

MARGALIT DWECK

What do you like the most about the community?

The people.

How would you define the role of a Rabbanit and what do you enjoy the most about the role?

My thoughts about the role of a Rabbanit has changed over the years and I am still learning and discovering what it means. There are so many ways in which a woman may fulfil this role, but for me as someone who enjoys being around people, it is about being able to use my personality to help build connections within the community. I like to open our home to welcome people and celebrate the beautiful aspects of Judaism like Shabbat and festivals. I also enjoy organising events in synagogue for our families.



If you could invite anyone for a Shabbat dinner who would it be?

My Grandma Margalit. She passed away when I was 16 years old. She was from a Syrian background and I wish I had had the chance to ask her what it was like growing up, and especially to have had time with her to learn her recipes and cook with her. Sadly she never saw me married and with a family.

If you had a superpower what would it be?

Definitely Flying. I would travel every day.

What is your favourite festival and why?

Hanukkah. I love how relaxed a holiday it is - Eight days of fun whilst maintaining all our regular activities (work, school etc). I love the family time while lighting the Hanukkiah and having extra delicious treats. (It also doesn't hurt that the first night of Hanukkah is also my birthday!)

What do you like doing in your spare time?

I love travelling: seeing new places and having new experiences. I enjoy doing lots of crafts including needlepoint and I paint, taking both art and sewing classes. I enjoy going to exhibitions, exploring the world and finding inspiration in the natural world. I've recently discovered a love of gardening. And as most people know I really enjoy cooking and baking and setting a beautiful table. So I'm really blessed because I get to do what I love as part of my job.

GINA ELIA

What do you like most about the community?

I love how kind and caring the community is. It feels like one big happy family. I feel very fortunate to be a part of this special extended family and value this tremendously. Of course having my lovely husband as my Rabbi, who is so adored by the whole community, makes it that little bit more special.

How would you define the role of a Rabbanit and what do you enjoy most about the role?

I would define the role of a Rabbanit as being able to serve the community during both sad and happy times. I enjoy being there for my community and feel that I can make a difference, for example, by being a discreet listening ear to a community member who has to navigate through a critical moment with their health, a bereavement and so on. I also enjoy the many celebrations that take place within the community.



If you could invite anyone for a Shabbat dinner who would it be?

Prince William and Prince Harry. I would love to ask them loads of questions, all the questions that nobody dares ask the royals! I would invite them to taste my traditional delicacies, recipes from Egypt that I learned from my late mother and have taught to my sons and daughters.

If you had a superpower what would it be?

Although it sounds like a cliché, I would use my superpower to make the world a better place: no more conflicts, less poverty, an end to nasty diseases, and a big increase in general awareness in caring for others.

What is your favourite festival and why?

My favourite festival by far is Pesah. Although exhausting, oddly I do look forward to the build-up towards Pesah. I enjoy the spring cleaning, all the special shopping and of course cooking the traditional dish that my family all look forward to: the meat Maeena or Pesah lasagne. Finally, I enjoy celebrating with my family and friends all sitting round the beautiful table revising the story of the Haggadah so beautifully explained by my wonderful husband.

What do you like doing in your spare time?

Mostly I try to spend time with my family as a whole; luckily for me they are all fairly close to home. I cherish quality time with my girls on Shabbat, during the long summer days it is always lovely; meeting with friends and going for strolls along the canal by Little Venice are other pluses. I am passionate about food and enjoy preparing and creating traditional and modern dishes to serve to my family and friends. I enjoy colouring in challenging designs which I find very relaxing. I can see why this is such a popular pastime for children; as an adult, it certainly allows me to take time out for a minute...or twenty. It's like taking a tea break but without the biscuits... (or with the biscuits!)

TAMAR KADA

What do you like most about the community?

Honestly, I feel privileged to be part of our Wembley family. I have yet to find a community which is so loving, caring and welcoming. Despite the diversity of nationalities, cultures and ages in the community, there is a friendly and warm ambience between everyone and these vibes can be felt just by walking through the doors of our synagogue. Each member is unique and it has been a real pleasure getting to know each and every one of them.

How would you define the role of a Rabbanit and what do you enjoy the most about the role?

Unlike a Rabbi's role which is more easily defined, a Rabbanit's role is a bit of an unusual one: supportive wife, full time party planner, religious guide, domestic engineer, chef, cheerleader, community liaison, and so much more. I really believe that each Rabbanit is unique and individual in her own right and should not be defined only by her husband's career. Nonetheless, for me personally, my primary role as Rabbanit is being a Rabbi's wife. Being there for my husband and supporting him in fulfilling his responsibilities that he carries out on a daily basis is most gratifying for me.



If you could invite anyone for a Shabbat dinner who would it be?

There are so many heroes and heroines of previous generations who I would love to ask about their success in life. One that springs to mind is Sarah Schenirer who was a pioneer of Jewish education for girls who founded the Beis Yaakov school network in Poland in 1917. I am intrigued to know what gave her the determination and courage to start this movement despite all the opposition she faced. What gave her the willpower to stand for the truth? What was the secret to her bravery and strength in making her dream into a reality?

If you had a superpower what would it be?

Teleportation. I have always wondered how much more we could achieve each day without life's barriers of distance and time which limit us being there for our family and friends as much as we would like to be. With this phenomenal super power, my day would start like this: waking up and praying at the Western Wall in Jerusalem before jogging at the beach in the Maldives, taking my girls to school in Edgware Road, visiting my sister-in-law in Brooklyn for breakfast, followed by going to work, then teaching children in Hong Kong about Judaism, before arriving back at my wonderful community in Wembley. A dream of a day!

What is your favourite festival and why?

The truth is I enjoy every festival (yes, even Pesach!) as each hag brings its own unique characteristics and energy for that time of the year. If I had to choose a favourite, I think it would be Shavuot. The word Shavuot brings to mind receiving the Torah, beautiful bouquets of sweet scented flowers, greenery, dairy delicacies and glorious long summer days.

What do you like doing in your spare time?

Spare time? Does that ever exist?!

For me, there is nothing better than the pleasure of enjoying quality family time with my husband and children. I do take time out alone regularly for a good swim, for exercise and nature walks in order to recharge myself and have some 'me' time. Expressing my creativity in any form of art or decoration is something I truly adore too.