financial security before considering Blessed Family life.

### **Develop a Family Matching Plan**

The most important thing you can do to prepare for the matching process is to make a Family Matching Plan. Use the Worksheet in Appendix 1 for this.

### **Clarify Roles and Relationships**

The candidate and parents should discuss and clarify

their relative roles and level of input in the matching process. The approach and roles will reflect the candidate's faith perspective, relationship with parents, and their family dynamic. For example:

- Some candidates prefer to trust and receive their parents' recommendation faithfully.
- Some candidates want to discuss and agree with a candidate suggestion before their parents contact the other family. Other candidates do not want to be involved at this point.
- Some candidates have suggestions to offer for their parents' consideration.
- Some candidates hope for their parents' approval for a particular person.

While children should respect their parents' vertical role, parents should also fully receive their candidate's inspiration and input, prioritize it and consider it carefully.

Parents and children need to work together with humility and wisdom, respecting each other's role.

*The most important thing you can do to prepare for the matching process is to make a Family Matching Plan.*

Each candidate needs to be clear about exactly how much they want to be involved at each stage of the process. Parents should encourage and respect their child's input, but not involve them where they don't want or need to be involved. By whatever approach a matching recommendation is agreed upon, the

step-by-step process of a 7-month communication period and the final decision of the candidates themselves should always be followed.

### **Agree Upon Preferences, Priorities and Strategies**

Consider the candidate's preferences and priorities: age range, race, culture and nationality, language, faith, purity and level of experience, future plans, openness to special situations, etc.

Because each child is different, candidate plans may look very different even within the same family. Communication and unity of heart is key, as is maintaining a clear vertical role for the parents.

When considering character or nationality, matching opposites can be healthy. However, when it comes to purity, it is best to match candidates with similar backgrounds and degrees of relationship experience. The more differences there are between two people's experience, the more potential for pain, hurt or mistrust there is. However, if two candidates and their families do make such a match, there must be full disclosure between the families and the couple themselves. This is true regardless of what has been forgiven or absolved by True Parents' grace. There should be no secrets, hidden guilt or fears.

### **Consider Family Involvement**

Do you want to involve siblings in the matching process or not, or make a family committee? Once you decide, keep the process confidential among only those you have agreed to involve.

## Decide Your Approach to Networking and Methods of Outreach

An important part of your plan is deciding how you would like to convey your candidate and search for possible matches. Some possibilities are:

- **Parents Matching Convocation (PMC)**– where parents meet and network to learn about other candidates and consider potential matches. These are held several times each year in the USA, twice a year in Europe, and regularly in other nations as well. Candidates can submit their profiles to international PMCs even if they and their parents are not able to attend in person. For details, see the International Section.
- **Websites**– [www.bcmatching.org](http://www.bcmatching.org) is for Blessed Children particularly interested in international matching; [www.blessedfamilies.org](http://www.blessedfamilies.org)'s "Matchbook" is our USA matching tool for Blessed Children; [www.cheon-il-guk.org/matching.htm](http://www.cheon-il-guk.org/matching.htm) is for candidates who joined as children, with their parents.
- **Matching Advisors**– trained supporters who can encourage and guide families through the process, assist in searching for matching candidates, support candidate communication and help if things become complicated or unclear.
- **Advocates**– someone who knows a particular candidate and family, and is able to represent and network for them, answer questions, or look for possible candidates.

- **Additional family or young adult networking events**, such as workshops, church and community events, social activities, team competitions, outdoor adventures and retreats.

## **Develop a Set of Important Questions**

Consider the questions you'll want to ask a potential candidate's parents regarding faith, expectations for the Blessing, degree of purity, future plans, etc., based upon the preferences and priorities you've developed. Be sensitive and respectful when asking delicate questions, but full disclosure between families is a must. Be prepared to honestly convey your own candidate's real situation, and to get answers to any questions that are important to you. You may also wish to prepare questions to interview the other candidate as well. See Appendix 2 for some helpful questions you may want to use.

## **Questions for Discussion**

### **Candidates**

1. What are one practical and one spiritual condition that you can make to prepare yourself for the matching process?
2. *"Unity through good communication is the most important condition we can make for God to work."*  
What does this statement mean to you? What are some things you can do to improve the communication between you and your parents so that you are on the same page during your matching process?



3. How involved in your matching process do you think you want to be? Have you been able to express that to your parents? Why or why not?
4. Write down your personal motivation for wanting to be matched and Blessed according to the Unificationist tradition.

## Parents

1. What are one practical and one spiritual condition you can make to help you prepare to match your child?
2. *“Unity through good communication is the most important condition we can make for God to work”*  
What does this statement mean to you? What are some things you can do to improve the communication between you and your child in an effort to prepare to match them?
3. What is most important to each of you respectively, when considering a prospective match for your child?
4. As a parent, what would you need in order to feel ready to begin your child’s matching process?



# The Matching Process

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Once you are a qualified candidate, you can begin the process of looking for a potential partner with the help of your family and support team.

## ***STEP ONE:***

### ***Finding Potential Matching Candidates***

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There are a variety of ways to approach the matching process, based upon each family's faith and relationships, and the mindset and maturity of their candidate. Some candidates may feel comfortable having their parents find and recommend their spouse. Other candidates will want to know whom their parents are considering before any outreach is made, or may have suggestions themselves. Some candidates may want to be matched to a specific person, and will seek their parents' approval. All of these can be a basis for a good match, but three things are extremely important:

- Parents' guidance and approval should be the center of the process. The essence of the Blessing tradition is reversing the self-centered love that has undermined relationships, families, and society. Parents' approval provides that important vertical process. If parents are not present or unable to take this role, Matching Advisors or other adult

advocates can provide this support for candidates.

- Parents should respect their child's attitude, faith and preferences. Although the matching is meant to be parent-centered, it does not mean that you should dictate to or force your child.

*"In the dispensational view, the vertical connection is eternal and therefore more important than the horizontal, which is temporal. That is why parents must be a part of the choosing of the mate. This doesn't mean that parents should arbitrarily choose partners for their children, but rather the parents should intervene, representing heaven, in order to ensure the harmony of the vertical and horizontal relationship. This is the meaning of the Blessing."*

—True Father

- Whether candidates completely trust their parents' choice or want more involvement in the process, they must take ownership over the final decision. Once parents consider, agree upon and recommend a match, candidates must be given the time and opportunity to embrace it, and must have the freedom to say no. We recommend a minimum of seven months for the couple to develop their relationship and reach a decision, with a maximum of one year if the process has stalled.

## ***Sources for Potential Matches***

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### **Candidate's Suggestion**

Sometimes a candidate has met someone that they are interested in, while on a mission or participating in an activity. During the planning stage they should offer that name to their parents. Their parents can then consider that person as a possible match. It is far better for a candidate to offer their suggestions to parents during the planning process than to pursue a particular relationship personally and privately. Their parents, being unaware of the secretive relationship, may introduce someone else to them. This will create emotional confusion and hurt, with a candidate thinking of one person while they are in the middle of a matching process with another. This will now affect the hearts of another innocent and unsuspecting candidate and family.

### **Parent's Suggestion**

Parents can find candidates themselves, using the Parents Matching Convocation, International Matching Website or BFA's "Matchbook" site, or through personal networking. Parents should make recommendations based upon their family matching plan, with the candidate's agreement. Parents who joined with children can use [www.cheon-il-guk.org/matching.htm](http://www.cheon-il-guk.org/matching.htm) to find candidates for their sons and daughters.

### **Suggestions from Others**

A candidate's matching plan may include siblings, friends, advocates or certified Matching Advisors as part of their matching team. These supporters may

make a suggestion, but only parents have the authority to recommend or approve a match, and the candidates themselves should have all the time they need to own the final decision.

### **When a Candidate Seeks Parental Approval**

When a young adult asks for parents' approval and blessing for a particular person, what should parents do?

- Parents should recognize that their child's impulse is not automatically "fallen" or wrong. Our First Generation walked a path of restoration that included cutting off all personal attachments or attractions. However, it is important to remember that our children are on an original path, and their ideals and aspirations should be considered.
- Young adults should realize that an impulse or attraction is not necessarily true love. Personal maturity should precede romantic attractions. The key to inheriting the Blessing tradition is God-centered, not self-centered love. The more they pursue such an impulse privately, the more it will undermine our Heavenly Parent's desire to bless it.
- Candidates should offer up their desire or intention to their parents. Parents should take their child's priorities very seriously. Candidates should work together with their parents to place the relationship within a vertical framework. Pray and consider together carefully. If candidates pursue a relationship defiantly and romantically, it will be

difficult for parents to embrace it. If parents try to force or control their child, it will also not work. When parents and children come together centered on God, everything becomes clear.

- If parent and child cannot reconcile their different perspectives or agree upon a process, you can seek the guidance and support of a Matching Advisor, Blessed Family Department counselor or pastor to mediate and assist in establishing a clear plan and process.

## ***STEP TWO: Finding and Recommending a Specific Candidate***

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### **Do Your Homework**

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1. Consider making spiritual conditions.
2. Gather information about the candidate from advocates or others who know them. You may choose to ask their local church leader or youth minister confidentially about the candidate's personality and church involvement. If your child's siblings or friends are part of the matching team, they will have their own avenues of information to learn about a prospective match. Your child may be interested in someone active in the church, or a social person, serious person, etc. Consider your child's criteria and preferences in addition to your own priorities.
3. Confirm whether or not the candidate you are considering is ready to be matched. An important

indicator is whether they have completed the application process themselves and developed their Family Matching Plan. If the candidate hasn't been so involved, you may wish to move on.

**NOTE:** Officially, someone who has not completed the application and interview process is identified as an “applicant,” while one who has completed this process is a “candidate.”

4. Contact the other parents directly or through someone to learn the candidate's situation more fully. To avoid catching them unprepared or creating an uncomfortable situation, it may be best to contact them first by e-mail. Some important questions to consider in this first encounter are:
  - Is their child ready to enter the matching process?
  - Is their child a qualified candidate, or still in the application process?
  - Are the parents currently talking with another family?
  - Are the parents willing to consider your child as a potential match for theirs?
5. If you receive an email from another family requesting that you consider a match between your child and theirs, be sure to treat it with respect and sincerity. Even if you are busy or already engaged in the process with another family, **be sure to answer them**. Even if you need a week or two before you are free to respond fully, send them a brief acknowledgment **within three**



**days** of receiving their inquiry. Such a request may be full of prayer and expectation, and failing to answer is disrespectful.

6. Be prepared that a family you ask to consider your child as a candidate might say no, and be sure not to take it personally. There may be several reasons that have nothing to do with the quality of your family or the qualifications of your child: they may be in a sensitive discussion with another family and don't wish to go into detail; their plan and priorities may lead them to a different category or type of candidate.
7. If there is interest, ask the other family for more information and photos. You should prepare good quality photos that present your child well if you plan to introduce them.
8. You may wish to Google the potential candidate, or check out Facebook.
9. Begin to dialogue with the other parents, in person if possible, according to your matching plans.
10. You can also use personality and character profiles at this point, such as Flag Pages or Love Languages to understand more about who this person is. See the Resource section.

