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Filipino values are cultural beliefs and assumptions about what is socially desirable, and therefore, there are expectations on how one must behave in certain situations. Filipino values are inherently positive, however, some values like utang na loob and pakikisama are often abused. Though the Filipino values system is shared by different ethnic groups, the values are ranked and expressed differently. Filipino values are taught in school, but they are quickly evolving because of the influence of social media and the changing priorities of Filipinos. Filipino values influence how we relate with people at home, at church, and in the workplace. Filipinos possess admirable values that, when reinforced, will create a great work culture and authentic leadership. By understanding their values, you can bring out the best in Filipinos. Filipino values refer to the shared cultural beliefs of what is socially desirable in the way Filipinos deal with each other. These values were cultivated by our experiences as a nation through centuries. This means that we have an outgrowth of values that are unique to our country. For many people, the Filipino values are not a new concept. They are the values that we have always had. We are not aware of them because we are not conscious of our values because we have internalized them in the process of growing up. We are swimming in values that we do not notice how our decisions are informed by them. Values are the community standards of what's valuable. They are the guiding principles of our lives. We have personal values, which are like lighthouses that tell us what to avoid and what to pursue. And we balance our personal values with communal values. Since Filipinos are grouped into many islands, dialects, and ethnic groups, some values may be emphasized more in one group than others. I will describe later 30 Filipino values. You will understand why Filipinos do what they do. Use these values to educate, empower, and motivate Filipinos. Use these values to teach personal development and leadership. I won't attempt to be academic. I understand that the younger generation of professionals may find some of the values unfamiliar. But they'll surely recognize each when I show the asal (behaviors) that demonstrate each value. If you want to understand Filipinos, start with our values. You can start with these 30 cultural Filipino values. Each of us carries a different set of values, and we may have a unique way of seeing and understanding each value. We don't study all of these in schools. Our parents taught us these as we were growing up. We learned them while playing with other kids. And we caught them while watching adults. It is quickly evolving because of the influence of social media, but the essence of these values remains. Amor propio is means self-love or self-regard. We Filipino value self-respect. It is related to dangal, which means dignity. We honor our words, and we fight for our honor. It is also related to the Filipino term hiya I will explain below. The greatest love of all, according to Whitney Houston, is loving yourself. Every line of that song tells us about Amor Proprio. Because the greatest love of allis happening to you, the greatest love of allis the love of yourself. It is the greatest love of all. Amor Proprio is a Spanish phrase. We use the phrase, but we did not inherit it. That's because Filipinos, like many Asians, value themselves. They have a high regard for themselves. They respect themselves as they respect others (kapwa-tao). When the Spaniards went to the Philippines, they were looking for slaves. The Filipinos, on the other hand, offered themselves as allies. During the American colonialization in the Philippines, there was an effort to paint love for self in a negative light. Our ancestors were told that too much of this kayabangan (something that colonizers often say) and that our sense of hiya prevents us from reaching our potential. This is why when a person is shy, he is called mahiyang. A criminal is walang-hiya (shameless) and kahiya-hiya (shameful). But hiya means self-regard. In the workplace, Filipinos do not want to be embarrassed. They resent being shouted at. And they also do not want to embarrass others. When I was young, I often hear Nonoy Zuniga's Doon lang. When I was young, I saw the value of education as a way to earn dangal. If you like listening to old songs, you can find Doon Lang on YouTube. Amor propio is a Filipino value that we bring with us everywhere. And everywhere I go, I find Filipinos whose amor propio makes them excellent workers. Awa may mean compassion, grace, sympathy, charity, or pity. The meaning of awa changes slightly based on context, but as a community value, it means compassion for others. Because of our heart for others, we give whatever we have even though we need help. One good example is the mushrooming of community pantries throughout the country during the pandemic. Because we value others, Filipinos tend to be compassionate. When the Covid-19 pandemic hit the Philippines, Filipinos took care of the most