



## GETTING TO KNOW ROSS ANDELMAN

The short version – I was born in Oklahoma and bounced back and forth between the coasts, spent more time in school or training than most people, then spent almost 20 years in the SF Bay Area and followed the Rabbi to Vancouver January 2016.

I grew up in Tulsa, where the Arkansas River bends and the ranch-style houses spread long, where the grass grows green and the air was pretty clean...the buckle of the bible belt, at one time the oil capital of the world, and the home of a pretty wealthy Jewish community.

My mother was 6-weeks-old when her mother drove the family from Upstate New York to Tulsa, drawn by cousins' promise of a good life. An aunt back in Buffalo introduced her to my father, a Harvard educated medical student and they were married and had my oldest sister before he shipped out to Hawaii and to combat in the Philippines just before the end of WWII. After a final army posting in Hot Springs Arkansas, the family by then of 4 moved back to Tulsa.

I am the youngest and only son.

As my sisters before me, I could hardly wait to get out of Tulsa and went to Yale where I studied architecture, then a year in New York, putting together a photography portfolio and applying to graduate school. Rabbi Hannah and I were likely sitting in the same gallery space at Yale where each of us were interviewed for their MFA program in 1979. I ended up at the San Francisco Art Institute, living on the corner of Haight and Ashbury and supporting myself by cooking at the Anchor Oyster Bar on Castro Street. (I may have shucked but I never inhaled those oysters.)

I moved to New York with a girlfriend and unable to find a teaching job, hating commercial photography, and too short to be a flight attendant, I took a few science courses -- 2 years-worth --worked in a lab, and ended up in "trade school" at Columbia University. I spent the last and most memorable 3 months of medical school in Durban South Africa supported by a fellowship in Human Rights and Medicine. On my return, I completed my residency in psychiatry and fellowship in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at UCLA.

I headed back to San Francisco to do a fellowship in mental health services. Somewhere in there I was married, had a daughter, and was divorced. About a year later, I went to Chicago to meet an artist on urging from a friend back in Tulsa. Eventually, the artist from Chicago agreed to marry me and with her two daughters, joined me in Berkeley. By then I was the Medical Director of a large county Behavioral Health system East of San Francisco. The artist became a rabbi and when she got a dream job a bit North of Berkeley, and I happily followed.