



Will Playing A
High-Class
Call Girl
Save Your
Marriage?

The Obedient Wives Club claims the secret to a blissful marriage is submitting to your husband and his sexual demands. Do they have a point? *BY ALEXANDRA WONG*

TALKING POINT

The Malaysian and Singapore launch of the Obedient Wives Club in June this year sent the worldwide media into overdrive – they were covered by everyone from the BBC and *Time* Magazine to Al-Jazeera.

What really got people talking, even though the Singapore branch never took off, were the remarks made by its International Vice-President, Dr Rohaya Mohamad, 46, who had previously worked in the Ministry of Health for 15 years. Dr Rohaya is a mother of eight, and the third wife out of four in a polygamous marriage. “By serving your husband better than a first-class prostitute, women can help curb social ills like prostitution, domestic violence, human trafficking and abandoned babies,” she said, all of which she attributed to unfulfilled sexual needs.

It’s such a controversial message that *The Weekly* met up recently with Fauziah Ariffin, 48, National Director of the club, which also has chapters in Indonesia and several Arab countries.

What is the story behind the Obedient Wives Club?

The “obedient wife” concept is drawn from an Islamic principle called *solehah*, which is about being an obedient and entertaining wife to your husband. If a woman plays her role well, the world will become a better place to live in.

Why choose a prostitute as a role model?

Our words were twisted out of context. What Dr Rohaya said was: “You have to entertain the husband more than what a first class prostitute can do.” The reason we picked a radical example was simple. An ideal wife should be like an angel, but who can imagine what they are like? We wanted to use a real-world example that could be easily understood by the layman. While doing research, we came upon reports of world leaders who forked out huge amounts to seek out prostitutes. So we analysed the qualities of a first-class prostitute: She looks good and is well-groomed. She doesn’t just supply sex, but offers empathy, comfort and serenity to a man.

Five Deadly Myths That Can Detonate Your Marriage

Whether you agree or disagree with the teachings of the Obedient Wives Club, it’s true that marriage today is complicated. For another view of the situation, let’s hear from life coach and relationship counsellor Sharmini Hensen from Neuro-Linguistic Programming.



MYTH #1 Love conquers all.

FACT: Both partners must expect growth, change – and negotiation.

Love will give you a great headstart, but sustaining a marriage requires adjustment and compromise. When you fall in love, you’re blind to the other person’s faults. Then reality kicks in – he snores and doesn’t put down the toilet seat. Can you still love him anyway?

“It’s challenging when two personalities come together,” says Sharmini. “A couple can be very much in sync with each other, but there will still be times when things will blow up and both parties will disagree. You’ll reach thresholds where you have to make a stand for what you want and learn to shift your emotions and attitudes. It won’t always be easy.”

MYTH #2 Being “selfish” is bad. “Our happiness” is more important than “my individual happiness”.

FACT: Your personal happiness is just as important as your collective happiness.

“The biggest mistake women make in a marriage is to forget themselves,” says Sharmini. “They say, ‘I am doing everything I can to make him happy.’ They end up resenting themselves and their husbands. Try telling yourself, ‘I am not selfish; I am just taking a healthy care of my needs’. In my sessions, if a woman is feeling distant towards her husband, I encourage her to go out, have fun and buy sexy lingerie. When you’re happy, you’ll be more creative at finding things you want to do together. You don’t have to go skydiving; even a simple gesture like texting can feel intimate.”

Why is there a need for sex education for wives?

We believe sex is one of the main causes of marital breakdown. Many women let themselves go after marriage and forget their role as wives. No man wants to come back to a harried wife who is perpetually not in the mood for sex! If a man is satisfied with his wife, he has no reason to look for it elsewhere.

Can a woman ever legitimately go against her husband's wishes?

By default, when you love someone, there is automatically negotiation. We are operating on the assumption that when a man accepts a wife, he is also accepting his responsibilities as a husband. A God-fearing man will not abuse his wife. Therefore, the wife can be 100 percent obedient to the husband. But if he is not fulfilling his responsibilities as a protector, she has the right to disobey.

How do you suggest busy working women manage work and the household... and their sex life?

If you have a target, you'll find a way. When a man is happy, his positive feelings will motivate him to feel more empathetic towards his wife. He may start to chip in or even hire a maid. Isn't that what marriage is all about – give and take? In the club, we are working women too. My husband knows that he is my priority. And because he is satisfied, he is supportive of my work. Dale Carnegie says it very well in his book: "When you give in love, you are being loved." In giving, you receive. **W**



MYTH #3

Your other half should "complete" you.

FACT: *You complete yourself. Expecting your spouse to hand you happiness on a platter is a recipe for disaster.*

No one can "make" you happy. This expectation puts so much pressure on your spouse, it makes happiness even more unlikely.

"It's smarter to take responsibility for your own happiness. Rather than placing the onus on your spouse, take the lead and focus on the positive aspects of your relationship to bring back the sparks. Positive reinforcement always works."

MYTH #4

Spectacular sex is only for the early days of a relationship. And anyway, sex is not that important in a marriage.

FACT: *Good sex is vital, regardless of how long you've been married.*

In an ideal marriage, there should be a balance between mind, spirit and body. "Sex should not be the deal-breaker, but it is crucial in cementing a relationship," says Sharmini. "Kids can bond you, but the relationship is about you and him. Sex is about feeling wanted, connected and loved. If you're not having sex, how is your relationship different from just being flatmates? I help clients rediscover what makes them tick. To enjoy sex, you have to get your moxie back – at times, that means being absolutely selfish about your needs and pleasure!"

MYTH #5

If your marriage is unhappy, end it so you're free to look for the "Right One".

FACT: *Going into a second marriage without realising why the first one failed is like building a new rocket before figuring out why the last one exploded.*

The failure rate for first marriages is 40 percent, and 60 percent for second marriages. "Instead of focusing on what went wrong, people often blame their ex-spouse, and end up believing that the key to a happy marriage is finding the right partner," says Sharmini. So before you head off on your quest for Mr or Ms Right, examine the part that you played in the failure of your last marriage. And rather than looking at an "unhappy marriage" as an unchangeable situation that cannot be saved, consider counselling and relationship coaching.

Contact Sharmini at www.sharminihensen.com.