vulnerable groups in our society. Many Filipino managers, for example, have to think twice before they let go of employees. Western companies consider it a good business decision to let go of people to maximize profits. If one employee can do the work of two persons, they'll let go of one. Most Filipino managers are people-oriented. They do understand that employment means a lot to Filipino workers. Being let go means that they will stop supporting their family. So, we find ways to keep someone on the job. As a result, we have loyal employees. They'll do everything to help your organization. Employees consider this generosity which they have to strong Awaw. A Deep Sense of Shared Suffering: Leap of FaithBahala Na is a Filipino attitude that expresses courage and faith in God. It means to let go and let God. It has always been an expression of optimism. Bahala na is a quality shared by most entrepreneurs. It is almost equivalent to the Western concept of risking forward. American entrepreneurs typically say that to succeed, one has to embrace the unknown instead of standing still. Bahala na is like that and more. Bahala na means that Filipinos consider all possible solutions. And when it seems that there is only one solution left, though they don't have all the information they need, they'll risk forward. They run away from safety to get something that will make them free. This is the same quality we admire among heroes. It may seem safe to be in prison but freeing oneself outweighs everything. But, just like I said, Bahala na is more than that! Bahala Na is an expression of courage and faith. It was like David facing Goliath. 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if they never learn from them. For example, if food is left out to spoil and has to be thrown away, they don't try to prevent it from happening again, but simply do it again and again. If during a party, someone puts their beer bottle on a narrow wooden plank, which common sense tells you will fall in only a matter of time, and it does fall as predicted, they simply do it again next time. When mothers give their toddler kids drink and food to hold, which they then spill all over the ground, the mother does not learn from that, but simply repeats the mistake again, results, a messy kitchen. And if kids get hurt or maimed from playing with fireworks and throwing them in front of people on public streets, they simply do it again and again, like they don't care. This is not just a lack of common sense, but a form of madness without regard for consequences too. It also shows a lack of regard for safety and wasting resources. Filipinos Definitely Love to Get and Hate to Give Winston posted in his blog happierabroad.com: "Filipinos definitely love to GET and HATE to give. This explains in part why salaries are so low in the Philippines that many have to go abroad to work or resort to receiving funds from overseas relatives or foreigners. They are so low because everyone hates giving and is super stingy, while of course they are always happy to receive as much as possible from others. This creates an obvious imbalance in their society that leads to problems. [Source:Winston, happierabroad.com, December 22, 2011] "The basic hypocrisy here is that everyone is always wanting to get but no one wants to give. This creates an imbalance that leads to consequences. To them, there is no shame at all in taking, but there is in giving. When Filipinos do give, it's always very little, and if it goes beyond that, there will be extreme reluctance and an attempt to make you feel guilty for forcing them to give. Giving goes against their nature. This is why foreigners who live in the Philippines or have done business there will tell you that "When money is flowing from you to them (Filipinos) they will be nice and friendly to you. But when money is flowing from them to YOU, they will see you as a devil." "Many Filipinos feel NO SHAME at all in receiving things, even at great expense to the giver, but in fact have an OVEREAGERNESS and INSATIABLE appetite for it. They receive with a child-like glee, as if they were children jumping up and down in front of Santa Claus waiting for their gifts. Try this: When you are in a department store, go to a sales associate and point to some fancy expensive item and jokingly say, "How about I buy that for you?" Notice how they light up with glee and delight as they say "Oh really? You buy that for me?" as though he/she was a child, totally forgetting the nonsensical nature of a total stranger buying an expensive gift for another stranger for no reason. That's because their desire to receive without shame or guilt supersedes everything without inhibition. It's the nature of their character. There is no shame or guilt in seeing you waste your money either, even if you're poor on a budget. They are always very willing to receive things from you, even if it bankrupts you. "Many are also not shy to ask you directly for a gift either, hence the popular cultural line they give you when you are about to travel: "Don't forget my pasalubong (gift)." Even jokes like that are revealing in