*When a family asks about your child as a potential match, be sure to treat their inquiry with respect, and answer them within three days.*

## **Make a Clear Decision**

Parents should decide clearly with the other candidate's parents, with the agreement of their children, to enter the next stage of the matching process: Parent Communication and Consideration. Here are some suggestions to help this process go smoothly:

- Be sure to discuss and agree to maintain confidentiality. You should never discuss sensitive personal information about a candidate or family learned in the matching process with anyone outside that process.
- Both families will want to agree upon the process they will use and the expected time it will take. This will help avoid misunderstanding.
- Avoid being intense or confrontational right from the start. Begin by getting to know each other. Ask questions regarding each family's and candidates' respective life stories.
- Some people find it easier to address sensitive or difficult questions through written communication.
- Remember that discovery and relationship-building is a step-by-step process. Don't rush; take time to develop trust and communication.

**One Family at a Time:** You might communicate with several families at once while looking for potential candidates. But once both sets of parents agree to seriously consider a potential match between your children, you should pursue that possibility exclusively

until its conclusion. Clearly inform anyone else who asks you to consider their candidate that you are currently involved in the process with another family.

## **Consider the Candidate**

**Parents should prayerfully consider the potential partner according to the preferences you developed** when making your family matching plan. While preparing that plan, you should develop a list of questions that are important to your child, in harmony with your own concerns. This is the era of full disclosure and family ownership. Parents need to carefully ask the right questions. Each family is different, and these questions may or may not be important for your child or family. Sensitive questions should be asked with consideration, but full disclosure between parents AND between candidates is essential. It is important that you respect the confidentiality of any family you communicate with, and keep all sensitive information private. Some questions you may want to ask are:

1. Has your child completed their purity interviews? Are they at a similar level of purity and experience?
2. Is your child in good physical health? Have they ever had an operation, serious condition or disease? Is there any reason there might be difficulty having a family?
3. Is your child in good mental health? Have they ever been diagnosed with any psychological condition, emotional problem or learning disability? Is there any family history of mental

illness or suicide? Has your child ever needed medication for depression?

Appendix 2, “Suggested Questions for Learning about a Matching Candidate,” contains a complete list of questions that we recommend each family consider asking about any potential candidate. These can be covered in as little as an hour in a phone conversation between the parents.

4. Both sets of parents may agree to do parents’ interviews with the other candidate by phone. Prepare questions to ask your child’s potential match like: Why do you feel ready to make the unconditional commitments required for marriage? What does the role of a husband or wife mean to you? What is your passion? What is your dream for your marriage? How would you handle conflict? How do you believe your life of faith should be lived? What are your educational plans? What are your professional or vocational plans? How do you want to raise your family?

If parents feel uncomfortable because your candidate has a unique or complicated situation, you should not be discouraged, and should not feel the need to hide or cover that situation up. Full disclosure is important, but you have alternatives. You can seek out those candidates with similar situations, or find those families that are more interested in the heart and character of your child than in any particular complication. The Blessed Family Department has developed a “Family Questionnaire for Matching Complications,” so that Matching Advisors can assist you. It asks parents and their candidate about any particular complication,

such as someone who was previously matched or Blessed, someone who lost their purity, someone with a developmental challenge, etc. It also asks what they are willing to consider in a potential match. Then your MA can search for the families that are already open to considering your candidate's situation. You obtain this form from a Matching Advisor, or download it at [www.familyfed.org/bfd](http://www.familyfed.org/bfd) under "Administration/Forms."

## **Select a Candidate**

If you as parents are satisfied that a candidate is a good match for your child, then:

1. Communicate with the other parents in accordance with your Family Matching Plan to reach consensus. It is important that both families are at the same place in the process and on the same timeline moving forward. Decide the best plan for each of you to offer your recommendation to your children, or to convey your acceptance and agreement if the suggestion came from them.
2. Make your recommendation to your child. Once this is done, you should give the prospective couple the responsibility to take ownership and make a final decision and commitment. This is the next stage of the matching process: couple communication and decision. To accomplish this:
  - Make sure parents are clear and united in their recommendation. Once you give this suggestion to your child, you should not doubt or take it back. If an undisclosed problem comes out during the

communication process, parents should not end the process arbitrarily on their own. It is important for both sets of parents to respect their children's opinions, especially if their hearts are already connected. Parents should be honest and thorough with each other, and then give their children responsibility, trusting and supporting them as needed.

- Introduce your recommendation to your child in a private setting such as at home, with a prayerful attitude. The candidate should have time to receive it calmly, focus and reflect. It can be stressful and distracting during school or exams. Parents should be sensitive, and not push or force the process, so as not to create a major disruption and distraction in your child's life.

*Once parents suggest a candidate to their child, they should not doubt or take it back.*

It may be good however, to let them know that you have a candidate in mind whom you want to share with them for their consideration at the right time (after finals or when they visit for a break). This can pique their curiosity in a hopeful way.

- time (after finals or when they visit for a break). This can pique their curiosity in a hopeful way.
- First impressions do matter. Be sure to present your recommendation wisely, at the best time and in the most positive light.
- Connecting from the inside first– While candidate photos are important to most parents to gain an impression of the

character of a potential match, many parents prefer that the couple they are introducing not be given pictures of each other immediately, but be introduced to each other's character first. This can be accomplished by giving them each other's answers to prepared questions and a short autobiography and resume of the prospective match. If candidates reflect and show interest, more information can be shared, such as creative work that reflects the potential match's heart and character. Pictures can be shared after that, if there is still interest. If the candidate is open, parents can encourage them to pray and think about it for three days while they coordinate with the other parents. The first meeting should be coordinated with the other family only after the information is shared, each candidate has an opportunity to reflect and both are willing to proceed. If one of the candidates says no to the possibility, check for the clear reasons and report to the other family honestly but sensitively.

- It is important that the two candidates receive their parents' recommendation at the same time. This will prevent the possibility that one candidate would find out about the recommendation from a source other than their parents.

## **Candidate's Responsibility During the Recommendation Process**

1. Be honest with yourself, God, your parents, and any potential match and their family.
2. Stay in good communication with your parents.  
**Ask questions.** Make sure that your parents understand your desired level of involvement as the matching process develops.
3. If you have someone that you are thinking of as a potential partner, it is important to share this idea with your parents. If receiving the Blessing is important to you, pursuing a relationship privately or secretly will only confuse the situation, alienate you from your parents, and make that relationship more like selfish love, and less like the ideal of the Blessing. Your parents can and should work together with you. If that trust is not there or you cannot reconcile your feelings with your parents' expectations, seek the guidance of a Matching Advisor or your local pastor.





## ***STEP THREE: The Communication Phase: Building a Relationship, Reaching a Decision***

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In general, we recommend seven months for a couple to meet, develop an internal relationship and take ownership of their commitment as a couple. The time and process will depend on each family's faith and the candidates' trust in their parents. Candidates should respect and have faith in God's guidance through their parents, but know that they are free to say yes or no at any time during this process. The seven months is meant to be divided as follows:

### **21-day Introduction Phase**

Once you agree to consider a particular candidate, you should first decide whether you want to invest in building a relationship with them with the Blessing in mind. You can take the first 21 days to intentionally get to know them, and consider together if you will begin the communication and relationship-building phase. Consider this prayerfully, and avoid making impulsive or external decisions. But feel free to decide not to pursue the match if either or both candidates feel it is not right.

### **25-week Communication Phase**

If the candidates agree to pursue their potential match, they will need to give each other enough time to know if it is right. A recommended framework is a minimum of seven months and a maximum of one year if the process has stalled.

## **Consider Your Decision Carefully**

It is important not to make quick or impulsive decisions based upon initial feelings, external appearance or your own concepts. True love grows out of respect, honesty, friendship, and establishing a genuine connection with someone. Invest in making that connection. You may have no idea what treasures lie within the heart and mind of another person unless you dig for them. You might be looking for someone who attracts you or makes you feel good. But what you may need is someone who balances or complements your character; someone patient, faithful and sincere enough to stand by you in the ups and downs of raising a family and building a life. Give yourself enough time and be open to a process. Kind words, loving actions and time to build communication and trust will help genuine feelings grow.

## **If the Candidates Decide Not to Pursue a Match**

It is not unusual for some candidates to go through this process more than once. There need be no such thing as a “failed” matching process. If each candidate prepares well, makes a thoughtful matching plan, asks the right questions and is honest about how they feel as the communication develops, it may become clear that the person they are considering is not an ideal match.

Rather than considering this a mistake, be aware that you can gain valuable insight about what you are looking for in a marriage partner or extended family, what you are not looking for, and any new requirements or dealbreakers. With this new information you can revise your matching plan, and now you will in fact be

closer to finding the right person than you were before.

**First Meetings:** As discussed above, first impressions do matter. It is important that both candidates have the best chance to shine at each level of their first meetings. There is no need to rush. Timing and support are very important to making a comfortable connection, getting an accurate understanding of each other and having a good outcome.

## **Beginning Communication by Internet or Telephone**

The next step will be the candidates' communication by phone or through the internet. Again, don't rush them. Have them choose a time when they aren't busy and can focus some energy on getting to know each other. Parents may suggest that the young man send an initial introductory greeting. Encourage them if needed, and make sure they have something to talk about. The recommended questions in Appendix 2 can help candidates learn more about each other.

*Invest in making that connection. You may have no idea what treasures lie within the heart and mind of another person unless you dig for them.*

Communication can proceed naturally from e-mail to telephone or Skype, at a pace that is comfortable for the prospective couple. At any point either candidate may decide to end the process, but parents should not dominate or intervene to end it. If a candidate needs help, parents can suggest that they read their e-mail out loud before sending it to make sure that it conveys what they want to say. During this phase it is important that

the parents maintain good communication with their child. Be aware of how often the couple is communicating. Help them with any concerns or frustrations: “He answers all my questions with one word!” “She doesn’t make any sense!” “I don’t know what to say!” Consider and prepare translation if needed for an international match.

## **Parental and Family Support**

Coordinating with the other parents can be helpful. Sometimes romantic expectations or the basic differences between men and women challenge the communication. Sensitivity, misunderstanding and quick judgments can undermine the process. It is helpful for candidates to use relationship tools to get to know each other to understand their similarities and differences. These are available from the Blessed Family Department or a Matching Advisor (see Resources Section), and include:

- The Five Love Languages
- The Flag Pages
- Myers-Briggs or other Personality Survey
- FOCCUS, PREPARE, or RELATE couple inventories

## **The Candidates Meet in Person**

The next and most important “first meeting” is when the candidates meet in person. Even if they know each other, this can be an awkward and uncomfortable situation. It is imperative that both candidates have the opportunity to show their best selves to each other.

One good way of doing this is for one family to visit the other for a weekend, or for one candidate to visit the other family with a family member or a very close friend. Too long of a first meeting can become stressful and demanding.

Thought should be put into this visit. It is usually better not to be around other church members, as their expectations and curiosity can create unnecessary pressure and uncomfortable feelings for the candidates prior to any commitment. It is helpful to choose activities that allow each candidate to express themselves naturally and at the same time observe the other. Some suggested activities are: family sightseeing, a service project, hiking, visiting a zoo, bowling, miniature golf, family dinners, board games and maybe a movie for a break.

After this meeting both families should take three days to pray, evaluate and process the meeting. Then the parents can communicate with each other to determine whether or not the process will continue.

## **What NOT to Do**

1. Do not share about any prospective match with people outside your family and matching team until the match is finalized and offered in a Commitment Ceremony.
2. If one candidate dislikes something about the other, or finds them unattractive, they should not express this openly to the other, but share it honestly with their parents or advisor. **Do not demean, hurt or treat a prospective match insensitively.**

3. These are some “red flags” that should not be ignored: when uncomfortable or negative feelings arise and continue; when someone exhibits secretive behavior or withdraws, or seems excessively pushy or controlling. Take time to investigate and question any of these behaviors. Some of these issues may not appear until 3-4 months into the communication process, even with someone you have known for years.
4. It is important not to push either candidate into an early decision because the other wants to move forward or is uncomfortable. If candidates are proceeding at different speeds, it is better to explore each candidate’s feelings and communicate about them sensitively.

