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**JEWISH NEWS**  
*of Greater Phoenix*



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## Heavenly matches make fairy-tale marriages

**VICKI CABOT**  
 Contributing Editor  
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Little things can make or break a marriage.

So professes Rebbitzen Esther Jungreis, matchmaker par excellence, whose New York-based outreach organization Hineni boasts of making a match a week.

"Marriages fall apart from small things," says Jungreis, who has counseled thousands of couples. But they are also built upon such seemingly inconsequential acts. A touch, a smile, a thank you, these are the things that make lasting, fulfilling relationships, says the Rebbit-zen.

Married for more than 40 years and the mother of four married children, Jungreis distills the formula for a good marriage into four easy pieces - a good eye, a good friend, a good neighbor and a good heart. She lays them out persuasively in her new book, "The Committed Marriage, A Guide to Finding a Soulmate and Building a Relationship Through Timeless Biblical Wisdom" (Harper-Collins, \$24.95 hardcover). The book addresses the contemporary reality of today's singles with age-old wisdom and common sense.

Speaking from her New York offices, Jungreis, who teaches a weekly Young Leadership class at Hineni that draws more than 1,000 participants and lectures and writes widely, shares a few tidbits. Interested in hearing more, Jungreis will open the Abraham Samuel Friedman Distinguished Speaker Series, sponsored by the Phoenix Community Kollel/Aish Hatorah Scottsdale on May 8 at the Desert Botanical Garden.

### Why is it so difficult for young people today to find their soulmates?

"Years ago, children stayed at home under parental guidance until they started their own homes. Parents helped them by making introductions and helped them to make decisions. Today, most children go to college and never come home, and they are on their own finding their own mates. As the children get older, it gets more and more difficult. They become more cautious. There is no one there saying, 'What are you thinking? She is wonderful, go for it.' "

### What are the qualities that young people should be looking for in a mate?

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"When someone says he or she is looking for someone who is good-looking, bright, wealthy, I say, 'It's all a bunch of zeros.' If he or she does not have a good heart, then all the good looks and brains are meaningless. All the money in the world can't make up for that."

### But how to assess a good heart?

"It is a question of education. Society has made relationships into a business venture. You give to get a dividend. Nobody can give unconditionally for the sake of giving. 'I will do the dishes if you take out the garbage' - it does not work that way. You have to do it because you want to do it. The more you give the more you get, the more you have to give for the sake of giving and the pleasure of giving. Once you start, it keeps you going."

### How do you get started?

"This is not like the '60s with visions that everything is love and not getting married. Those days are gone. Today (young people) want to get married, and they desperately want to have children. More young people would be happy to have the stability of a home and marriage - and they are ready to accept guidance. They are hurting."

### Advice for the newly married?

"Your first year is the most important year. It sets the pattern for the rest of your life. Learn to respect each other. Do things together, dress up for each other, talk to each other. If something bothers you, do not keep it inside. But do not attack the person. Speak about the issues, and if you are upset, wait before speaking. As my father would say, 'Sleep on it.' What you don't say today, you can always say tomorrow - but you can never take it back. And keep your parents and in-laws out of your conflicts."

### And how to grow old together?

"Do not take God's greatest gift for granted. What is most important in the world to us is us. You don't have to go to a seminar to know that it is the small things. You do not need diamonds. Send an e-mail, 'I love you.' Say thank you. After every meal, my grandfather would say 'thank you' to my grandmother before getting up from the table. Smile, kiss, touch, offer to get your spouse a cup of coffee. When you come home, put a smile on your face. Create a mood. And keep your relationship private. If you have a problem, it should be your own. Don't talk to your friends; see a professional."

Also of note this month is the Jewish Reconstructionist Congregation's latest offering, "Oy to Joy: Our Holidays Across the Years" (JRC Press, \$14.95 paperback). A sequel to the JRC's poignant "Pirkei Imahot: A Celebration of Our Mothers," "Oy to Joy" is a similar compilation of recollections, only this time the focus is on holiday celebrations rather than maternal memories. Beginning with Harry Goldin's "Matzo Balls to Die For," through Ken Ross' "Cousin Eddie's Cookies," and onward, anyone who has ever strived to achieve the perfect proportion of matzo meal to eggs and oil or laboriously scoured the house for chametz will relate to the delightful offerings. The 58 short vignettes, written by members of the 485-household Jewish Reconstructionist Congregation in Evanston, Ill., are interspersed with nostalgic black and white photos that capture the flavor of generations past. Mel Patrell Furman, Carol Kanter and Adrienne Lieberman edited the book, which includes essays, stories and poems not only about Passover, but the high holidays, Hanukkah, Thanksgiving and Christmas. On a local note, check out the photograph on page 21 of writer Sue Ginsburg's family circa 1954. Local resident Berry Sweet, Ginsburg's sister, is pictured on the far right, alongside Ginsburg's touching story of Passover "Grandma's Way."

### **Details**

- What: Book signing by Rebbitzen Esther Jungreis
  - Who: Phoenix Community Kollel/Aish Hatorah Scottsdale
  - When: 2:30-3:30 p.m.
  - Where: Barnes and Noble Kierland, 7030 E. Greenway Parkway, Scottsdale
  - Call: 480-948-8551
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- What: "Five Elements of a Fairy Tale Marriage" by Rebbitzen Esther Jungreis
  - Who: Phoenix Community Kollel/Aish Hatorah Scottsdale
  - When: 5:30-6:30 p.m. reception and book signing; 7:30 p.m. lecture; 8:30 p.m. book signing
  - Where: Desert Botanical Garden, 1201 N. Galvin Parkway, Phoenix
  - Cost: \$15
  - Call: 602-433-0300

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