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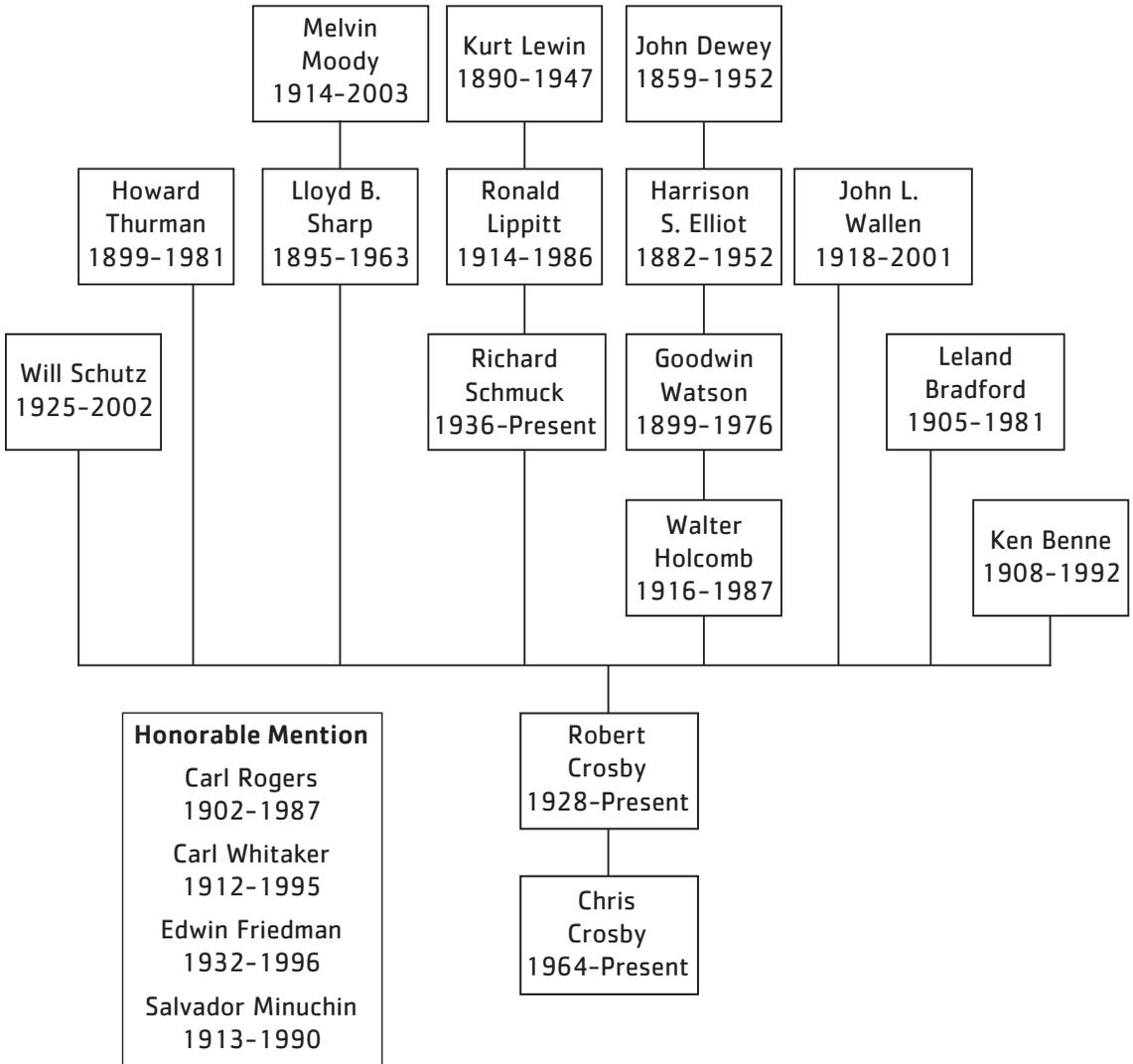
## My Organization Development (OD) Roots

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### Appendix E

## My Organization Development (OD) Roots

**Figure 53: Organization Development Roots**



## Organization Alignment

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In 1993 I began my career in Organization Development by starting my Masters in Applied Behavioral Science at the Leadership Institute of Seattle (currently a Graduate College of Saybrook University), of which my father, Robert Crosby, highly regarded in his field, was the founder.