### **Physical Closeness: What is Appropriate?**

#### *1. Prior to the Commitment Ceremony*

From the time you are introduced you are getting to know each other and deciding if you have a future together. While there may be the hope of that future, this is the time to learn about yourself and each other. This relationship-building process is not dating. As you come to know each other from the inside-out, and begin to establish trust, openness and respect, there should be no physical or sexual contact at all. The best sexual chemistry flows from internal chemistry.

NOTE: While you might send a thoughtful card or take your prospective match out for a meal, you should avoid giving personal gifts until there is a clear, established commitment to a lasting relationship.

While a match is still being considered, your growing friendship should only be known within your family and matching team. It should not be shared with friends or on Facebook.

## *2. After the Commitment Ceremony*

After your Commitment Ceremony you are a matched couple. Your matching should be announced publicly, at church the following Sunday or at a similar community event. You are promised to each other, but should develop the trust and closeness of a true brother and sister and become best friends. Premature physical intimacy can undermine or short-circuit the development of genuine emotional intimacy and trust. Continue to learn about each other and begin to make decisions together. Like any brother and sister, it is natural to hold hands, greet each other with a warm hug, dance together, and at the right moment, he might put his arm around her shoulders or she may place her arm in his. You should not kiss on the lips, lay down together or anything that begins the process of sexual stimulation. This will be deeper and more meaningful when it is based upon knowing and trusting each other, in the freedom of our Heavenly Parent's Blessing.

Many young men take this opportunity to prepare an engagement ring as an expression of their commitment. Some young women prefer that such a memorable expression be delayed until it can be accompanied by their first kiss. You can discuss and decide this together as a couple.

If for any reason you are uncomfortable sharing that you are engaged with school friends or extended family



who don't understand the process, you may wish to tell them at least that you are dating.

### *3. After the Blessing*

After the Blessing Ceremony, or after any additional period of offering established by True Parents for your Blessing group, you may naturally kiss, cuddle and develop a loving intimacy, based upon the respect and trust you have developed.

If you don't feel comfortable sharing with school friends or extended family that you are Blessed or married, you may want to say that you are engaged.

### *4. Beginning Your Married Life*

Father has explained how profound and meaningful a couple's "first night" can be. Consummating your Blessing should be a very special experience. Building internal closeness, trust and respect, and coming together free of any guilt or fear is important. You want to carefully plan for your first night together, and make it special, inviting God's presence. We recommend that a couple be legally married first, in accordance with the legal and social norms of your country and culture. Some suggestions for planning for this moment can be found on the Blessed Family Department website.

Those members who joined with their parents will begin their married life with a special 3-day Ceremony, as described in the Change of Blood Lineage process in Chapter 7.

## ***Additional Suggestions for the Communication Period***

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Candidates who are unsure, or need more involvement and ownership, should be given the time they need to own their decision. When needed, a private commitment can be made between parents while candidates work through any lingering questions or insecurities. When children look in their parents' eyes and say, "This is what I want. We (the couple) are committed to do this," they will be stronger when facing any future difficulty. Now is the time for a public declaration of their commitment. Once a commitment ceremony is held, they should not reconsider or change their mind. Therefore, before that commitment couples should take whatever time is needed, as long as the process is moving forward.

Through this thoughtful, step-by-step approach, our goal is that all members of both families benefit from this process, whether it ends in a matching or not.

### **The Importance of Prayer**

When candidates pray for each other on a daily basis, this places God at the center of their growing friendship. They may also want to read and share Father's words with each other each day. These simple conditions begin to build a spiritual foundation for their relationship, and will impact their thoughts and feelings

*Through this thoughtful, step-by-step approach, our goal is that all members of both families benefit from this process, whether it ends in a matching or not.*

about each other and their relationship over time. During this time it is important that the parents support the couple by praying for them and for the process.

## **A Suggested Monthly Plan**

A number of excellent relationship-building tools can help a couple get to know each other more deeply. One recommended way to use these is:

1. Months 1 and 2– Answer all the suggested questions for candidates found in Appendix 2 of this handbook. Couples can discuss one or two questions each week.
2. Month 3– Couples can fill out the Five Love Languages questionnaire and discuss what their love languages mean to each other. They may want to share the results with their parents. They can also go on line and complete Mark Gungor’s Flag Pages, or one of several couple inventories (PREPARE, FOCCUS or RELATE). These are listed in the resources section of this handbook, and can be linked from the Blessed Family Department webpage.
3. Months 4 and 5– Read and discuss “Selecting a Marriage Partner: 29 Critical Matching Variables” by Neil Clark Warren, the founder of eharmony.com. This can be accessed through the “Matching Resources” menu under “Blessing and Matching” at the FFWPU-USA’s BFD webpage.
4. Maintain a consistent, growing spiritual life: It is helpful during this time for each partner to

attend church and any available educational opportunities, such as workshops, camps or Young Adult Ministry.

5. It is important that both candidates are serious about their tithing and that they are saving for their Blessing fee.

## **Monitor the Relationship Monthly**

At the beginning of each month parents should check with their child to see how things are going, and confirm that they want to continue the process. Sometime during the first seven months the candidates will usually make a decision.

### *If the Answer is “Yes”*

The couple should begin planning their Commitment Ceremony, but there is no need to rush it. Time is our friend, and allows things to grow, develop and mature. Delayed gratification is a good thing. This time period is part of a necessary Foundation of Faith. By waiting and planning the ceremony the couple learns more about each other and the importance of the commitment they are making.

### *If the Answer is “No”*

Remember that there need be no such thing as a “failed” matching process. Candidates will learn so much about themselves and what they are looking for from each matching effort. Both families will need to go back to their Family Matching Plan. Both candidates and their families need to allow time for healing, time for communication between parents and children, time for evaluation and a new beginning. We suggest

a minimum of one month for every three months the couple was in the communication period. Do not start again until your child agrees and is ready to.

## ***Commitment Ceremony***

Once a couple has made their decision, they should plan a personalized Commitment Ceremony, where they officially accept the match and make their eternal commitment to each other. At this point the couple has chosen one another and embraced a future together, and there should be no turning back.

The commitment ceremony is meant to be very special and holy. This is the first time they pledge to be together eternally. It is a commitment between two families as well. Families can discuss when and where to hold the ceremony. The couple can decide on the content of their ceremony and write their own vows. After the prayers and vows a Matching Report Form should be signed by each candidate and all four parents. Report the match to your local pastor, submit a copy of the Matching Report Form to your local church, and upload it with a photo of your couple as part of your online Matching and Blessing Application.

## **Ideas and Recommendations**

This is your Commitment Ceremony. It is the first thing you work together to create. Please take the time to create a ceremony that reflects who you are and who you want to become. Create a ceremony that begins your walk through life together by welcoming God into the heart of your relationship. Your ceremony may

be simple or ornate; the important thing is you have worked together to create it and you are sincere in your commitment to God and each other.

*Some basic components you may want to consider:*

- Opening Prayer
- A few words by a parent from each family
- Candidates share a vow they have written, or simply express:
  - a. What this Commitment means to me.
  - b. Why this is the best person for me.
- Exchange of gifts
- Closing Prayer
- Share refreshments or a meal
- Photos
- Signing of the Matching Report Form

*Other ideas some have included:*

- A bowing ceremony: everyone to God and True Parents, candidates to their parents, candidates to each other and both families to each other.
- Guests: It can be meaningful and inspiring to invite another close Blessed Family, friends or relatives, such as grandparents.
- The candidates may wish to plan the content: who will offer the prayers, and if they wish, who can say a FEW words about their child, the meaning of

this day or the Blessing.

- Gifts: Gifts need to be agreed upon beforehand. The parents may wish to give spiritual gifts to the couple such as Holy Salt from one family and a Holy Candle and matches from the other. The candidates may exchange gifts of similar value, such as nice (but not too expensive) jewelry or a handmade blanket. The families may choose to exchange gifts like a small piece of art from their native area or a handmade keepsake.
- If there are guests who are unfamiliar with the matching and Blessing tradition, you may want to include a brief introduction that helps them understand its meaning and value.

*More possibilities*

- a. A banner. This can be made by siblings that want to help.
- b. A slide show of each person growing up, their meeting and growing together to this decision.
- c. Music and entertainment.
- d. A reading of True Parents' words.
- e. Photos. This is a great chance to take photos of the couple, and family photos for each family.





## *After the Commitment Ceremony*

### **You Are in the Position of an Engaged, Promised Brother and Sister.**

It is appropriate to hold hands and exchange a warm embrace when greeting or parting, but you should abstain from anything that begins the sexual process until after the Blessing. Kissing on the lips, laying down or sleeping together, sexual touching, etc. are not appropriate at this time.

### **Invest in Your Growing Relationship**

- Invite God into your growing love through a habit of prayer and study.
- It will benefit your future together if you attend all available education, especially any programs for couples.
- Plan to attend the first available Level 3 Blessing Workshop for couples. It will have more meaning as you attend it together.
- Live for others: find a creative way for each of you to serve your community.
- Find ways to date each other even though you live in different areas. Let your fiancé know they are the most important person in your life. **LITTLE THINGS MATTER.** Communicate, e-mail, phone, text, Skype, and visit. Find special terms of endearment for each other. Let your actions show you care. Loving actions create loving feelings. Each

day ask yourself, “What did I do for my future spouse today?”

## ***Preparing for the Blessing***

Make sure that all forms, health tests and educational requirements are updated online. These now need to be submitted electronically to your pastor and the National Blessed Family Department, together with a photo of your couple and your Matching Report Form, within one month of your commitment ceremony.

Continue saving for the Blessing fee, travel expenses, attire, blessing rings, etc.

## **The “I-Deal” Year**

Any relationship between a man and woman, no matter how loving and committed it may be, will face challenges and difficulties. God designed men and women as complementary opposites; we love differently, and experience love differently. Growing to understand your partner’s needs, though they are unlike your own, is essential to building a healthy marriage. But because of immaturity, emotional barriers or ancestral burdens, and the stress of life’s unexpected challenges, many relationships face times of crisis.

When painful times arise, the strength of your eternal commitment is of course important. But at the time of the Blessing, each couple will be asked to make a simpler, more practical commitment to an “I-deal Year.” If troubles arise and communication breaks down; if a couple cannot find the way to resolve their struggle, it is not acceptable to withdraw and avoid, drift into

non-communication, or seek comfort in unhealthy ways. If you feel overwhelmed, it is important to report the situation honestly, not only to a friend, but also to a trusted mentor, counselor, or pastor. The Blessed Family Department is committed to providing a network of understanding, support, and guidance that can assist you confidentially and professionally.

A one-year process of counseling and mediation to support each couple's effort to understand, communicate, and "deal" with their problems will be provided whenever they need it. An investment of at least a year in a guided process will be a minimum requirement for each Blessed Couple.

Of course, a healthy spiritual life, honest and open communication, participation in community and regular relationship education can help ensure that your marriage never reaches a point of crisis. The Blessed Family Department's commitment is to provide such opportunities, and we encourage each family to invest in ongoing education and support. When problems arise, don't let them get so out of hand that there is no way back. If you can't find the solution within yourselves, do not hesitate to seek help as soon as you need it.

