



Autumn 2020

So... What Did She Say?

Vijay and Ferry recently completed ten sessions of pre-engagement counseling at the Pastoral Counseling Center of Flushing. As a cross-cultural couple they were surprised at some of the issues they have had to face. We thank them for sharing a part of their journey.

PCCF: So Ferry, is it true that the first time you met Vijay in person you had a check off sheet in hand as to his potential?

Ferry: Yes, and not only a list, but also I took a picture of his driver's license and had a background check done.

PCCF: Why did you choose pre-engagement counseling instead of pre-marital counseling?

F. & V.: We agreed on pre-engagement because we believed that we needed a lot of help in our relationship before taking the leap into engagement. Communication has become very challenging for us, being cross-cultural and from different denominational backgrounds. We wanted to be sure that when we got engaged it would be because we worked out our major issues. Another really important reason was to insure that we would never get into a place where we would be tempted to consider divorce due to issues we weren't aware of prior to marriage. We agreed that seeking counseling early in our relationship would steer us in the right direction.

PCCF: Can both of you share with us some of the things you learned from your counseling experience?

Vijay: I learned how to listen to Ferry, how to focus on the emotions behind the words, and not just on the words. Using "Incarnational Listening" I learned how to

hear what Ferry said without inserting my opinion "into" what she was saying.

Ferry: I think that going to counseling gave me a neutral space where I could hear Vijay speak, as well as for me to express my opinions freely. This helped both of us to see what our strengths and weaknesses were, which was a step to help us realize how much work we needed to make our relationship work. Just hearing each of us put our thoughts into words, no matter how opposite we were, and responding to issues that otherwise we would never be aware of, was very enlightening.

The guidance our counselors gave us helped us analyze what else we were missing. They broke down a step-by-step process on how to deescalate an impending misunderstanding through the power of using a specific set of words chosen for such times. It takes a lot of practice and time to learn.

Vijay: Being short tempered my whole life I've learned through counseling how to breathe and diffuse the anger inside when I get upset. I'm not 100% there but it's getting better. I learned that our family history plays a big part in how we think and act as adults.

Ferry: The space that our PCCF counselors provided, where major issues are tackled, where there is a spirit of acceptance, and just being heard, helped us a lot with our issues. It helped me to understand the grace that must be shown in a relationship.

Vijay: We've been spending time together reading, doing devotions and listening to messages to encourage each other.

PCCF: Any final comments you'd like to share with our readers?

F. & V.: Don't be afraid to raise tough subjects like debt, raising children, living with aging parents, moving geographically, and understanding your spouse's relationship with God.

We decided that we should attend some sort of marriage counseling for the rest of our lives. Trained Christian counselors can steer us back in the right direction when we let life take us off the road.

PCCF: Do you have an announcement to make?

Vijay: Yes, on August 9th I asked Ferry to marry me!!!!

PCCF: *So... What Did She Say?*

Vijay: *She said, YES!!!!!!*



PCCF congratulates Vijay and Ferry on their recent engagement!!

“Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” Ephesians 5:31

A New Order

The tradition of a father walking his daughter down the aisle is often a poignant moment in the wedding ceremony. Each step brings the bride closer to a beginning and the father closer to an end. One handshake later, and the girl the father has protected and loved since birth, is given over to another man.

The tradition is meant to show that a new family unit is being created, one with new priorities and loyalties. In a single moment, Daddy’s little girl becomes someone’s wife, and everything changes.

When you marry, your spouse becomes your most important earthly relationship. For many couples, it’s difficult to find the “oneness” they long for because they’ve never reordered their relational priorities after marriage. Often, this happens because they continue to rely on their parents for assistance with housing, bills, vacations, and emotional support. This almost happened to us.

Three months before we got married, I was laid off from my job. With our income slashed, we had to pull back from our search for an apartment to live in after the wedding. Thankfully, my parents owned a building with an empty apartment. But, when I explained our situation to my mother, she shocked me by saying she would not allow us to move into their building. Furthermore, she said that after the wedding she didn’t want me to complain to her if my wife and I ever fought.

How could a strong Christian woman respond to her son like that? It felt like the most unloving thing she could have ever done, but in the end, it turned out to be a blessing. My mother understood the experience would force me to *leave my father and mother and hold fast to my wife*. It forced us to work together in ways we never had. My wife-to-be helped me consider career opportunities and the implications they would have on our life together. When I ultimately found a job, the victory was ours.

If your in-laws are causing fights in your home, perhaps it is because one of you has failed to “leave.” Establishing a new household can be painful, but leaving your parents is not a rejection of your past, nor is it an act of disrespect. Rather, it is an act of obedience to God and an acceptance of your new role as a husband or wife. So go ahead, leave so that you can cleave.

For more on leaving father and mother listen to, “Leave and Cleave” on [FamilyLife.com](http://www.familylife.com).

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Our Mission
To provide counseling services by integrating psychotherapeutic techniques with biblical principles

FYI
PCCF is open for face-to-face counseling sessions

Generous contributions have blessed the ministry in various ways. PCC continues to depend upon your prayer and support. If you would like to sponsor a session, or a client, Contact us at (718) 463-4613. Thank you.

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