



Filipino Culture 101: “Tampo”

By Mark Nelson | October 29, 2013

You don't want to find out about “tampo” the hard way. Most Americans and Europeans hate the silent treatment. They can get annoyed really quickly but that's what “tampo” is all about. This Filipino trait is a way of showing your dismay or disapproval of something your partner or friend did. It's all about the silent treatment. “Tampo” can be practiced when you're living with your girlfriend or your wife and your partner will not talk to you or even look you in the eye for a long period of time. “Tampo” can also be done online.

When you have buddies who you constantly over Skype or Facebook chat and all of a sudden you hear crickets, they might be suffering from a case of “tampo”. The American equivalent is not really much of an equivalent. The closest equivalent to this Filipino trait is sulking but sulking tends to be very individual and very self-focused. “Tampo” is really not about the person being silent with themselves or brooding but directing their silence at you. So it's more of like an emotional embargo.

Hurt feelings

Obviously, hurt feelings are at the core of why Filipinos and Filipinas go into “tampo” mode. While both Filipinos and Filipinas express this trait, they express it in different ways and it falls within rough gender lines. Women tend to show their “tampo” and their hurt feelings a certain way while men tend to show their “tampo” in other ways.

Men will still talk to you but you know that they are holding something back or that there is some sort of uneasiness or some sort of discomfort whereas females would completely shut you out. It's very important that you get to the core of this and not let it fester.

How to deal with “tampo”

There are really three general ways Filipinos and foreigners married to Filipinos or Filipinas deal with “tampo”: a. they can let it play out by giving a time; b. they can give emotional bribes by giving their partners small gifts and tokens or; c. talk it out. As you can well imagine, “c” is the best option. Letting “tampo” play out might work for the first few times your partner displays this trait but eventually, old embers if left alone won't die out, instead they might flare up into a giant fire.

So it's really important that you be more proactive in your relationship when “tampo” rears its ugly head. The same goes with bribery. Bribes can only work for so long. If they feel that you have a bad habit or if there is a fundamental flaw in your relationship, no amount of bribes can really make the problem go away. You have to remember, your partner is going into “tampo” mode because they feel hurt for the relationship and they care enough about you to try to communicate to you but “tampo”, it's the best way they can communicate.

So it's a good idea to always be proactive and always try to talk it out. You would notice that when you talk out “tampo” issues that it is not the small petty thing, petty event or petty action that triggered “tampo” but something more fundamental, something deeper.

Ref.: <http://www.pinoytoptips.com/blogs/expat/filipino-culture-101-tampo/>

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