



## GETTING TO KNOW YOU

### **Maurice Bloch**

I spent my first 27 years in Cape Town, South Africa. In Latvia and Lithuania, the origins of my two sets of grandparents, the marriage of my parents would have been an unlikely occurrence. Only in my adulthood did I learn the extent to which the Germanic Latvian Jews considered themselves superior to the “schmutzig” (uncouth) Litvaks. It was the sisters of my father who asked at the time of their Golden Wedding, to reminisce about my parents courtship, who both alluded to the surprise they had that my mother’s family (Latvian) had allowed their daughter to marry my father. Neither family was well off nor especially prominent. That came later.

Destined for a business career I studied commerce and political philosophy at the University of Cape Town. Then I went through a crisis, changed course, and switched to psychology. My wife, Susan, myself, and our seven-month-old son, Gary, moved to Vancouver in 1975. I attained my PHD in psychology at UBC.

After graduating and attaining Canadian citizenship, we went to live in Dar es Salaam for two years now with two sons. We returned in 1983 with another son, Elisha, to join Gary and Joshua. I worked in medical genetics at UBC with Huntington’s Disease as well as seeing adult outpatients in the community mental health system. I tutored medical students in courses dealing with psycho-social issues for a number of years. I am now retired and my family has expanded to include three daughters-in-law and seven grandchildren.

I twice trained for marathons and both times became injured and so never completed either. A few years ago Sue and I trained for the big Argus cycle ride in Cape Town (111 tough but spectacularly beautiful kilometres). Ironically, due to huge fires on Table Mountain, the course was significantly shortened. So I was destined not to complete the cycling marathon either. I run regularly, bike a lot, am a keen summer golfer, and love travel.

I have been deeply connected with Or Shalom since the early 1980s. I served on the Board as treasurer and as co-chair as well as co-chair of the Strategic Financial Planning Committee for six years. I am a devoted reader and participate in a mens’ book club composed entirely of Or Shalomniks.

I find great inspiration and pleasure being part of Or Shalom and feeling embraced by my many friends there. Ask me about summiting Mount Kilimanjaro and the summit of Table Mountain.