regards to a culture's mentality. Such greediness is the worst in Manila and Angeles City, but not as bad in the rest of the country or the provinces. In this area, there is a double standard in that while it is ok for a Filipino to want to receive things for FREE, and take advantage of any FREE thing they can get, it is considered out of line and rude for a foreigner to expect to get anything for free. Instead, foreigners are supposed to enjoy paying for everything, not expecting anything for free. Yet a Filipino is allowed to gleefully want and expect free things, especially from foreigners, as though it were an entitlement they had been waiting for, like a child waiting all year for Santa to visit his home." Hiya "Hiya" (pronounced hee-ya) is an important idea in the Philippines. It literally translates to "a sense of shame. Sometimes hiya is interpreted as 'face', but that is not the whole story. According to laonlaan.blogspot.com: "Filipinos are very sensitive to personal affront. They try, as much as possible, to avoid feeling "hiya", a painful emotion or deep shame arising from a realization of having failed to live up to the standards of Filipino society. It is a kind of anxiety, a fear of being left exposed, unprotected and unaccepted. It is a fear of being shunned by their society, which would mean personal humiliation. [Source: laonlaan.blogspot.com / " "Hiya" is one value that regulates the Filipinos social behavior. Just as one is very careful not to be subjected to embarrassment or "mapahiya" one must also make it a point NOT to cause another person's embarrassment. For example, in asking favor, both parties are careful not to offend the other. So if a favor cannot be granted, the person who cannot oblige apologizes for his failure to do so with an explanation that it is not his intention to forgetting the nonsensical nature of a total stranger buying an expensive gift for another stranger for no reason. That's because their desire to receive without shame or guilt supersedes everything without inhibition. It's the nature of their character. There is no shame or guilt in seeing you waste your money either, even if you're poor on a budget. They are always very willing to receive things from you, even if it bankrupts you. 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So if a favor cannot be granted, the person who cannot oblige apologizes for his failure to do so with an explanation that it is not his intention to refuse but that other factors beyond his control keep him from doing so. / "Hiya is the currency applied within the society, controlling and motivating a person's social behavior. This is the reason why a vast majority of Filipinos still remain conservative in their actions in the modern age. Everyone is expected to have hiya in the way they behave in order to win respect from the community. Dressing cleanly, being friendly and living up to your word are good ways avoiding "hiya". / "Public ridicule, or to be censured openly, or to fail to do what is expected of one, is to suffer hiya, a loss of esteem. Inversely, if one has not acted improperly, or continued to behave in a manner disapproved of by the community, it's to be without hiya. This label automatically results in the withdrawal of acceptance within one's group, if not the entire community. To be charged with not having this sense of hiya is regarded as a grave social sin, for one to be called "walang hiya" is an ultimate insult. / "Hiya is a controlling element in the Filipino society. A person's behavior is socially restricted by his sense of "hiya" while public behavior is censured, or approved of, by hiya. For example, an employee dismissed from his job may react with violence because of "hiya." Or a workmate may not openly disagree with you even if he feels strongly against your opinion out of "hiya". For other examples, an employee could refrain from asking questions from his supervisor even if he is not quite sure what to do, because of hiya. Or a party host may end up spending more than she can afford for a party, driven by hiya, or the fear of being perceived of in any negative way. More on Hiya According to Philippines Australia Business Council: "Hiya is shame, shyness, losing face, and embarrassment, or a combination of these. It is the Filipino reaction to anything which is an affront to his honor, dignity, or pride. It reflects in all his personal relations, as well as how he looks at himself relative to another individual. A Tagalog would say "Di baling saktan mo ako, huwag mo lang akong hiyain: (I would not mind if you hurt me physically, just do not shame me). A harsh speech or discourteous comment may trigger a violent reaction from a Filipino. A Tagalog would say "Ang sugat ng itak ay mas mahanay kaysa sa sugat ng masamang pangungusap" (The wound from a knife is more bearable than an offensive word). Another Filipino proverb which stresses the importance of hiya says "Kung gumagaling ang isang sugat, di kumukupas ang masamang pangungusap" (A wound may heal, but an offensive word never fades away. [Source: Philippines Australia Business Council ~^~] In other