



GETTING TO KNOW YOU

Deborah Ross-Grayman

My name is Deborah Ross-Grayman. I grew up in Berkeley, California. While earning my master's degree in Clinical Psychology and working as a Family and Child Play Therapist, I co-founded a small real estate corporation, which continues to thrive today. I moved to Vancouver in 1993.

While members of another shul in Vancouver, my husband Henry and I increasingly felt that our spiritual needs weren't being met. We were drawn to the inclusive and welcoming nature of the Or Shalom community and the opening to the spiritual, mystical, and meditative elements of Judaism. We have been members going on three years and currently I am on the Orsh board and the membership committee.

My husband and I are both children of Holocaust Survivors and facilitate the Second-Generation Group in Vancouver. Some of my history helps to understand the issues that I am passionate about and want to support at Or Shalom.

My mother was the recipient of a life-saving visa from the Japanese Diplomat Chiune Sugihara. I went back to Japan to meet with his granddaughter to give thanks to her for the actions of her grandfather, who gave my mother life and so gave me my life.

My mother was a member of the Bund in Vilna, the Jewish Socialist Workers Organization. They did not believe in organized religion and I was brought up outside the Jewish community and without a Jewish education. Which leads me to another issue I am passionate about: supporting families with young children to give them an understanding of the rich context from which they are descended and to which they belong. I am also interested in Adult Education as I personally want to expand my knowledge base of all things Jewish and love to learn in community.

Henry and I hold a space in our home twice a month for the Jewish Meditation Group led by Matthew Gindin. We go annually to a Jewish meditation retreat in California and have just signed up for a two-year Jewish meditation program, including four one-week retreats.

Now retired, I have the luxury of focusing on my creative endeavors. I am an emerging artist and exhibit with my two colleagues, Sidi Schaffer and Sorour Abdollahi. I do all my creative

work under my grandmother's name, Devora, as a tribute to her. I also write and aspire to put down more words on more pages.

Henry, Bella (our Cairn Terrier child), and I spend much of December and the summer on Salt Spring Island where my adoptive father lives, enjoying his company, being close to nature, and reveling in a slower pace of life.