# Married 72 Yrs And Still In Love

After 72 years married, with 10 children, 59 grandchildren and countless great grand children, Cassandra and Joseph Thomas are very much in love. The secret : they never go to bed angry.
On a cool afternoon one day last week, Miss Cassie recalled how they met as she sat on the verandah of their home in Johnnies Hill, Clarendon. IT was love at first sight when Cassanda (Miss Cassie) met Joseph Thomas many moons ago.She was 17 years old and he was five years her senior when they had a chance encounter."I went out to the market at Kellits and on returning home - at the time we used to walk because transportation was not available in those time - we walked and talked from this to that," a very animated 92-year-old Thomas said, as she sat beside her husband.She had her first child a year after they took that walk from the market. They got married on December 26th, 1936 when she was pregnant with her second child."He stepped in after I had my first child and when I got pregnant again... he decided to marry me." Thomas, she said, had promptly informed her that no more children would be born "out of wedlock".

In all, Miss Cassie gave birth to seven boys and three girls whose ages range from 47 to 75. Four children are deceased.When asked how her husband proposed to her, she burst out laughing then later confessed that she couldn't remember. She quickly added, however, that her lapse in memory was insignificant since all that really mattered was that they were in love."I told my father that he was going to marry me, and we got married and the second child was born in wedlock," Miss Cassie, the more talkative of the two, said.They say their secret to a successful marriage is abundant love. The fact that they share the same birthday, March 28, may also have something to do with it."Let me spell it for you, l-o-v-e," Miss Cassie emphasised. "It's just love, because if you don't love, yu not going to stay. If you don't love, don't bother with it [getting married]. That's how we do it. We just love one another. Soft, hard, rough; we just cling to each other," she explained."Not all day is sunshine, but we just take it easy," she continued. "For sometimes you have rain and sometimes you have sun, but you still going. When the rain comes, you just shelter." Over the years the couple also developed an intricate way of dealing with conflict. According to Miss Cassie, couples should never go to bed angry. "Settle your business at night. Confession on the pillow! That's where you make up, and nobody hears about it. So if you don't love, nuh baddah with it (marriage)," she reiterated.The couple were also business partners, making their livelihood from farming."I planted everything. The only thing I never planted was weed," Mr Thomas said jokingly, adding that he planted mostly coffee, sugar cane and chocolate.After the products were reaped, Miss Cassie took them to the market to be sold."Whatsoever he cultivated, I sell at the market. Me had a hard time because me travel from here to Claremont Market. At that time it was mango time, so you work the donkey to Claremont and then sell mango as usual until the trucks come in, and you don't bother use the donkey again you go on the truck," she explained, adding that she sold the produce in Lluidas Vale and Rock River."It was a rough time because we have to travel with the donkey to market. I used to have to get up early because I never used to stay overnight. The only time I stay overnight was when I went to Claremont," she said.That is how they pulled through the rough times and were able to build their own home in the 1960s. They built a quaint bungalow where they still live today."The children had to be contented with whatsoever we provided," she recalled, adding that "God's handy work, work this out for us".Their fourth child, Leahnore, has fond memories of her childhood."It was fantastic. The point about growing up with my parents was you must not tell lies," she said. "It was beautiful, when she (Miss Cassie) says no, there is no if and but, it's just no."Unfortunately, Mr Thomas recently had to give up farming, not because of his age but because he has a bad knee."Everything come to a standstill now, but we know that God will provide," Miss Cassie said, adding that Tropical Storm Gustav also destroyed some of the crops they had left.And when it comes to the reason why the couple has enjoyed longevity, they think it is their good eating habits that has kept them around this long."Just natural. No fertiliser," Miss Cassie explained. "I take it easy. Me nuh eat everything. Me nuh eat them beef and them chicken."  source: jamaicaobserver.com