*When problems arise, don't let them get so out of hand that there is no way back. If you can't find the solution within yourselves, do not hesitate to seek help as soon as you need it.*

## ***Questions for Discussion***

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### **Candidates**

1. Do you have anyone in mind that you would like to consider for the matching process? Have you shared that with your parents? Why or why not?
2. What is one spiritual condition you can make to invite God into your heart during your matching process?
3. In a perfect world what would be the ideal way for your parents to offer you a matching recommendation? Have you shared that with them? Why or why not?

### **Parents**

1. Which tools do you feel comfortable using for networking to find a matching candidate to consider for your child? (i.e., Parents Matching Convocations, Matchbook website, International Matching website, or through people you know personally)
2. What is one spiritual condition you can do together as a couple to bring God into the process of matching your child?
3. Write out what the ideal situation would look like for you to offer your child a matching recommendation. What are three practical things you can do to make that a reality?

# Matching Your Children Internationally

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## *How to find and consider candidates living in other countries*

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*“The best way to receive the Holy Blessing is through a cross-cultural marriage. These marriages contribute to the great task of transcending the barriers of race, culture, nationality, ethnicity, and religion, and to creating one family of humankind. In God’s sight, skin color makes no difference. God does not recognize national borders. God does not stand behind the barriers of religion and culture.”*

—True Father

True Father has challenged Blessed Families to transcend traditional barriers to build an original culture of heart, and encouraged international or cross-cultural matchings for our children. This path, however, is not for every candidate or family. Many candidates have attended True Parents’ matching expecting an international or interracial marriage, but found themselves engaged instead to someone from their own country or race.

Therefore, each family should prayerfully consider whether an international matching is appropriate. The first and most important consideration is your child's heart and desire. If your child wants an international match for the right reasons, and is prepared to commit to it, consider it seriously, even if you as parents are hesitating. Your son or daughter may feel a special calling to marry someone from a developing country. If God is inspiring them to such a course, you can help them consider all of the implications or challenges they may face, but please be prepared to support them if they are truly aware and committed.

Some parents fear the challenges of language, culture, or distance, or hesitate based upon their own experience with an international match. But our children may be more prepared than ourselves. There are many countries to consider, both near and far. With webcams, Skype, and the growing era of international travel, the world is becoming truly one community. Other parents hesitate because they simply don't know how to find candidates. A variety of international networking methods are recommended in this chapter.

On the other hand, if your child cannot fathom the possibility of an international match, and is truly unprepared to go beyond their comfort zone in this area, it is not helpful to push them even though you as their parents believe it is the best course. You can discuss, educate or encourage, but you must consider and respect your candidate's desires when making your matching plan. It is also possible to match your children with someone of another race or nationality who lives within the same country or geographical area as your family.

To assist your family in considering an international match, here are some points to consider:

### ***True Parents' Guidance***

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*“Almost everybody who was important in God’s providence had to leave his own hometown. Jacob had to go away, and you, too, must go into enemy territory at one time or another. The best way would be to marry a person who represents your enemy. Those who marry interracially, especially white and black, are accomplishing this, and bringing together two extremes.”*

—The Harvest Season for God’s Providence,  
September 9, 1982

*“The Unification Church should gather the races of all five colors and establish true brotherly love. The realm of brotherhood was shattered in Adam’s family; thus, we should realize brotherly love. The marriage that established the satanic lineage took place due to the breakdown of true brother and sister relationships. We should thus realize the global blessing that transcends nation and race, where we connect life and lineage through love centering on God and True Parents, while standing on the absolute standard of brotherhood and sisterhood. This is the worldwide blessing project of the Unification Church.”*

—Proclamation of the Realm of Liberation  
of Cosmic Unification for the Parents  
of Heaven and Earth—September 9, 1999

## ***Benefits of International Matching***

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- The most important benefit of an international matching and Blessing is the harvest of heart that can result from it. True Father teaches that our environment and experience in the spiritual world is determined by the size of our heart and the quality of our love. He said that to enter the Kingdom of Heaven we should be able to truly love three nations other than our own. He has explained that the most beautiful, shining couples in the spiritual world are those who have developed the deepest hearts by loving each other beyond the most extreme differences. He has honored the path of international couples as unique and precious for this very reason.
- Cross-cultural marriage is God's holy instrument to heal the world's divisions and liberate the resentment of our ancestors. There is, no doubt, profound merit and meaning to be inherited from participating in this healing and restoration process.
- Children raised in such an international environment will be able to embrace the world, and all of its citizens more naturally and easily.
- How glorious and enriching to develop an extended family and lineage that stretches around the globe and spans the divisions of nation, race and culture!



## ***Important Points to Consider***

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- When establishing your Family Matching Plan, be very sure that your candidate agrees with, wants and is realistically prepared for an international match.
- Candidates must complete the Blessing application and interview process in their own church community before beginning the international matching process. Because international matching requires strong faith and deep commitment, completing the application process demonstrates that candidates are more prepared and serious. It also allows each nation's BFD to communicate with each other concerning the international match.
- Be sure you are financially prepared for at least one visit between candidates, and family members if possible, during the communication period, before deciding upon the match.
- Utilize the available and growing international resources and support, which includes international matching websites and Parents Matching Convocations in different countries. For additional support see the list of international BFDs in Appendix 5.

*True Father has explained that the most beautiful couples in the spiritual world are those who have developed the deepest hearts by loving each other beyond the most extreme differences.*

## ***Potential Challenges to International Matching—and Recommendations***

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*“How do we find potential candidates?”*

One of the best ways to find candidates is to use the international matching websites: [www.bcmatching.org](http://www.bcmatching.org), or [www.cheon-il-guk.org/matching.htm](http://www.cheon-il-guk.org/matching.htm) for candidates whose parents joined when they were young. Parents can also attend Matching Convocations (PMCs) in your own and other countries, which include candidates from many nations. If parents cannot attend, they can still display candidates, and have a Matching Advisor or advocate represent them. Europe, the USA, and many other countries have international liaisons to assist the process of finding and safely accomplishing an international match. In addition, families can network themselves and receive suggestions through spiritual mentors, friends, leaders and members whom they know living in other countries.

*“We don’t want our children to live so far away... We might miss grandchildren growing up... We can’t afford the travel costs to visit or invite them to visit us.”*

- The couple may decide to live in your country.
- With the internet, webcams, and Skype, you can share deeply with your loved ones practically face-to-face, at little or no cost.
- Our children can and should become more successful than us, with internal AND external excellence. With careful planning, family visits and connections can be maintained. Perhaps they will invite you once a year!

*“We want to know and trust the candidate and family that we match our child to.”*

This is a valid and reasonable concern. International matching is a unique realm of faith, where we are creating an opportunity for God to work beyond our comprehension. Nevertheless, we recommend a period of time and communication for every potential couple, including international matchings. Candidates can communicate deeply through Skype and webcam when possible, and we strongly urge that candidates, and their family members when possible, visit the other family at least once before deciding upon the match.

*“Our international marriage was so difficult; we don’t want our children to go through that experience.”*

We don’t either! Thank God that our children are standing upon our foundation, and more importantly, are born from True Parents’ lineage. If your child wants it, understands it, and owns it, don’t limit the possibility. Create the conditions for our Heavenly Parent to guide the process.

*“Learning a different language is so difficult.”*

Fortunately for many of us, English is spoken widely throughout the world. In addition, many international couples have found that a limitation in one form of communication can sharpen and sensitize other ways of understanding each other. If your candidate has the heart and desire, allowing them to pioneer and become self-reliant and strong is a wonderful thing. Just be sure that they have a realistic understanding of what to expect.

## ***The Process of International Matching***

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Please follow the guidelines in the previous chapter, “The Matching Process,” with special attention to the issues and concerns identified here. Matching Advisors can support you through the process. You must complete the Blessing Application process in your own church community before beginning. This will allow the BFDs and advisors in each nation to communicate with each other and support your matching process to its conclusion.

The following tools can assist parents in finding potential matches in other countries:

### **International Matching Website**

**[www.bcmatching.org](http://www.bcmatching.org)**

This website was established in cooperation with all international BFDs for the purpose of finding matches from any part of the world. You can go to this site and follow the tutorial to create your own account. The candidate should sign up, create an ID and password, upload pictures and complete all the information. Once completed, the national or regional BFD webmaster will review the application, add it to the list of applicants and provide parents with a “parents password.” This will allow parents to view the list of available international candidates. On the website there are both applicants and candidates (candidates are those who have completed the Blessing application process in their nation or region). With the ID and password, parents and candidates can access, edit and update their profile at any time. Candidates’ info can

also be made available or hidden by selecting “open” or “close,” or can be deleted from the website when you choose. Only parents have access to the list of international candidates with their password, which should not be given to their candidate. The site is only a matching tool and does not replace the application, qualification and communication process.

### **The Online Matching System (OMS) for First Generation Unificationists**

**[www.cheon-il-guk.org/matching.htm](http://www.cheon-il-guk.org/matching.htm)**

The Online Matching System (OMS) is a service provided to the Blessed Family Department of the Family Federation for World Peace and Unification: USA. OMS works in conjunction with the BFD, and cooperates with all Blessed Family Departments. It does not override the authority of the BFDs, but is only a tool to facilitate the matching and blessing of First Generation Unificationists. This tool will be helpful for those candidates who joined as children along with their parents, who have the support and involvement of their parents in their matching.

The OMS is a secure web application that allows applicants to the Blessing to submit their application and create a profile. It facilitates candidates and their Matching Advisor in the search for a potential spouse. Matching Advisors working with First Generation Unificationists use the candidate information there to search for potential matching suggestions, and communicate with one another to find good recommendations. Candidates are able to read the answers to the profile questions of other candidates, and can offer suggestions or requests

to their MA, but candidates cannot access the names, photos and contact information of other candidates, and cannot contact them through the OMS.

## **Parents Matching Convocations**

In each nation or region Parents Matching Convocations (PMCs) are held regularly. Consult the online Blessed Family Department calendar at [www.familyfed.org/bfd](http://www.familyfed.org/bfd), or consult your local pastor to find out when and where these are taking place. The PMCs are designed for Parents to meet and network with other families, learn about the matching process and find potential candidates for their child. Parents can display their candidate's profile and photo at any PMC, with the candidate's agreement, whether parents attend the PMC or not. American families can submit profiles for any PMC in the USA by registering your family with the Blessed Family Association at [www.blessedfamilies.org](http://www.blessedfamilies.org), completing the profile page at the "Matchbook" site there, and clicking "Make Available at PMC."

At every PMC in the USA there are candidates displayed from other nations, and there are often staff or parents there to represent them. To display your candidate at another nation's PMC, watch for announcements or contact the National Blessed Family Department. You will need to complete the profile information at the international website, [www.bcmatching.org](http://www.bcmatching.org), which can be printed out and displayed at another nation's PMC upon request.

## **Matching Advisors and International Liaisons**

Each nation and region is working to develop international liaisons that can help parents find potential candidates and communicate with parents, Matching Advisors or the BFD in other nations. For international BFDs see Appendix 5: Contact Information.

## ***Questions to Consider with a Prospective International Partner***

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Be sure to consider and discuss the following issues with any potential international partner:

- Where will you live? Who will be the one to relocate?
- Carefully consider the differences in the two candidates' cultures such as different gender roles, parental expectations, and the tradition of extended families.
- Be sure you understand the particular challenges or limitations concerning when and where you can come together, according to the immigration laws of your countries.
- Consider what church and community support systems are available in the country where you plan to live. Is there a church or worship service? Is there a supportive community?

