



Marriage Enhancement Programme (MEP)

The Marriage Enhancement Programme (MEP) is a service provided by the United Synagogue primarily for engaged couples.

MEP believes that it is the right of every Jewish couple who are about to get married to know and understand what a Jewish marriage entails so that they can make informed decisions for themselves. It has therefore created an education programme specifically to address this group.

In the run up to a wedding, lots of time and effort is put into making the day 'just right'. Hours are spent worrying about the dress, where to hold the reception and how long the speeches should be. With all these details, the spiritual dimension of the wedding can easily become forgotten. The United Synagogue Marriage Enhancement Programme provides a wonderful Jewish perspective on marriage: a perspective that can help a relationship flourish in the years following the wedding day.

A Jewish marriage is very special. Spiritually it fuses the energies of two individuals into a unique relationship as they begin building a new Jewish home together. When a couple have a sense of the spirituality of their wedding and beyond, the rewards can be enormous.

Before the wedding day the experience of the visit to the mikvah (natural body of water) starts a new chapter in a couple's life. After visiting as a bride, many women are enriched by immersing themselves in the mikvah every month before renewing their marital relationship.

Women give many personal reasons for their commitment to mikvah. Many stress the way in which it improves their relationship, while some women say the mystical nature of the mikvah waters deeply affects them – giving them a spiritual high.

Mikvah strengthens the intimate aspect of marriage as well as promoting the growth of mutual respect and priceless friendship. It reflects the constant renewal and sanctification of a Jewish marriage as well as giving expression to the individual's right to separateness, self-direction and self-fulfilment.

The mikvah is often misunderstood. Far from being 'old-fashioned' it is as relevant and rewarding for women in the 21st century as it has ever been. It is also a practice which unites Jewish women throughout the ages. For thousands of years, Jewish women across the world have regarded this mitzvah as so precious that they have braved huge distances, inclement weather and severe danger rather than forsake it.

The Marriage Enhancement Programme provides both brides and grooms a chance to spend time one-to-one with a trained tutor. MEP tutors – who come from all parts of the community – are able to explain in a friendly, informed way, just what is so special and personal about this mitzvah.

The Marriage Enhancement Programme provides helpful and contemporary ideas about relationships as well as explaining the meaning behind the rituals that will take place on the wedding day itself.

MEP courses are also available to couples who are already married but did not have this opportunity at an earlier stage or who would like a refresher course.

For more information please contact:

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