

QUESTIONNAIRES

The following questionnaires are an effective manner to get the couple to think about their relationship and the potential problems. They also provide a good basis to begin discussions.

What Is Your Main Motivation In Marrying This Particular Person?

1. What is your main reason or reasons for marrying this particular person?
2. Are you afraid that if you do not marry this person that you will have a hard time finding someone else to marry?
3. Is your main motivation in marrying this person because of a strong feeling of attraction?
4. How can you be certain that your strong feelings are really love and not merely infatuation?
5. Do you have any ulterior motives for marrying this person (such as money or status)? Are these a basis for a good marriage?
6. Does your potential spouse have any ulterior motives? How can you find out for sure?
7. Are you or your potential spouse trying to get married to escape from an unhappy home life? In reality, will this marriage increase or decrease your problems?
8. Are you getting married to solve your own personal problems?
9. If yes, how certain are you that this marriage will solve those problems?
10. What role does the marriage of your friends have on your wanting to get married right now?
11. If you weren't marrying this particular person, would you prefer to marry someone Jewish?
12. What are you gaining by marrying this particular person?
13. What are you losing out by marrying this particular person?
14. Do you think that your potential spouse might be painting an unrealistic picture of him or herself and that you might be marrying an illusion? In what ways might you be mistaken about the real personality and attitudes of this person?
15. Is it possible that your intended marriage might be a rebellion against your parents? If it is, is that a good basis for a marriage?
16. Does your physical attraction for your potential spouse prevent you from being aware of problems which may cause you difficulties later?
17. Do you love your potential spouse? What do you mean by love?
18. Does your potential spouse love you? Have you asked your potential spouse if he or she has a definition of love? If he doesn't have one, how do you feel about marrying someone who, when he says that he loves you, doesn't know what he means?

Are You Compatible?

1. What are your five strongest traits?
2. What are your five worse faults?

3. What are your potential spouse's five strongest traits and five worse faults?
4. How can you be certain that you will be able to tolerate your potential spouse's faults?
5. How can you be certain that your potential spouse will be able to tolerate your faults?
6. Is there anything about you that annoys your potential spouse?
7. Is there anything about your potential spouse that annoys you?
8. Are there any traits or behaviors of your potential spouse that you hope to change?
9. What will you do if there will be no change?
10. What are your major goals in life?
11. What are your potential spouse's major goals in life? How do they differ from yours? Are they compatible with your goals?
12. Describe the atmosphere of your childhood home. How does this differ from the atmosphere in your potential spouse's childhood home?
13. What are some of the differences between your parents and your potential spouse's parents?
14. What are the intellectual differences between you and your potential spouse?
15. What are the emotional differences between you and your potential spouse?
16. What are the differences between your interests and the interests of your potential spouse?

Financial Compatibility

1. Have you spoken with your potential spouse about your ideas of how much money you both would like to earn and how much money you would like to spend on a regular basis?
2. What are the major differences between the financial situations of your family of origin and that of the family of your potential spouse?
3. How will you react if your spouse spends more money than you think is appropriate?
4. How will you react if your spouse does not earn as much money as you wish?
5. What is the barest minimum you would be able to live on?
6. Would your spouse be able to live on that amount?
7. In what ways do you financially indulge yourself right now?
8. In what ways does your potential spouse indulge in excessive spending?
9. How will you react if your spouse turns out to be excessively stingy?
10. Do you think that you and your spouse would agree on how much to spend on a house?
11. Do you plan to spend any money on hobbies?
12. Do you plan to spend large sums of money on furthering your education?
13. Do you plan to spend a large sum of money on vacations?
14. Do you enjoy spending large sums of money on clothing?
15. How much of your income do you plan to give to charitable organizations?
16. What arguments have you already had with your potential spouse about monetary matters?
17. What type of neighborhood did you grow up in and how does this differ from the type of neighborhood that your potential spouse grew up in?
18. Do you feel that both a husband and wife should work?

19. Who do you think should make the decisions about spending money? Who does your potential spouse think should make the decisions?
20. Did your parents ever argue about financial matters and how did you react, if they did?
21. How many days a week do you plan to work?
22. How do you feel about working overtime? How does your potential spouse feel about it?
23. If your family is wealthier than your potential spouse's family, do you think that your fiancé might be interested in you because of your money?
24. Consider in what ways your potential spouse might differ with your opinions and habits concerning financial matters.