- Consider that there may be special concerns in certain countries, such as health, immunization, political or financial issues.

## ***Matching Advisors***

When considering an international match, feel free to consult with a certified Matching Advisor. Advisors can also assist and support you throughout the matching process. To find a Matching Advisor, check the available list at each matching website or at [www.familyfed.org/bfd](http://www.familyfed.org/bfd), or write to [matching@unification.org](mailto:matching@unification.org).

## ***Questions for Discussion***

### ***Candidates***

1. What are the men/women in your life like? How could that affect your perception of the role of a husband/wife?
2. What aspects of your own cultural background are most important to you?
3. What are your reasons for wanting to be matched internationally?
4. What are some of the challenges you think you might face with an international match?



## ***Parents***

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1. Have you spoken to your child about the possibility of an international match? Why or why not?
2. What concerns do you have about matching your child internationally?
3. What are your own cultures' traditions regarding extended family? How do you think these will affect your child's cross-cultural matching?
4. Are you excited at the idea of matching your child internationally? Why or why not?



## The Matching Process for Candidates Who Joined as Children, with Their Parents

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When parents join the Unification faith with their children, it is natural that they be involved in each child's matching process. Therefore, although their marriage partner will be an adult first-generation Unificationist, the family process outlined in this handbook will apply. It is a parent-centered process with candidates' ownership of the final matching decision.

It takes great courage for a young person who joined as a child and grew up in a faith chosen by their parents, to make that faith their own and choose the path of the matching and Blessing for themselves. Parents and pastors alike should do everything in their power to support the efforts of these precious young people to achieve their vision of a God-centered family.

For additional information and details concerning the matching process for first-generation Unificationists, see the Unificationist Matching Handbook.

*It takes great courage for a young person who grew up in a faith chosen by their parents, to make that faith their own and choose the path of the matching and Blessing for themselves.*

## ***I. Finding Eligible Candidates***

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The ideal matching candidates for those whose parents joined when they were young are others who became members as children and grew up in our church, as well as single Unificationists who joined as adults. There are a number of ways to find these potential matching partners:

### **A. Matching Advisor Network**

We have prepared a nationwide network of certified Matching Advisors who are trained to assist and guide parents and candidates in planning your matching process and finding potential matches. MAs can also support you throughout your communication process and commitment ceremony. They have a wealth of resources, contacts and experience to assist you. You can find a list of Matching Advisors on the Blessed Family Department webpage at [www.familyfed.org/bfd](http://www.familyfed.org/bfd) under “matching resources,” as well as on the Online Matching System.

### **B. Online Matching System**

Hundreds of qualified candidates can be found on the Online Matching System (OMS) for First Generation Unificationists at [www.cheon-il-guk.org/matching.htm](http://www.cheon-il-guk.org/matching.htm). Once your son or daughter has uploaded their profile information and photos and been approved as a candidate, they will have limited access to profile information to learn about other candidates. They will not be able to see names, photos or contact information directly, but can discuss with their parents and inform their MA of any profiles that they are interested in.

### **C. Parents Matching Convocation (PMC)**

The Parents Matching Convocation is for all parents who are supporting their children's matching process. This includes parents whose children joined with them, and then grew up in the church. A special section for these candidates is available at every PMC in the United States.

### **D. Annual Matching Candidates' Blessing Workshop**

Once each year, usually in the summertime, a national workshop is held for all First Generation matching candidates. Candidates are not required to attend this program, and can receive Blessing education locally or by other means. However, this annual gathering is an opportunity for candidates and Matching Advisors to meet and network with others from around the nation and around the world. MAs will meet together at the conclusion of the workshop to consider possible matching suggestions.

### **E. International Candidates**

Parents and candidates should remember that there are a number of eligible candidates in other countries who joined the church as children and grew up in the Unification faith. Many of these profiles are on the OMS, and Matching Advisors can also help you network with other nations.

For more details and additional ideas for finding potential matches, see the Unificationist Matching Handbook.

## ***II. The Matching and Blessing Process***

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The matching process for these candidates is the family matching process put forth in this book. The path to the Blessing, however, for these and all first-generation candidates, is the restoration and renewal process of changing the blood lineage. A brief outline of this process is below. The Blessing workshop explains the meaning of the Blessing and the change of blood lineage more deeply. Your pastors and spiritual mentors can guide and assist you through each step along the way.

## ***III. The Blessing and the Change of Blood Lineage***

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The purpose of human life is to embody and reflect God's ideal of love. The channel for Divine love into our lives is the family. Our first ancestors' purpose was to realize an ideal family, fulfilling the Three Great Blessings (Genesis 1:28). Their selfish misuse of love brought about the Fall, and separated us from the Heavenly Parent's original love, life and lineage. True Parents, standing on a historical foundation of victory, have the authority to engraft all humankind into the original lineage of God. The Blessing is the process through which we become God's original sons and daughters. It consists of these steps:

### **1. Holy Wine Ceremony**

As a result of the human fall, our families have been separated from the love and life that the Heavenly Parent intended. A false tradition of love has been inher-

ited from generation to generation. In the Holy Wine Ceremony, we transition spiritually from this fallen lineage and tradition to that of True Parents.

This ceremony restores the order of God's original love, cleansing us from the original sin. It is performed in precisely the reverse order of the process of the fall. True Parents give the wine to the woman first, who then shares it with her future husband. The wine represents God's original blood lineage through True Parents. The condition to become the first Israel was keeping the law, and the condition to become the second Israel (Christianity) was baptism and communion. The Holy Wine ceremony connects all humankind to the ultimate, final "Israel," the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth.

## **2. The Blessing Ceremony**

The Holy Blessing was traditionally officiated by Father and Mother Moon in their capacity as True Parents, or an officiating couple representing them. The officiators and their attendants "baptize" the couples with holy water, signifying their rebirth into God's lineage as a Blessed couple, leaving past sins behind. Through the vows, couples pledge to fulfill God's ideal of creation as an eternal husband and wife. They promise to establish a loving family, maintain fidelity, and to raise their children to remain pure before marriage and faithful in marriage. They also determine to love all people of the world as our Heavenly Parent does. The officiators extend their arms and pray for the couples, claiming them as renewed sons and daughters within the realm of God's original, eternal Blessing. Then True Parents proclaim the completion of the Blessing in front of God and the entire cosmos.

### **3. Chastening or Indemnity Ceremony**

The fall took place through the corruption of sexual love, and the misuse of our sexual organs. Therefore Jacob could be victorious and blessed by God as “Israel” only after the angel struck the “hollow of his thigh,” knocking it out of joint. In the same way God required circumcision as the condition for Israel to become His people. These were conditions of indemnity to restore the misuse of our sexuality.

The betrayal of the fall initiated a history of resentment between men and women. We have all experienced, directly or indirectly, the pain of misused love, as have our ancestors. This simple ceremony provides an opportunity for each couple to indemnify our false sexual past and the historical abuse of each gender by the other. Each partner firmly strikes the other three times upon the buttocks, to repent for and resolve the history of sexual immorality and the misuse of our bodies. This ceremony is of course symbolic. Any abuse or violence between the couple, whether emotional, verbal or physical, is a violation of the Blessing vows and not acceptable. Completing this ceremony opens the door to our Heavenly Parent’s forgiveness and grace. It is conducted shortly after the Blessing ceremony, as the foundation for the next step.

### **4. 40-day Separation Period**

The number “40” is the Biblical period for separating from Satan, and holy people of many faiths have traditionally carried out 40 days of fasting, prayer and spiritual cleansing. In this tradition, abstaining from sexual intimacy during the first 40 days of marriage is meant



to separate the newly Blessed Couple from the history of false and fallen love between men and women. It can also help heal any painful personal sexual past. The newly Blessed Couple offers their married life to God first, and focuses upon developing the inner aspects of marriage: love, trust, commitment and spiritual intimacy.

### **5. Three-day Ceremony of Renewal**

The fallen love relationship between Adam and Eve brought about the corruption of love, distorted the family ideal and established a false world centered upon Satan. Through this final ceremony, Blessed couples begin their conjugal life by reversing this tragic process. The couple first cleanses their bodies with the Holy Handkerchief (that has been sprinkled with Holy Wine) and this now links them to God's lineage. Then with a prayer of offering, they invite the Heavenly Parent to enter their most intimate love relationship. Through symbolic ceremonial steps, each partner will give rebirth to their spouse as an original man and woman. Their renewed conjugal life, with God's Blessing and presence, should become one of total freedom, loving and serving one another in joyful spiritual and physical oneness.

Through his crucifixion and resurrection, Jesus brought spiritual salvation for humankind. The three-day ceremony makes physical salvation a reality by re-establishing the original ideal of love.

NOTE: The three-day ceremony has profound significance. Couples should be sure to obtain the detailed instructions for this ceremony from their pastor during the separation period.



# Resources and Reference Materials

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## *Online and Networking Resources*

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USA Blessed Family Department webpage:  
[www.familyfed.org/bfd](http://www.familyfed.org/bfd)

International Matching Website:  
[www.bcmatching.org](http://www.bcmatching.org)

“Matchbook” - the Blessed Family Association’s online matching site: [www.blessedfamilies.org](http://www.blessedfamilies.org)

For candidates who joined as children, with their parents: [www.cheon-il-guk.org/matching.htm](http://www.cheon-il-guk.org/matching.htm)

Parents Matching Convocations (PMCs)–  
several times a year in the USA and internationally.

Matching Advisors– each nation and region will train and certify advisors who can support and assist parents and candidates in the matching process. To find a Matching Advisor, or find out how to become one, contact [matching@unification.org](mailto:matching@unification.org)

Utilizing an Advocate– a candidate or family can identify a mentor, friend or well-connected person to represent them in the matching process. An advocate

can recommend the candidate to others, represent them at PMCs or through Matchbook, and serve as an intermediary for them with other families.

## ***Parenting Advice***

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*Educating for True Love / Chapter 21: Purity and Preparation for Marriage*, International Educational Foundation, New York, NY, 2006

*Protocols for Principled, Parent-Centered Matchmaking and The Marriage Blessing Commitments*, Dr. Mose Durst/Ken Hardman. A discussion paper on the step-by-step process of parent centered matching. Download at BFD website: [www.familyfed.org/bfd](http://www.familyfed.org/bfd) under Blessing and Matching / Matching Resources.

*Losing Control and Liking It: How to Set Your Teen (and Yourself) Free*, Tim Sanford, Focus on the Family Publishing, Colorado Springs, CO, 2008. Great advice for raising teenagers from a professional counselor with focus on the family

*The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work*, John M. Gottman, Ph. D, Crown Publishers, New York, NY, 1999. Based on his research with 700 couples, John Gottman lays out a clear path how to build and maintain a happy marriage.

