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Masanza still owes me a marriage proposal Publish Date: Jul 09, 2012



Dr. Michael Masanza and his wife, Dr. Monica Masanza
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Dr. Michael Masanza, 51, is a senior lecturer at Uganda Christian University, Mukono. His wife, Dr. Monica Masanza, 44, is a senior programme officer at African Field Epidemiology Network (AFENET). The couple has been together for 13 years and have three children, Joshua, Michelle and Joel. They shared their love experience with Samuel Lutwama

Michael, a student teacher, met a Senior One student in 1981 at Bubulo Girls School in Manafwa. "She was small, but extremely bright," Masanza explains. By coincidence, Masanza taught the girl's favourite science subjects. That girl was Monica, who later became his wife.

"Michael used to teach Chemistry, Biology and Physics, my favourite subjects," she reminisces. At that time, getting married to Michael or any of her teachers was the furthest thing in her mind.

Before she joined Nabumali High School for her A-levels, Michael left the school to pursue further studies at [Makerere University](#). Later, the two met again at Deliverance Church, Mbale and became friends.

Michael

When Monica joined Makerere to pursue her Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine, we both joined a Christian fellowship called Navigators of Uganda. We got to see each other whenever we were going for lectures.

It was not until 1998 when our friendship was taken to another level. During that time, she was pursuing a Master's degree in Microbiology at Cornell University in the US and I was at Wageningen University and Research Centre in the Netherlands, pursuing a PhD.

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Quite often, we communicated by email and phone calls. It was through the interaction that I fell for her. I asked a friend of ours, Connie, whether Monica was seeing someone or not. She assured me that she was not. When she visited me in the Netherlands, I asked for her hand in marriage.

Monica

I think it was our friends who brought us closer. Connie and Geoffrey were our friends and they had a hand in setting our love in motion. I remember Connie calling me while in the US and suggesting that Michael would make a good husband.

Before I came to terms with Connie's suggestion, Michael called and wanted to know whether I was engaged to anyone. By that time, I was ready for a serious relationship and I knew Michael as a serious man and I respected him for that.

The proposal and the first hug

Michael

Before she finished her studies in the US, she was invited to the Czech Republic for a conference. I asked her to visit me and she agreed. That was the time I proposed to her. Interestingly, she also knew what I was driving at because I remember she told me that if she was going to turn me down, then she would not have come.

By then, I was already smitten and I was nervous. Given my conservative background, I was not prepared to give her a hug. However, when I went to pick her at the airport, she asked whether I would hug her. I moved forward and hugged her. It was an unforgettable experience and we did not look back.

In December 1998, she introduced me to her parents and a month later, we got married at Deliverance Church in Nsambya.

Monica

At first, when he revealed his intentions, I thought he was joking since I had known him from childhood. However, as time went on, I made up my mind to date him.

Actually, Michael still owes me a formal proposal because when I met him in Holland, he started discussing the introduction and wedding plans. Fortunately, by the time I was 32 years, I was mature enough for marriage.

After four years, when we were at the airport, one thing stood out when he came to pick me. He simply looked at me, without knowing what to do. I politely asked him whether he was going to give me a hug. To him, it was more than he had bargained for. We courted for only three days.

Previous love experience

Michael

Honestly, Monica was the first girl I fell in love with. Through out school and the time I joined [Makerere University](#), engaging in intimate relationships was not part of my lifestyle.

Before I left for Europe after my master's degree, there were some ladies in the church, whom I thought were expecting a 'word' from me but it did not materialise.

But there was a lady in the church who actually presented the perfect picture of my future wife. I proposed to her, but she put me on hold for a year, until she told me she was engaged to someone. While in Europe, Monica became the sole candidate for my heart.

Monica

When I was in Senior Six, there was one man whom I detested. He claimed God had showed him a 'vision', revealing that I was meant to be his future wife. He came at a time when marriage was not a priority to me.

Besides, he was not the kind of person I was hoping to spend the rest of my life with. I assured him that God had not shown me anything regarding my future husband. Then it became more frustrating when he insisted and started stalking me. This went on for almost a year and I started dodging him. Many years later when I got married to Michael, he actually apologised to me.

Challenges

Michael

The initial challenge for me was to know who I was. The first time I was told that I was rude, was during the initial years of our marriage.

She perceived my ways of talking to her as being rude and this was the hardest challenge to deal with. But now, I have tried to work on handling her in a more gentle way.

In my early years of driving, she would urge me to use routes that had thick traffic in the city centre, yet those were the areas I dreaded, fearing that I would crash into other cars. The other challenge was how my relatives tried to challenge my marriage. Some believed I had made a wrong choice.

