When I first met John, I did not know how the sun shines. I was a 24 year old
graduate student from Israel, visiting IAS on a pleasant Friday morning in 1987 and being
introduced to Freeman Dyson by Michelle Sage. Freeman said: "Oh, you are from Israel;
do you know John Bahcall?". "No", I said. "Well, you must meet him. He likes Israelis.
In fact, he is married to one..." Freeman called John’s office. Fortunately, John was just
about to go to lunch, so I had lunch with him. I gave him my CV which included eleven
publications. He looked at it and said: "how did you hear about us?" I said "I just finished
my PhD thesis in Plasma Physics, and Marshall Rosenbluth, whom I met on a recent visit
to Israel, recommended that I visit IAS as a potential place for a postdoc position." John
said: "I see. I know Marshall very well. Could you take a vacation from your obligatory
military service and visit us for a month?" I later found out that in the meantime John
called Marshall to ask about me. He also called Yuval Ne’eman, the most influential Israeli
scientist at the time. Yuval called my PhD advisor and asked about me. After a month-long
visit to IAS, John invited me to his office. On the blackboard next to his chair, was a
sketch and the phrase: "Dad, I love you!!!". Signed "Orli". "I have three children, and Orli
is the youngest", he explained. "Anyway, we would like to offer you a five-year position",
he said. I was thrilled, but did not really believe it. "But", John added quietly, "under one
condition. That you switch to work in Astrophysics".

I do not think that I would have taken today such a risk on hiring a five-year postdoc
without any experience in astrophysics. John was a unique risk-taker, and I must tell you:
with many more papers on my CV, the Astronomy department at Harvard is grateful for
his willingness many years ago to take a risk on me.

As far as I am concerned, John was the most influential matchmaker in my life. He
introduced me to Astrophysics with which I had the longest-lasting love relationship in my life. I met my wife only later. She says that according to Jewish tradition, a matchmaker who arranges for three long-lasting relationships, is privileged to have a place in heaven. I know of many more than three successful matches that John arranged. There is no doubt in my mind that John has a honorable place in heaven now.