



SPIRITUAL BELIEFS

*“We are not human beings having a spiritual experience;
we are spiritual beings having a human experience.”*

—Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

YOUR SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

Spirituality and faith are powerful dimensions of the human experience. Spiritual beliefs can provide a foundation for the values and behaviors of individuals and couples. People who profess a spiritual faith do, indeed, feel their beliefs breathe life into their relationships. Couples with high agreement on spiritual beliefs report much higher levels of marital satisfaction and closeness than those with low spiritual agreement.

Given the potential benefits of spiritual beliefs in a relationship, it makes sense for partners to explore and evaluate their compatibility regarding spiritual beliefs. Couples with strong spiritual beliefs and practices say their faith provides a foundation that deepens their love and helps them grow together and achieve their dreams. If you and your partner’s spiritual beliefs are incompatible, talking about the origins of your beliefs can help you understand one another.

COUPLE DISCUSSION:

How much do you know about your partner’s religious history? How much do you know about your own religious history? Family heritage lends a sense of stability and tranquility to relationships.

Set aside some time to discuss the following questions together and share your individual responses. If you do not have the answers, ask other family members about their perspective.

1. What is your family’s religious tradition and heritage?
2. What holidays (holy days) and rituals does your family observe?
3. How similar or dissimilar are your personal religious and spiritual beliefs compared to those of your family?
4. What holidays (holy days) and rituals do you find personally meaningful?
5. What holiday/religious symbols hold special meaning to you (the Menorah, a Cross, or a Christmas tree)?
6. Is/was there significance to the food you prepare?
7. What is the meaning of the gifts you exchange?
8. How does your spiritual life affect your values and the decisions you make?
9. To what extent do you/would you like to integrate your faith or spiritual life into your marriage relationship?
10. Do you have strong feelings or opinions about the religious upbringing you’d like to provide for your children?
11. How has your understanding of God changed through your life?
12. What do you believe is the meaning of life?