They were convinced that there was a better woman for me and they were determined to get rid her. One time, they told her that she would not have children.

But being the strong woman that she is, Monica endured all the mistreatment without disclosing it to me. Perhaps if I had known about those issues earlier, I would have reacted differently. But now, it is history. She gave birth to three children.

Monica

Because we had no time for proper courtship, after Michael had proposed to me, I wrote to him a long email, describing my character and what he should expect of me. I wanted to give him an opportunity before we both committed our lives.

Michael

Before we got married, she wrote a long list, which I have kept up to now. There are some moments when I go back to it just to remind myself who she is.

I believe that write-up helped me to deal with some of my cultural shocks about my spouse. At first, I laughed about the whole write-up, but later, it became my manual of blending personalities.

But now I know that being bold as she is, she knew what she wanted and she never wanted to regret later in life.

In the write-up, she emphasised: “This is me. Do not be shocked about me.”

Monica

I do not like hurting people. I would like someone to know what he or she is going into. So, I preferred to reveal my character in a write-up, to make him aware of who I was. I knew that since we had had no proper courtship, he would be shocked by my character.

One of the lighter things in the write-up was that I would not know how to iron trousers and frankly, up to now, I do not know how to do it.

Another thing was that I do not want to be controlled by circumstances. So, I did not want that to be a threat to him, thinking it was a kind of insubordination as most men would think.

I did not want him to feel intimidated by my character. I did not want him to look at me through the lens of the girl he first saw in 1981, in class.

Our first born

Monica

One of our first challenges was when our first child was born prematurely and with a heart

problem. Before he was born, I had a fracture of the placenta, but with God's grace, the baby was delivered safely. He was in intensive care for three weeks.

Later, we were told that he needed heart surgery. That was the greatest challenge that brought us closest to God. We wondered how we would raise the funds to meet the medical bills in India.

When he made five years, we took him to India to undergo the operation. Seven years later, he is doing well.

Michael

Recently, someone asked me about my son's heart condition since he was once on TV as we asked for funds. I said he does everything that other children his age do. He always tops his class.

Parenting

Michael

From an early age, we teach them Christian basics. As a must, we take our children to Christian schools. We also go to church together as a family. We try to involve them in church activities so that they can appreciate our ministry. We believe that when they grow up, they will reflect what we have imparted to them.

Monica

My parenting was greatly influenced by my mother. When it comes to parenting, Michael and I complement each other. One of our principles as parents is not to argue or disagree in front our children.

From the beginning, we agreed to settle our marital challenges in the bedroom without the children getting wind of anything.

On finances

Monica

For a long time in our marriage, I earned more money than my husband, but it was never an issue. We both believed that 'what was mine was his' and because of that, I remained submissive to my husband, despite my financial status. We discuss everything together as a couple. We have strategic plans for every year.

Usually, we go out for a retreat. Initially, he was not in for that, but now, he is the one pushing all the time for our planning sessions. From time to time, we make reviews and assessments.

Love and submission in the Christian context Michael
My wife is submissive.

The only way I can show love back is by allowing her to pursue her aspirations. She is a career woman, so I give her the liberty and support her to achieve her dreams. In most cases, men who are married to career women try to clip their wings and make them less of what they were intended to be, hence creating friction in marriages.

Monica

Because I am asthmatic, I am allergic to most things, including detergents. So, my husband does all the cleaning in our bedroom and he does it so diligently.

He never lets me go for ante-natal appointments on my own and he has always stood by my side during my three pregnancies. Mostly importantly, he does all the shopping at our home.

I think one thing we have done in our marriage is not to stick to the traditional roles, but to identify our strengths and capitalise on them.

Dealing with trust issues

Monica

Most times I am busy at work, but what has kept us together is trust. My view is that it is my responsibility to keep my trust in God and not my responsibility to keep an eye on my husband, because it is not possible to watch all his moves.

Michael

I trust my wife with all my heart. That is why I am not bothered when she is not with me. However, as a husband, when I go out, I have to inform her because she is also accountable to me. We are all each other's keeper.



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coletecandy@gmail.com

Thank you for this story, its really nice! I have always wished to get a good relationship when I get married!

Bigosi

I think Monica asked for a hug first because after being in Ithaca US, she knew its an american way to hug and kiss on the cheek as a greeting. To Michael hugging is a sign of promiscuity by ugandan conservative culture.

Navigator Friend

Great story!! But thanks to Connie..the match-maker!!

Katu

Micheal and Monica. This is real good news. We are proud of your story.

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