words, a Filipino prefers to agree, especially with superiors, rather than take the risk of being offended by rebuff; it drives him to do the "right" thing in the eyes of others, even if this requires sacrifices on his part. It also helps maintain order within his own group and serves as an unwritten code of conduct for the community. Hiya has been described as "the uncomfortable feeling that accompanies awareness of being in a socially unacceptable position, or performing a socially unacceptable action." It is a very controlling element in Filipino society. To call a Filipino walang-hiya (shameless) is to wound him seriously. Hiya may even operate when a person is absolutely right, and the other person is wrong. This is to preserve the balance between hiya and amor propio (self-esteem). For example, a Filipino may hesitate to collect a long overdue debt, because to bring up the matter face-to-face may place a person's amor propio at risk. ^~ Stephen wrote in livinginthephilippines.com: "The Filipino people are not known for being confrontational ... But if you get in their face, raise your voice and call them names, you are likely to push them over the brink . Our western culture is that of being 'rugged individuals'. This means being a self-reliant and independent person. Surely we are all citizens, but responsible for ourselves and our own futures. This 'rugged individualism' is especially true for America, Canada, New Zealand and of course Australia. But because of the Philippine 'Hiya' concept it means that the Pinoy outlook is completely different. The Philippine people need to be close to, and accepted, by others. Most personal behavior is driven in seeking to be well-accepted and respected group members.Thus, our individualism is not something that is outside Pinoy would ever aim for. [Source: Stephen, livinginthephilippines.com/forum, August 22, 2013] This Philippine concept of hiya may seem somewhat meaningless or unknown to us westerners whom value individualism and non-conformism, because our behavior is controlled more by an individual sense of right and wrong, and much less by outside group censure. In the Philippines, to lose hiya and so the support of your kinsmen is to become a social outcast. This strong social/cultural drive leads to the over-riding importance of "Filipino Hiya" at all times. Hence, it's a really good idea not to shout at or abuse any Filipino, especially in public. If one causes a perceived loss of hiya, things could get ugly very quickly indeed and especially for you. It's best to smile in a friendly way, so Pinoy's can feel that doing what you want brings respect to them for treating foreigners well. However, if one is shouting and displaying anger in public, then a Filipino can gain respect from other Pinoy's by treating you, a rude foreigner, disrespectfully. They would gain in hiya by simply putting a rude person in their place. Importance of Social Approval to Filipinos Jeff Harvie wrote in filipinawives.wordpress.com: "Filipinos are very aware of the opinions of others and what people think of them. While this might seem a bit silly to westerners, it is how it is and you're not going to change it, even if change was a good thing. Social approval, or acceptance by the group, is very important to Filipinos. If you, as the fiancé or husband of a Filipina, do something to cause her to feel hiya within her social group, then you have offended her and hurt her in ways you might never be able to appreciate. [Source: Jeff Harvie, filipinawives.wordpress.com, August 19, 2014 =] "Going out in public unshaven, unkempt and wearing dirty clothes, old flip flops and looking like you just crawled off Smokey Mountain (a giant garbage dump in Manila) will cause her to feel hiya. She wants the world to be proud of you because you are the living embodiment of how well she can take care of her family. You never see Filipinos at the mall dressed like beggars unless they are, indeed, begging. No matter how poor, when they go out in public they will make sure every member of the family is clean and as well dressed as circumstances allow. = "Speaking your mind in that blunt, forthright and very direct way we westerners see as being honest and admirable is also a way you can evoke hiya in those around you. Yes, the Philippines has some serious social issues to deal with. Yes, there are inequalities and corruption is systemic, but that doesn't mean you need to remind everyone in earshot. Filipinos know there are problems to be solved but so too do we have serious social issues in our own countries. You wouldn't like it if someone kept on and on about racial problems in the USA or welfare cheats in the UK, how Aborigines are treated in Australia or whatever. Regardless of how accurate the comments may be, nobody likes to be hammered about these things, especially in social settings. Filipinos do worry what others think about them. Accept that. Do be aware that what you do, say and how you behave can hurt those around you. Understand that hiya, a sense of shame, is very real and if you don't want to be the archetypal ugly "Kano", be mindful of