Religious Compatibility

1. Do you believe in God? What is your definition of God?
2. Does your potential spouse believe in God? What is his or her definition of God?
3. What will you do if your potential spouse becomes more involved in his or her religion?
4. How will your potential spouse react if you become more involved in your religion?
5. Is it important for you to observe any Jewish holidays? How does your potential spouse feel about this?
6. Does your potential spouse wish to observe any of his or her non-Jewish holidays? How do you feel about this?
7. Do you want a religious ceremony for your wedding? Does your potential spouse? What differences do you have in this area?
8. Would your potential spouse wish to have any symbols of his or her religion in your home? If yes, how do you feel about this?
9. Do you plan to attend synagogue after you are married? How does your potential spouse feel about this?
10. Does your potential spouse plan to attend church after you are married? How do you feel about this?
11. Are there any religious practices of your potential spouse that presently bother you?
12. Do you have any religious practices that bother your potential spouse?
13. If you have a boy, would you want him to be circumcised? How does your potential spouse feel about this?
14. If your potential spouse is a religious Christian, will he or she insist on baptism? How do you feel about this?
15. If your potential spouse is a religious Christian, how does he or she respond to the fact that the Almighty forbids intermarriage in the Five Books of Moses (Deuteronomy 7:3,4 "Do not intermarry ... they will lead your children away from Me...") which both Jews and Christians revere as the Word of God? How do you feel about this?
16. Do you or your potential spouse think it is wrong to aid in the destruction of an endangered species? How do you feel about aiding in the destruction of the Jewish people?

How Much Do You Value Being A Part Of The Jewish People?

1. Do you consider your Jewishness an important part of your identity?
2. What would your reaction be if you personally were safe, but the rest of the Jewish people were in danger of perishing?
3. If someone tried to force you to convert to another religion, how would you react?
4. Do you feel proud when you hear about the achievements of other Jews?
5. Did your parents value being Jewish?
6. Did your grandparents value being Jewish?
7. If you are marrying a non-Jewish woman, does it bother you that your children will not be considered Jewish by the vast majority of Jews?
8. What concepts and ideals are important to you in considering yourself a good person? Which of those are of Jewish origin?
9. Have you ever visited Israel? If so, did you feel any special connection?
10. If a non-Jew makes a derogatory remark or ethnic joke putting down Jews, do you feel angry or hurt?
11. Do you have an emotional reaction when you hear the words "Hitler" or "Nazi"?
12. If someone offered you \$10,000 to remove all traces of Jewishness from your life, would you consent to the deal?
13. If you meet a stranger and he tells you that he is Jewish, do you feel closer to him because of your mutual Jewishness?
14. If there is a major tragedy such as an airplane crash, do you read the list of victims to pick out the Jewish names?
15. Do you want to be buried in a Jewish cemetery?
16. Do you realize that marrying a non-Jewish person essentially cuts you off from the Jewish people? Does that bother you?
If you find that these questions ring true, then you care about being a part of the Jewish people more than you think!

Is Conversion An Option?

1. Is your potential spouse seriously considering conversion?
2. How does he or she feel about his or her own religion?
3. How knowledgeable is he or she about Judaism?
4. Are you both familiar with the traditional Jewish requirements for conversion? (see page XX)
5. Are you both aware that Jews who are committed to traditional Jewish law do not recognize Conservative and Reform conversions?
6. Are both of you willing to accept upon yourselves observance of traditional Jewish law?
7. Are both of you aware that failure to sincerely accept mitzvah observance invalidates a universally accepted Jewish conversion? (see page XX)
8. If it were not for the marriage, would your potential spouse consider conversion?
9. If your marriage dissolves or you were to die, would your potential spouse want to remain Jewish? Would he/she continue to raise your children as Jewish or take them to church?
10. If your spouse converts to Judaism, what would be his or her main motivation?

11. Are you aware that conversion for the sake of marriage is an unacceptable motivation for conversion?
12. What would be the reaction of your potential spouse's family if he or she were to convert? Would their reaction have a detrimental effect on your potential spouse's decision to convert?
13. If there were to be another holocaust, would your potential spouse still consider himself or herself Jewish?
14. If your potential spouse were to sincerely convert, would there be a problem if he or she wanted to be more observant than you - to keep Shabbat, Kashrut, etc.?
15. Would you consider converting to your potential spouse's religion? If not, why not? Would you respect yourself if you converted?
16. If you are not willing to convert to your potential spouse's religion, how can you ask him or her to convert to your religion?
17. Could you respect the intellectual and moral integrity of your potential spouse if he or she would convert in order to marry you, rather than because they truly wanted to be Jewish?
18. Would you have respect for someone who opted for a quickie, non-universally accepted conversion?