*Five Love Languages for Teenagers*, Gary D. Chapman, Northfield Publishing, Chicago, IL, 2000. Identifying the ways in which parents and children express their love to one another and how to use that knowledge to build a lifelong relationship

*Dad, If You Only Knew....Eight Things Teens Want to Tell Their Fathers (but Don't)*, Josh Weidman and James Weidman, Multnomah Books, Colorado Springs, CO, 2005

*Active Parenting for Teens*, 3rd Edition, Michael H. Popkin, Active Parenting, Marietta, GA, 2009. Provides concrete steps on how to handle family problems, honest communication and respectful discipline

*Launching Your Teen into Adulthood: Parenting Through the Transition*, Patricia Hoolihan, Search Institute, Minneapolis, MN, 2009. Teaching your teenager life skills as preparation for marriage

### **Education for Candidates**

*True Love, Volume I*, Rev. Sun Myung Moon, HSA-UWC Publications, New York, NY, 1989. True Father's words on marriage 1979–1989. True Father's advice and anecdotes from the time of many first generation blessings: 1979-1989. HSA-Books

*I Kissed Dating Goodbye*, Joshua Harris, Multnomah Books, Colorado Springs, CO, 1997. Smart love looks beyond personnel desire and the gratification of the moment. A “how-to,” to prepare oneself for marriage from God's perspective

*First Comes Marriage: Modern Relationship Advice from the Wisdom of Arranged Marriages*, Reva Seth, Simon and Schuster, New York, NY, 2008. With advice from 300 arranged marriages, she shares the importance of knowing yourself and identifying what's central in building a lasting marriage.

*Tale of Two Brains: Teen Edit [DVD]*, Mark Gungor, Crown Entertainment, 2009. Explores the difference between man and woman in an honest and hilarious way

*The Gift for Life*, HSA-UWC, New York, NY, 2008. An early matching guidebook from the Blessed Family Department. Includes testimonies of the matching and Blessing from candidates and their parents

*Unificationist Matching Handbook*, FFWPU, New York, NY, 2013. A practical step-by-step guideline for the matching process for adults who have joined the Unification Movement

*Can We Dance? Learning the steps for a Fulfilling Relationship*, Susanne M. Alexander, Marriage Transformation LLC, Cleveland, OH, 2006. Preparing for a relationship that is founded on character development and spiritual growth

*Cheon-Hwa-Dang: House of Heaven's Harmony*, Hyung Jin Moon, HSA-UWC Publications, New York, NY, 2006. Wonderful internal guidance on developing character and internal discipline. HSA-Books

*The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens*, Sean Covey, Simon & Schuster, New York, NY, 1998. Applies the seven habits to the life of teens including stories from all over the world (self-image, build more active goals, your goals for parenting...)

*RQ: Relationship Intelligence: Why your RQ is More Important to Your Success and Happiness Than Your IQ*, Richard A. Panzer, Center for Educational Media, Murfreesboro, TN, 1998. This and many other relationship and marriage resources from the Institute for Relationship Intelligence at [www.lovesmarts.org](http://www.lovesmarts.org)

*A Return to Modesty: Discovering the Lost Virtue*, Wendy Shalit, Simon & Schuster, New York, NY, 1999. Assessing the impact of the sexual revolution, rediscovering the virtue of innocence and preserving the mystique of sexual love

*Lady in Waiting*, Jackie Kendall & Debby Jones, Destiny Image Publishers, Shippensburg, PA, 2005. How to develop a biblically-based marriage preparation/comes with accompanying workbook

*29 Critical Matching Variables*, Neal Clark Warren. Download at BFD website: [www.familyfed.org/bfd](http://www.familyfed.org/bfd) under Blessing and Matching / Matching Resources

*Educating for True Love / Chapter 21: Purity and Preparation for Marriage*, International Educational Foundation, New York, NY, 2006

*True Family Values*, Joong Hyun Pak & Andrew Wilson, HSA-UWC Publications, New York, NY, 1996. A vision for creating an ideal family based upon the first seven points of the Family Pledge

*Dae Mo Nim: Words to Second Generation*, Download at [www.familyfed.org/bfd](http://www.familyfed.org/bfd) under Blessing and Matching / Matching Resources

*Arranged [Film]*, Diane Crespo & Stefan C. Schaefer, Cicala Filmworks, New York, NY, 2009. A moving film that centers on the friendship between an Orthodox Jewish woman and a Muslim woman, both first-year public school teachers in modern-day Brooklyn, NY, as each experiences the process of an arranged marriage. Rent/buy at Amazon.com

## ***Building Relationships / During the Matching Process***

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*Saving Your Marriage Before It Starts: Seven Questions to Ask Before and After You Marry*, Les and Leslie Parrot, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 1995. Points to prepare yourself for being a qualified candidate. Asks the reader 7 important questions. Through answering, the reader can gain valuable skills that help build a successful marriage.

*Pure Gold – Encouraging Character Qualities in Marriage*, Susanne M. Alexander, Marriage Transformation LLC, Cleveland, OH, 2005. Learn how to understand and practice positive character traits in your marriage. Great for before and after the matching and Blessing

*Boy Meets Girl: Say Hello To Courtship*, Joshua Harris, Multnomah Books, Colorado Springs, CO, 2000. Practical guidance on how to switch from “no dating” to building a God-centered relationship that develops into commitment and marriage

*Flag Pages*, Mark Gungor. A helpful tool for young people to learn about themselves and each other in preparation for matching. Download at BFD website: [www.familyfed.org/bfd](http://www.familyfed.org/bfd) under Blessing and Matching / Matching Resources

*Why Him Why Her?: Finding Real Love by Understanding Your Personality Type*, Helen Fisher, Henry Holt and Company LLC, New York, NY, 2009. Understanding your basic personality type, and how we are attracted to those who both complement and mirror our character



*Myers/ Briggs, Personality Types at a Glance*, Download at BFD website: [www.familyfed.org/bfd](http://www.familyfed.org/bfd) under Blessing and Matching / Matching Resources.

*Couples Surveys*, a helpful way to learn about myself and my prospective partner. Examine basic areas of relationship strength/challenge: values, upbringing, communication styles, attitudes toward faith, children, money, etc. Prepare/Enrich [www.prepare-enrich.com](http://www.prepare-enrich.com); Foccus [www.foccusinc.com](http://www.foccusinc.com); Ready/Relate [www.relate-institute.org](http://www.relate-institute.org)

*Five Love Languages Questionnaires*, Gary Chapman. Find out how you and your fiancé differ in giving and receiving love. Download at [www.familyfed.org/bfd](http://www.familyfed.org/bfd) under Blessing and Matching / Matching Resources

## ***Websites***

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[www.familyfed.org/bfd](http://www.familyfed.org/bfd): The USA Blessed Family Department website

[www.blessedfamilies.org](http://www.blessedfamilies.org): The Blessed Family Association website, home of “Matchbook”

[www.hsabooks.com](http://www.hsabooks.com): The HSA Bookstore

[www.smartmarriages.com](http://www.smartmarriages.com): A comprehensive marriage resources website

[www.themarriagelibrary.com/archives/](http://www.themarriagelibrary.com/archives/).htm

[www.marriagepreparation.com](http://www.marriagepreparation.com): For Better and For Ever

[www.eHow.com](http://www.eHow.com) – search for “Marriage Preparation”



## Family Matching Plan Worksheet

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It is recommended that the parents and the candidate each fill out this worksheet separately, and then work together to create a single, unified plan. You may want to engage the support of a certified Matching Advisor to assist you in developing your plan. An effective planning process depends upon honest and open communication between the candidate, their parents, and any advisor supporting this matching plan.

1. Who will be a part of your matching team? What role will they each play? When and how will they be involved? (Below is a list of possible team members you may want to consider. Each person you choose to help in your process should be personally invited to help and given the parameters of their responsibility)

Candidate	Parents
Family member(s)	Support committee
Matching Advisor(s)	Advocates
BFD Representative	Local ministry leaders
Pastor	

2. What process will you use when you enter the matching discussions with another family? It is important that your family is in agreement about how they want to proceed, and that any family you work with also agrees on the process to avoid miscommunication and misunderstanding.

- Family Matching Handbook
- Some other plan you agree upon

3. Before you begin looking for the “right person,” it is important to consider your own life goals, core values and the type of marriage you envision. We encourage each candidate to reflect upon and answer the following six questions to the best of your ability. Discuss these with your parents, and any members of your support team who can help you look at these more deeply.

A. What kind of life are you planning for? Do you plan to remain a private person? Will you be active in your church or community? Are you passionate about particular hobbies or leisure activities? What will be your work/social life balance? Do you plan to travel and be mobile in your younger years? How might your school plans affect your marriage and family plans? When would you anticipate settling down and having children?

B. What kind of marriage relationship fits into the life you anticipated above? Is it private? Public? Spiritually-based? Religious? Strongly Unificationist? Two professionals?

Two career-focused people or having one home and family-focused? Of course these may be flexible based upon the person you meet and commit to, but consider what your preferences might be.

- C. What qualities are most important in the person who will help you create the relationship you described above? Is he/she spiritual? Religious? More, less or the same amount as you are? Is he/she more outgoing, verbal and expressive, or a more quiet and supportive type of person? Is he/she strong, disciplined and accomplished? Or more heart-oriented and relationship/family-centered? What kind of family does he/she come from? What three character traits would inspire you the most in a spouse?
- D. Who are you? What are your most important core values by which you will live your life? What character strengths do you bring to a relationship? What areas of yourself do you think need improvement, that may need your partner's understanding and support. What is important for your partner to understand about you?
- E. Do you have any dealbreakers or absolute requirements? Consider what past-relationship experience you are comfortable with in a partner, and any preferences concerning language, location, race, nationality, faith, physical appearance, or any challenges or complications you are comfortable with and open to in a partner.

- F. If you had a previous matching effort or Blessing experience, what lessons did you learn that can help you adjust and approach things more effectively this time?
4. Are there important questions that you need or want to know about any potential match from the very beginning? (Parents and the candidate can each make a list, then compare and agree on them. You can refer to Appendix 2 for ideas.)
  5. How will your team find potential candidates?
    - Suggestions from the candidate
    - Suggestions from parents
    - Attend Parents Matching Convocation
    - Matchbook
    - International Website for BC Matching
    - Suggestions from family and friends
    - Suggestions from Matching Advisors, advocates and others
    - Blessing workshops, DP workshops, Service Projects, other church activities
  6. Once there is a suggested candidate, what happens next?
    - Who does a suggestion go to first?
    - How does the team investigate or screen a suggested candidate?
      - Parent and/or support committee check, using their contacts and resources

- Check with their local church leaders, advocates and Matching Advisors
- Consult your list of important questions and deal breakers
- What do you want your parents or others NOT to do? (“Don’t hand me a bunch of pictures and ask my opinion”; “Don’t approach a candidate’s parents without talking to me first”: etc.)

7. When and how does the candidate become involved?

- The candidate’s input can be sought at any point with anonymous questions for clarification.
- We suggest timing be carefully considered. (Never introduce a suggestion during finals!), and that the process not be rushed. Waiting a little longer for the right time and clarity is always better.
- We suggest focusing on the internal first; give profile information first, then family information and pictures very last.
  - ◆ Does the candidate want to wait until the parents consider and can fully recommend another candidate to them before they become directly involved?
  - ◆ Does the candidate want to be consulted about a potential match after the parents’ initial screening but before they contact or talk extensively with the other candidate’s parents?

- ◆ Does the candidate want to look at a number of profiles and put them in order of preference?
- ◆ Does the candidate want a more active role, or have a specific person to suggest or request?

Or is there some other agreed upon plan?

8. When does a suggested candidate become a recommendation? When and how do the two candidates begin communicating with each other? We strongly suggest that:

- Both young people become qualified candidates before communication begins. (They have completed the application process and completed their interviews.)
- Parents have completed the “Suggested Questions for Learning About a Matching Candidate” found in Appendix 2 of the Family Matching Handbook before they recommend any candidate to their adult child.
- Parents continue to communicate regularly with each other and with their son or daughter throughout the candidate-communication phase, to monitor that the process is proceeding well.