the part hiya plays in Filipino society. = Filipino "Amor Propio" " Amor propio" is Spanish word which means self -love; a sense of self-esteem or self respect that prevents a person from swallowing his pride. According to the Philippines Australia Business Council: Amor propio often implies a vindictive reaction to questioning an individual's action, integrity, or honor. Injury is personal and does not need to be shared; it is enough to the aggrieved person that injury has been inflicted. Amor propio is like a high tension wire, which holds an individuals self-respect and esteem and provides protection from rebuff. Amor propio is not aroused by every insult or offensive remark, but only by those which hit at an individual's most highly valued attributes. If amor propio is aroused, the impulse to hit back physically or verbally often overrides pakikisama and the desire to avoid violence. [Source: Philippines Australia Business Council] According to laonlaan.blogspot.jp: Amor propio "includes sensitivity to personal insult or affront. A slight remark or offensive gesture, though insulting, would not trigger a sense of "amor propio". The stimulus that sets it off is only that which strikes at the Filipino's most highly valued attributes. For example, an abandoned wife will refuse to seek financial support from a husband who has abandoned her no matter how financially destitute she is on this principle. Amor propio in short means ego defensiveness, dignity or one's personal pride akin to the traditional oriental attitude of having 'face". [Source: laonlaan.blogspot.jp, June 18, 2010 /] "In Philippine society, building up one's self-esteem is essential, and to this end amor propio in all respect reinforces the Filipino trait "hiya". To damage another person's amor-propio is to invite conflict, even violence; a Filipino is prevented by "hiya" from placing a person's self-esteem in jeopardy For example, a bride who stands up a groom in the altar places the latter's "amor propio" at risk and could lead to a violent marital dispute. In other words, a Filipino prefers to agree, especially with superiors, rather than take the risk of being offended by rebuff; it drives him to do the "right" thing in the eyes of others, even if this requires sacrifices on his part. It also helps maintain order within his own group and serves as an unwritten code of conduct for the community. Hiya has been described as "the uncomfortable feeling that accompanies awareness of being in a socially unacceptable position, or performing a socially unacceptable action." It is a very controlling element in Filipino society. To call a Filipino walang-hiya (shameless) is to wound him seriously. Hiya may even operate when a person is absolutely right, and the other person is wrong. This is to preserve the balance between hiya and amor propio (self-esteem). For example, a Filipino may hesitate to collect a long overdue debt, because to bring up the matter face-to-face may place a person's amor propio at risk and can cause the latter to flare up. Public confrontation can lead to violence. Filipinos avoiding open conflict as matter of amor-propio and honour. Now if you are wondering why a Filipino hesitates to bring up a problem, or point out that "your slip is showing", or call your attention to an anomalous situation, remember that it is hiya in operation. Filipinos feel uneasy if they are instrumental in making waves, rocking the boat and exposing someone's volatile amor-propio to injury. To avoid further confrontation and damage to one's "amor propio", the best solution one can resort to is to get a "go between". Importance of "Go-betweens" in the Filipino Society A breach of etiquette involving the inter-play between "hiya" and "amor propio" can be a serious matter and face to face situations resolving the matter can be too potentially explosive to be handled delicately and appropriately. Thus, according to laonlaan.blogspot.jp, "an intermediary or "go-between" (locally termed as "padrino") is needed to defuse the situation. The "go-between" makes it possible to raise matters that may have caused a person's "hiya" or embarrassment. The person addressed by the go-between has the prerogative to turn down the request, or contradict the charges and explain his side without fear that he is threatening the amor propio of the petitioner. [Source: laonlaan.blogspot.jp, July 12, 2010 /] "For example, a simple request for a job placement from a friend/family is fraught with "amor propio" elements, since to say a person is not qualified may wound that person's "amor propio" and cause "hiya" for having presumed that he can do the job and for having aspired for it, rejection of an application creates an awkward situation for both the applicant and the person who has to turn him down. This is much harder when the other element of Filipino society such as kinship comes in. "Amor propio" would be more wounded if the person who turned down the request is, say, a relative or a friend. In this situation, the job of the third person is to convey the request, in which case the person from whom the job is solicited will