What About Children?

1. Are you planning to have children?
2. If not, are you concerned with the possibility of having unplanned children?
3. If you are planning to have children, what will you consider their religion to be?
4. Will they be considered Jewish to the whole Jewish people?
5. What will your spouse's religion consider to be their religion?
6. Are you aware that children of mixed-religious parentage often have an identity crisis? How do you plan to deal with your children's identity crisis?
7. What will you do if your non-Jewish spouse surprises you by deciding to raise the children according to his or her religion?
8. Do you think it is fair to create confusion in your children in an area so vital as their basic identity?
9. Would you want your son to have a Bris Mila?
10. Would you want your son to have Bar Mitzvah?
11. Would you want your daughter to have a Bat Mitzvah?
12. What will your spouse do if you decide to raise your children as Jews?
13. Are you aware that frequently, Jews look at children of an intermarriage as non-Jews and non-Jews look at them as Jews?
14. If you knew there would be a tremendous identity problem for your future children, would you reconsider intermarriage?
15. How would you feel if your child would want to marry a non-Jew?

Potential In-Law Problems

1. How do your potential in-laws feel about you and your parents?

How do your parents feel about your potential in-laws?

2. What is the present reaction of your potential in-laws?
3. If your potential in-laws are against the marriage, do you feel that it is right for you to cause them suffering?
4. If your in-laws are vehemently against the marriage, what type of problems do you think they might cause for you and your marriage?
5. In what subtle ways do you think your in-laws could harm your marriage?
6. Are there any personality qualities of your in-laws which bother you and which might create problems in the future?
7. Do you think that it is possible that your in-laws will make negative comments about you that will eventually cause major difficulties between you and your spouse?
8. Do you think that in the event of minor difficulties between you and your spouse, your in-laws will try to pressure your spouse into getting a divorce?

What About Latent Anti-Semitism?

1. Does your potential spouse dislike Jews in general, but feel that you are different than most Jews?
2. Do any close relatives or friends of the person you wish to marry dislike Jews? What do they say?
3. Have you ever heard your potential spouse make disparaging remarks about Jews?
4. Does your potential spouse ever tell any ethnic jokes making fun of Jews?
5. Does your potential spouse ever tell any ethnic jokes about other minority groups and refrain from anti-Jewish jokes just because you are around?
6. If your potential spouse becomes angry at a Jew, does he or she make negative comments about Jews in general?
7. Do you think your potential spouse would give a positive or a negative response if you asked him or her to complete the sentence beginning..."Jews are...?"
8. What would happen if you spilled soup or a drink on your potential spouse? What would the reaction be? (see page XX)
9. What is your potential spouse's opinion about the reasons for so much anti-Semitism throughout Jewish history?
10. What are your potential spouse's views about the Holocaust and those who deny it?
11. If you get married, how would you feel if you found out that your spouse harbored strong anti-Jewish feelings that he or she had hidden from you?
12. If your potential spouse becomes furious at you for some reason, do you think that he or she might curse out the Jewish people as a whole? (see page XX)
13. What would be your response if your potential spouse called you a "kike", "dirty Jew" or some other disparaging epithet?
14. Have you heard your potential spouse talk about Jews while under the affect of alcohol? (see page XX)
15. Do any family members harbor anti-Semitic feelings?

What Is The Likelihood Of Divorce?

1. What in your opinion are valid grounds for divorce?
2. What is the opinion of your potential spouse as to valid grounds for divorce?
3. How many divorces are there in your family?
4. How many divorces are there in the family of your potential spouse?
5. Are there members of your family that are against your marriage who might try to influence you to get a divorce if the going gets rough?
6. Are there members of your potential spouse's family who are against the marriage who might try to influence your spouse to get a divorce if the going gets rough?
7. Are you aware of the higher rate of divorce amongst intermarried couples? What, in your opinion, accounts for this higher rate?
8. What differences in personality between you and your potential spouse might be a cause for divorce in the future?
9. What are the five main reasons people get divorced? How do those reasons apply to you?
10. What are the five main reasons that couples stay together even though they have disagreements? Which of those reasons will apply to you and which will not?
11. If you knew that there was a strong likelihood that you might get divorced if you married the person you are planning to marry, would you still marry him or her?
12. Did you carry out a careful investigation about your potential spouse's past history, medical situation, emotional stability, and personality traits to see if there are any factors that might make divorce likely?
13. If you feel that because you love each other, the factors mentioned in question #12 do not apply to you, whom can you consult to find out how many couples who eventually did get divorced thought that because they loved each other they would never get divorced either?