9. Meeting in person: In the planning stage you may not have an idea of who the other is or where they live. It is good to have a general idea of how soon in your communication process you want to meet in person. We recommend the first meeting



be well-planned, so it is not too long or intense: perhaps for 2-3 days at most; perhaps with support. Even long distance first visits should not be too long.

10. Communication and reporting: It is important that the candidate and parents continue to communicate throughout the process. While looking for recommendations, it is good for the candidate to send a brief email to their core team each week or two to keep the search for their eternal partner as a priority and to keep the team informed of any changes in the candidate's situation or outlook. Once two families begin to communicate with each other seriously, they may want to touch base each week or two to keep abreast of how things are developing. Choose a time, interval and method of communication that works for you.

It is important that each candidate's family openly share the process they have decided upon with the other family, and agree on how to handle any differences in their process and plans. This will promote clear communication and avoid misunderstandings.

If the matching process between two candidates comes to an end, the reasons should be clearly communicated so that both candidates and their families can have closure, learn important lessons for how to improve their plan and be better prepared for the next opportunity. If needed, MAs can facilitate this process, and at the right time help the family update and improve their matching plan and begin again.



## Helpful Questions for Parents and Candidates

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### *I. Questions for Parents to Ask About a Matching Candidate*

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Here are some recommended questions for parents to think about and use when communicating with other families while considering a potential match. First, parents can use some of these in their initial communication with other parents. This can be done in person or by phone. If you don't know your child's answers to these questions, it is important to discuss them fully before communicating with the other parents. You might also use some of these questions later in the exploration process when interviewing the other candidate directly. Sensitive questions should be asked with care.

1. What is your child's relationship with God like and when does he/she feel closest to God?
2. How much Divine Principle education has your child had?

3. Which part of the Principle grabs them the most?
4. What church activities has your child been involved in?
5. How does your child view the roles of husband and wife in the family? What do these roles look like in your family?
6. How does your child envision their future family connecting to and participating in the church community and activities?
7. What kind of community and environment would your child like their future family to live in?
8. Where would your child like to live while they raise a family? [city or countryside, big church community or independent, etc.]
9. How big a family would your child like to have? When do you think they would want to start having children?
10. Does your child have any particular health challenges?
11. Is there any reason to think having children could be a problem?
12. Have there been any health problems in your family history that are hereditary? Examples of these would be epilepsy or sickle cell anemia.
13. Have there been mental health concerns in your family history? Examples are bi-polar condition or attempted suicide.

14. Has your child ever seen a mental health professional, been diagnosed or taken medication for any mental health problem, psychological or emotional condition, learning or developmental disability?
15. Ask questions about how the candidate was raised. Ask about grandparents and great-grandparents. These are precious questions about the possible joining of two lineages.
16. What are your family's views on the three-generational family, and how do you envision your future relationship with your children and grandchildren?
17. How was your child disciplined growing up? How would your child like to discipline their children?
18. How does your child manage their anger? Has he/she ever had a violent outburst?
19. What is your child's level of purity? Is he/she qualified according to True Parents' original standard? Has he/she ever dated or kissed? Has he/she ever given their heart to another person, or made an exclusive commitment?
20. Has your child had experience with alcohol, drugs, gambling or pornography? Has any of this become addictive? Is there any family history of addiction?
21. Does your child have any "Deal Breakers" (issues that make it impossible for you to consider a match with someone)? Examples of these could be language, location, race, purity level, education, vices, etc

22. What are your child's passions and goals?
23. What is your child's career path and how do they see themselves supporting their family?
24. What were your child's hobbies and activities growing up? What are their interests and aspirations now?
25. Describe your child's educational background and job experiences. What was their relationship to classmates, coworkers and bosses like?
26. Does your child have any debts, such as college loans?
27. How did your family handle finances? How do you see it working in your child's marriage?
28. How is communication and conflict managed in your family? How are your child's communication and conflict resolution skills?
29. When your child struggles in their marriage, who will they turn to for help?

## ***II. Questions for Matching Candidates to Ask Each Other***

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Candidates may wish to use some of the questions below to help them get to know a prospective partner, as they develop their relationship during the communication period:

1. What were your hobbies and favorite sports growing up?
2. How did you usually get into trouble? How did you get out of trouble? How would you discipline your children?
3. What did you enjoy about school activities? Who were your favorite teachers and why? What awards and achievements did you win?
4. Who were your closest friends and where are they today?
5. When did you feel closest to God? What was your spiritual life like as a child? As a teen? As an adult?
6. What are your political views?
7. How did your family celebrate holidays? Did your family have any special traditions? What was your favorite family vacation?
8. Who are the five most important people in your life?
9. What do you think about the three-generational family, and how do you envision your children's relationship with their grandparents? What are your

views on aging and elder care?

10. Where would you like to live? Do you prefer the city or the country? Is living in a large church community important to you?
11. How do you handle your finances? Do you have any debts? If your future spouse has debts, how should those be handled? How will you merge your financial situations?
12. Describe your educational and job experiences. What was your relationship to classmates, coworkers and bosses? What are your ambitions?
13. What parts of your childhood would you like to relive and why?
14. What are some of the needs and desires that were never fulfilled by your parents? What were your hurts and disappointments as a child? What were your greatest joys?
15. What are some expectations you have about your spouse and about your marriage? What are some expectations you think your spouse will have of you?
16. What are your personal 10 commandments?

We also suggest that candidates pray for each other every day.



## *Appendix 3*

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# **Introduction to the Matching Websites**

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## *Matchbook*

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### *The Blessed Family Association's Matching Site for Blessed Children*

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[www.blessedfamilies.org](http://www.blessedfamilies.org)

The Blessed Family Association (BFA) has developed a matching support system, called “Matchbook,” that is designed to help Blessed Families share information for the matching of their children. The site offers each candidate and family substantial control over who can access their information, which enhances privacy and security, as information can be shared openly or only with the people you wish. Matchbook can be found at [www.blessedfamilies.org](http://www.blessedfamilies.org), by clicking on the banner on the lower right of the home page. To utilize the site, candidates and their families need to be registered as members of the BFA, and to fill out the basic information for your family and children.

Matchbook is also the official registration site for candidates and families who wish to utilize the Parents Matching Convocations in the USA. Once you have completed a candidate profile, you can also select whether or not to make that profile available at PMCs. The registration for parents to participate in the convocation is also conducted through the BFA website.

## How to Use Matchbook

**Entering a Profile:** Parents, click the “Edit” icon next to your child’s name in your family profile. Be sure to enter all required information and upload 3 photos: a “head shot”, a full length shot and a family picture. If something is missing, a red message will be displayed near the top of the profile entry page.

**Sharing Your Profiles:** Your profiles are confidential and will only be shared in the way you choose. You can “share” a profile in several different ways:

- **By the Profile Setting:** At the “Show my profile to” setting in your profile, if you select “To any parent with a potential candidate,” your profile will be visible to any family who has completed a profile for a candidate of the opposite sex. This is the way to get the most exposure.
- **Directly to another family:** Go to “BFA Directory” and locate the family with whom you wish to share your profile. Click on the family name and you will be taken to a full-page view for that family. Now click, “Share Matching info” at the bottom of the page. You’ll be asked to select which candidate profiles you’d like to share.

Click the “Process” button to complete the sharing.

- **Through a Matching Advisor:** Most certified Matching Advisors have listed themselves, with a description and contact info, on Matchbook. If you want the support of an MA, click on the “View All Advisors” link at your family matching home there, select one or more, and make sure they accept your request and are able to support you. Once you have completed your family matching plan and selected “active” or “passive” advisory mode in your profile, you can give your MA permission to confidentially share your profile with another family by selecting “Advisor’s Recommendation” under “Show my information to:” in your profile. If you select “Ask Parents first”, the advisor will email you prior to sharing.
- **Through an Advocate:** If you have chosen another family to support or advocate for your candidate, that family can share your information with any other family. You will not automatically be informed of this, so that the Advocate can represent your candidate confidentially. Using an Advocate can make it easier to explore a potential match without making a big commitment or hurting another family’s feelings.
- **From a Classified Ad:** In your profile, you can enter an anonymous headline and advertisement about your candidate. Any family with a completed profile for the opposite sex can read this ad without knowing the actual identity of the candidate. If you wish, you may respond to a Classified

Ad with an e-mail or by sharing a profile with the family who placed that Ad.

- **To View Other Profiles:** Just click the “Our Male Candidates” or “Our Female Candidates” link on your Matching Home Page. You can select the profile of whichever candidates are visible to you.
- **Contacting Another Family:** You can send an email directly to the parents of any candidate by clicking the “email” button at the bottom of their profile. You can also select any family from the BFA directory and click the same “email” button at the bottom of the page. Another option is to contact an Advocate for a candidate. Any Advocates will be listed on their profile. Click on the Advocate name and you will be directed to their directory information. You can e-mail them by clicking the “email” button. Advocates have already agreed to help in this way. In fact, sometimes it is easier to ask a third party and you might get a more objective reply.
- **Using a Matching Advisor:** A growing number of members who feel called to support the matching process have been trained and certified by the Blessed Family Department, and are listed on Matchbook by location and specialization. If you have selected “active” under the Advisement entry in your Profile, your MA can actively look for potential matches. If you selected “passive”, they will contact you only when someone else contacts them about your candidate. Advisors will keep your information strictly confidential and can, at their discretion, share some profiles with you as

parents. They may also contact other families on your behalf. You can communicate with the advisors by clicking the “email” icon on your Matching Home Page. If you have selected specific advisors, they will be the first to advise you. However, any of the advisors may respond, depending on who is available.

- **Selecting Advocates:** An “Advocate” is another person or family that serves as a reference for a candidate and also looks for potential matches on behalf of the family. You’ve probably figured out that having several Advocates can be a big help! To select an Advocate, look up the Advocate family in the BFA Directory and click to view the family detail page. At the bottom, select “Add as an Advocate,” and indicate which candidates are to be advocated for. You can write a message to the prospective Advocate. An email invitation will be sent to the prospective Advocate family, who will have the option to accept or decline the invitation. Once they accept, you will be notified and the advocate name will appear on your profile.
- **Being an Advocate:** If you agree to be an Advocate for a candidate, their name and profile will appear with your own family members on the Matching Home Page. You will be able to share their profiles in the same way as for your own family members.

## ***The International Matching Website for Blessed Children***

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[www.bcmatching.org](http://www.bcmatching.org)

The International Matching Website for Blessed Children was established in October 2007, through the cooperative efforts of the Family Departments in Korea, Japan, the USA and Europe, to promote and support the family matching process internationally. It is the official website utilized by BFDs and Blessed Families around the world to facilitate the process of international matchings. It is also useful for nations that do not have their own web support system for matching. Profiles can be uploaded in 3 different languages. While various websites have been developed, such as the USA's "Matchbook," this site has the largest and most broad participation of the greatest variety of international candidates, and can therefore be an effective tool for those specifically seeking a candidate living in another country.

The International Matching Website for Blessed Children is also utilized by the BFDs in the USA, Europe, Japan and elsewhere to display international candidates at Parents Matching Convocations throughout the world. When one nation holds a PMC, it is announced to other nations as well. Those nations then invite qualified candidates from their countries who wish to have their profiles available at the PMC being held in another country, and reports those names to the BFD hosting that PMC. As long as candidate profiles have been uploaded at [www.bcmatching.org](http://www.bcmatching.org), they can be easily downloaded for display at the intended PMC.