feel free to say no gracefully, rejection is taken in better grace when explained by the intermediary. / "A "go-between" is often used by a young man to know whether the lady he is courting likes him as well. As we say, the way to a Filipina's heart is through her best friend, or a cousin. Because of "hiya" and "amor propio", face to face confrontations are very much discouraged which makes the "go-between" indispensable. This is also inculcated within the Filipino family. Children approaches the mother over a grievance or disciplinary problems involving the father. A grandmother, aunt, sister, or brother may all serve as intermediaries over inter-family differences. / According to the Philippines Australia Business Council: "To avoid situations where hiya or amor propio may come into play, a go-between, or intermediary is often used. It is easier to solve a problem, or turn down a request this way. For example a child learns to approach their mother for solving disciplinary problems involving their father; an employer rejecting a job applicant, may find it appropriate to use a go-between to relay the information to diffuse what may be an awkward situation for both employer and intending employee. A go-between helps maintain SIR. He can relay an unpleasant message with less pain than if it comes directly from the sender. The receiver can then let off steam without directly affecting the sender, and conflict can be avoided. [Source: Philippines Australia Business Council ~^~] "Pakikisama" Pakikisama is involved in important ideas in the Philippines. According to language.berkeley.edu: In its most basic sense, "pakikisama" means going along with others. Its basic etymological source is "sama" (to go with). A derived term is "kasama" (companion; together with). In the social interaction context, "pakikisama" means 'getting along with others' and ideally getting along 'well' with others. The first part of the term "paki-" is also significant, since it may refer to the Tagalog affix for "please". It's as if the individual is being requested to 'please' get along well one's fellow human beings. [Source:language.berkeley.edu /+] "Among friends and even relatives, it is considered obnoxious and unacceptable to give a direct command. To minimize the directness or "impact" of the command, Filipinos use paki nga or maki- so as not to offend. Even a boss in the office would use 'paki-' the equivalent of 'please' in English, in giving a request to a subordinate. [+|] To be polite is to use paki- or maki-. This is part of the so-called "S.I.R." coined by Filipino social scientists. SIR stands for Smooth Interpersonal Relationship. Filipinos go to great lengths to avoid offending another's feelings which is why they have this linguistic social convention. It is also part of this whole system of pakikisama and pakikipagkapwa-tao. Pakikisama is the opposite of individualism. In Filipino culture, a person who has no pakikisama is a loner, an individualist disdained by others who seek his company. He does not know how to "go with the crowd." A related word is makibagay, "to conform" with the group in order to maintain a Smooth Interpersonal Relationship. [+|] Pakikisama is also sharing one's wealth, talent, time and self with fellow human beings as in bayanihan, working together for a common good without regard for monetary remuneration. The wonderful feeling of having helped achieve something for the common good is its own reward. It is interesting to note that the root word for bayanihan is bayani, "hero," hence, "being heroes." [+|] F. Landa Jocano in his book on Filipino World View (2001) relates pakikisama with two other concepts. First, is pakikipagkawa where "a person is evaluated as good or bad, just or unjust right or wrong on the basis of how (one) regards ...kapwa (the other person).". In the normative dimension, a golden rule-type is called for in relating to one's kapwa-tao (fellow human being). The second concept is that of pakikiramay, where a person empathizes or sympathizes with fellow humans during critical periods (e.g. a death in the family). Pakikipagkapwa-tao is a compound word that comes from kapwa "other" and tao "person" The prefix pakikipag- yields the social participative meaning of essentially "getting along with others", and ideally getting along 'well' with others. The first part of the term "paki-" is also significant, since it may refer to the Tagalog affix for "please". It's as if the individual is being requested to 'please' get along well one's fellow human beings. [Source:language.berkeley.edu /+] "Among friends and even relatives, it is considered obnoxious and unacceptable to give a direct command. To minimize the directness or "impact" of the command, Filipinos use paki nga or maki- so as not to offend. Even a boss in the office would use 'paki-' the equivalent of 'please' in English, in giving a request to a subordinate. [+|] To be polite is to use paki- or maki-. This is part of the so-called "S.I.R." coined by Filipino social scientists. SIR stands for Smooth Interpersonal Relationship. 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