To learn more about the site and how to use it, visit [www.bcmatching.org](http://www.bcmatching.org), click on “Home” at the top, and then click “How to Use Website” from the homepage and read a step-by-step visual guide or save it as a PDF file.

## **How to Use the International Matching Website for Blessed Children**

**Registration:** Applicants themselves should register at the site first and enter their profile information. At [www.bcmatching.org](http://www.bcmatching.org), choose your preferred language at the top of the page. Click “Join,” and read the user rules. If you agree to the rules, click on “OK” and a form will open up where you can create your personal ID and password, and enter basic information. Enter your email and all information carefully and correctly, or your registration will not go through. In the “Organizing Department” box, select the appropriate national or regional Blessing Department for your nation. Complete all information and click “send.” You can now access the site using your personal ID and password, and begin filling out your profile.

**Creating a Profile:** Once you as an applicant have submitted your initial information, you are registered as an “Applicant Waiting.” You can login and begin to enter your profile information, but cannot access information on any other candidates. You should open and complete the first four categories listed at the top of the page. You do not need to finish this all at once, and can save more information each time you enter.

**Confirming your membership:** When first submitted, your initial information goes to the webmaster for your

nation or region. The USA has its own webmaster, who works with the National Blessed Family Department. Once they have confirmed your membership and qualification, you will be registered at the website as an “Applicant,” meaning that you have not yet completed all qualifications (Blessing workshop, purity interview, etc.), or a “Candidate,” meaning that you have completed all the qualifications. If you haven’t received email confirmation of your registration within 7 days of applying, contact the appropriate webmaster by clicking “Contact” at the left side of the homepage once you login.

**Sharing Your Profile and Accessing Other Profiles:** Once you are registered as an applicant or candidate, your profile information, whether complete or not, will be visible on the website. If you do not want your profile to be visible to others, click on “Open/Close” at the homepage and you can close your profile until you want to open it. Applicants and candidates themselves cannot access the profiles of other applicants or candidates on the website. Only parents are authorized to view profiles. Sensitive personal information, such as previous Blessing history, is for Blessed Family Department and webmaster information only, and will not appear to others viewing your profile. But these issues should be discussed between parents, and between candidates, at the appropriate in the communication process.

To be able to access profiles, parents need to receive a parents’ password. Once your son or daughter is confirmed as an applicant or candidate, you can receive your parents’ password by requesting it directly from the webmaster. You can login with your candidate’s ID



and password, and select “Contact” at the homepage, or call the National Blessed Family Department directly. To search for potential candidates for your child, enter the site with their ID and password. Then go to “Search and List,” and enter your parents’ password. You can now look for a specific candidate, or create a list of potential candidates by entering various criteria, such as an age range, height range, nation or region, those who are seeking a match from your nation, and other factors to make your search more specific. Please respect and protect the security and confidentiality of the website, which all other candidates and parents expect- do not give your parents’ password to your candidate, or to any other person.

By clicking on a candidate’s name from your search list, their profile will open up. While photos and basic candidate information will appear, some personal information, such as previous Blessing history, will not appear. This information is for Blessed Family Department and webmasters only, but should be discussed between parents at the appropriate time, and candidates as well. Since parents are meant to be the first point of contact between two families, only the parents’ contact information will appear in any profile.

**Matching Advisors:** If parents or candidates have secured the support of any certified MAs, and you would like them to search for international candidates at this site, they simply need to secure an advisors ID from the webmaster at the National Blessed Family Department. Only certified MAs can receive this ID. Parents should not give their ID to any other person, including their candidate, or even a certified MA.

## Other Features

- Profiles can be uploaded and read in English, Japanese or Korean language. The site does not translate profiles automatically, but candidates can upload in any or all of these languages, to reach a greater international audience.
- Parents can organize and edit the “Search and List” in many ways. You can create a specific list with a range of criteria, organize that list by age or by which criteria are more important. You can list candidates by name or by photo.

### ***The Online Matching System (OMS) for First Generation Unificationists***

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[www.cheon-il-guk.org/matching.htm](http://www.cheon-il-guk.org/matching.htm)

This tool will be helpful for those candidates who joined as children along with their parents, and who have the support and involvement of their parents in their search for a potential spouse.

The Online Matching System (OMS) is a service provided to the Blessed Family Department of the Family Federation for World Peace, USA. OMS works in conjunction with the USA BFD, and cooperates with all international Blessed Family Departments. It does not override the authority of the BFDs, but is simply a tool to facilitate the matching and Blessing of First Generation Unificationists according to their faith. Registering and completing the information on the OMS is not the same as completing the application process for the Blessing. This needs to be done separately, with the sup-

port of a Matching Advisor, and must be completed before you can be a qualified candidate on the OMS.

The OMS is a secure web application that allows applicants to the Blessing to submit their application and create a profile. It facilitates candidates and their Matching Advisor in the search for a potential spouse. Matching Advisors working with First Generation candidates and their parents based upon the Family Matching Plan will search for potential matching possibilities and communicate with other MAs to find good recommendations. Once qualified, candidates are also able to read the answers to the profile questions of other candidates. They can offer suggestions or requests to their parents or MA about candidates that interest or inspire them. However, candidates cannot access the names, photos or contact information of other candidates directly, and cannot contact them through the OMS.

At this point, the OMS does not provide special access to parents of candidates, but parents can have the same access as their son or daughter, or can work with a certified Matching Advisor to search for potential matches for their son or daughter.

## **How to Use the Online Matching System**

Registration: Applicants can visit [www.cheon-il-guk.org](http://www.cheon-il-guk.org), click on “Register,” select “Applicants and Candidates,” enter an email address and a password of your choice, and click on “Register” once again. Answer the security question and click “submit.” A first-time registration page will appear. Complete the brief information there. Select “Jacob Generation” as your category and select 2 of the 4 “Matching Status” categories. Once you have

completed the information, click on “Finish Registration.” You will receive an automated email confirming receipt of your registration, including instructions on how to access the site. Even though you receive these instructions, you will not be registered or able to access the site until the webmaster has confirmed that you are a member or associate of the Unification faith community. You will receive a second email within 48 hours, confirming your registration and granting you access to the site.

**Creating a Profile:** Go to [www.cheon-il-guk.org](http://www.cheon-il-guk.org) and click on “Login.” Select “Applicants and Candidates,” and enter your email address, ID and password. This will take you to your main candidate screen. Begin by clicking on and completing each of the information categories 1 through 6 listed across the lower portion of the screen. You do not have to complete everything at once. Take your time to present yourself well, and save your information each time you visit. Be sure to select “Upload Images” and upload good-quality photos of yourself—at least 1 “head shot,” one full-length shot, and one family photo. If you have any problems creating your profile, contact the OMS webmaster at [uc.matching@gmail.com](mailto:uc.matching@gmail.com).

If you have any siblings of the opposite gender who are also matching candidates, you can enter their registration ID numbers to prevent the OMS system from identifying them as a potential matching candidate for you.

**Searching for Candidates:** The OMS is designed as a search and communication tool for Matching Advisors. Qualified candidates can access the answers to profile questions of other candidates, but cannot see the

names, photos or contact information of other candidates. You must have the support of at least one Matching Advisor to use the OMS. A list of certified MAs is available at the website.

Once you have completed all the required information and have been approved to be a candidate by your Matching Advisor, a button named “Potential Candidates” will be visible on your main page. If you wish, you can use this button to access the limited profile information of other candidates, and use this information to make suggestions or requests to your MA. When you click on this button, a list of all qualified candidates of the opposite gender who are within  $\pm 10$  years of your child will be displayed anonymously with basic information, identified by number. By clicking on a particular candidate’s number, you can read their answers to profile questions, and if you wish, anonymously request a full version of the profile be made available to your Matching Advisor.

For more details, visit [www.cheon-il-guk.org](http://www.cheon-il-guk.org), and view the video tutorial there. Written directions are available at the site to guide you every step of the way.



## **The Role and Responsibilities of Matching Advisors**

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### ***What is a Matching Advisor, and What Do They Do?***

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A Matching Advisor knows the process, the best practices, and the available tools to support a candidate and the family with their matching.

- A. They **thoroughly** understand the international guidelines and procedures for the matching process as outlined in The Family Matching Handbook.
- B. They know the matching and Marriage Blessing application process, where to find the forms, and how and when to submit them.
- C. They have been trained and certified by the National Blessed Family Department, and participate in advanced training at least two times per year. They understand the importance of and respect confidentiality.
- D. Some Matching Advisors serve a particular community or geographic area, while others

specialize in a particular category such as candidates over 24. You will want to find one who is a good fit for you and agrees to support you and your family.

- E. Matching Advisors are volunteers. They feel called to this work. They usually have specific hours or days they can offer their time. Their availability should be clearly defined and genuinely respected by each candidate and family.
- F. Your Matching Advisor should be someone who is trustworthy, a good listener and an effective communicator. Also, someone who can support good communication and unity within your family and with another family. An MA is a connector who knows people in different categories and situations.

### **Matching Advisors serve as guides through the process**

- A. They can educate and encourage applicants, candidates and families about preparation for and the process of the matching. They may also host educational programs or small groups and distribute Handbooks.
- B. They can assist applicants in the process of becoming a candidate, develop an understanding of who the candidate is and establish a relationship of trust with them. They can work to ensure good communication, understanding and trust between the candidate and their parents.



- C. They can support the candidate and family in developing a matching support team and a matching plan by using the Family Matching Plan Worksheet in Appendix 1.
- D. They can help candidates and families in the process of finding other candidates and/or help research the situation of someone suggested as a potential match.
- E. The Matching Advisor can serve as a support resource for families during the introduction and communication process of candidates.
- F. If the couple chooses to be matched upon completion of their communication phase, the Matching Advisor can support them in planning and holding their commitment ceremony. The MA will be sure that the match is recorded by the signing of the Matching Report Form, by an announcement at church and by all the necessary documents being submitted to the Blessed Family Department, USA.
- G. If the candidates choose not to be matched at any point, a Matching Advisor can help the candidate and family learn from the experience, heal, and when the time is right begin again by making a new matching plan.
- H. Matching Advisors will encourage matched couples to continue their education together and attend a Level 3 “Start Smart” Blessing Workshop for couples. They will educate candidates and couples about the “Ideal Year” commitment.

As a candidate, you may want to choose a Matching Advisor whom you can trust and be honest with, and who can represent you well. Once you have identified someone you feel you can work with, make sure that they are available, willing and able to be your MA before you begin. Your Matching Advisor can be a valued member of your matching team.

## Contact Information

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### ***USA Blessed Family Department and Matching Advisors***

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481 8th Ave, Room 606  
New York, NY 10001  
Phone: (212) 997-0055  
Fax: (212) 997-0054

Administration: BFDadmin@unification.org  
Matching Advisors: matching@unification.org

### ***Blessed Family Departments in other nations***

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**EUROPE:** [www.bfdeu.org](http://www.bfdeu.org)  
BC Blessing Department [www.esgd.org](http://www.esgd.org)

**KOREA:** [bfdkorea@hanmail.net](mailto:bfdkorea@hanmail.net)

**JAPAN:** [BFDjapan@j-seiwa.org](mailto:BFDjapan@j-seiwa.org)

**SOUTH AMERICA:** [bfdbrzail@gmail.com](mailto:bfdbrzail@gmail.com)

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