Upon entering LIOS, I had not really known the depth of his experience or his background. Through my OD career, I eventually learned of my father's history as well as of the amazing contributions of the people who helped shape him. He is a synthesizer: he incorporates what he has learned into evolving synthesis more powerful than the sum of its parts. I am blessed in many ways: I've had significant training, a global company in which to learn my trade in OD, and access to a coach and mentor with 40 plus years of experience to guide me.

What follows is a brief explanation of each player in my Organization Development roots.

### **Melvin Moody Lineage**

**Melvin Moody** was a twentieth-century pioneer in Protestant Church Camping. In 1949 he made two decisions that were unprecedented. The first was to join the radical movement from centralized church camping to decentralization; the second was to hire program staff, instead of relying solely on volunteers. Hiring such staff might not sound like much today but he was likely the first ever to do so in the history of church camps, which had, by 1949, existed for more than a half-century.

Church Camps in the late 19th Century were out-of-doors Camp Meetings, primarily for adults, with extended preaching, singing, evangelizing, and teaching. Over time the activities gradually included playground sports in order to appeal to the young. It became necessary to hire custodial help as new camps were built and owned. Clergy preaching and teaching Bible classes were program personnel. By the 40s, the focus of such "camps"

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had shifted to the young, with sports, singing, swimming, inspirational campfires, and Bible classes. Campers lived in dormitories or cabins with chaperons who received no special training for that task. Most activities were centralized, total-camp experiences.

Moody's move to decentralization was radical because it went against the tide and then-current direction of outdoor camping. The new style of camps emphasized small-groups with 8-12 campers and two staff. The activities gradually shifted to cookouts, canvas shelters, small campfires, and fewer centralized moments. City playground sports, commercially purchased crafts, and, more significantly, classes disappeared. This demanded training not needed in the 'centralized' camps where a single inspirational speaker and class teachers were enough! Moody not only trained the hired staff, but soon had all volunteers coming to Wanake in the spring as well for training in this outdoor small-group movement.

The camp that Moody led is called Wanake. It began in 1946 in Ohio, and still flourishes today. In 1949, Robert Crosby was Moody's first program employee. Moody had learned of Robert's song-leading prowess and hired him to be his recreation director, song leader, and cabin counselor. Moody thus creating perhaps the first employed staff position in Church Camping, beside custodial support. Wanake alumni remember Crosby by his college-age nickname, "Bing." Blending older, more mature volunteers with college summer staff became a hallmark of Wanake camping. By the next year, there were three program staff, a number which increased year after year.

The change to decentralized camping had a huge impact on Crosby. As a youth, he had only experienced centralized camps. Moody was on the cutting edge of small group camping. He helped Robert learn to love the outdoors in a unique and caring way. Campers were taught to be in the outdoors in a way that not only connected them with the environment, but also helped them to have genuine interactions with each other in the

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context of a caring, small family-like, temporary life together. Respect and positive interactions with others were rewarded and structures were put in place to ensure the growth of all individuals.

Moody was also a master at change. Faced with theological opposition: “You are creating nature worshipers,” and with educational opposition: “Learning happens through lectures and classes,” Moody helped Wanake move to experiential out-of-doors education in incremental, methodical ways. Under Moody’s leadership, Wanake became a model of Church outdoor education in the USA.

Moody also introduced Crosby to various educational experiences. He hired the legendary Charlie King, whose “Wings Over Jordan” was the first professional U.S. Afro-American choir. King helped Crosby lead music at the camp. Moody introduced Robert to Dr. L.B. Sharp in 1952 by sending him to a month-long experience at Sharp’s *Life Magazine* funded, thousand-acre National Camp in the forests of northern New Jersey. He also inspired Crosby to pursue a 2nd Masters at Boston University in 1953-1954. There he experienced his first two T-Groups, and met and learned from the amazing Dr. Howard Thurman, Martin Luther King Jr.’s mentor. Subsequently, he brought these new learnings from his Boston University experience to Wanake in the summers of 1954 and 1955.

In short, Moody opened the door leading to ALL of the other influential persons noted in this chapter!

In 1953 Melvin Moody became Robert’s uncle by marriage when Crosby married his first wife, Ruth, who became the mother of their five children. Robert left Wanake in 1955. In 1963, he joined the National Staff of the Methodist Church in the fields of Camping and Laboratory (T-Group) Training.

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Ironically, in 1970 Robert's beloved mentor succeeded him on the National Staff of the newly merged United Methodist Church. Many of his Wanake staff became leaders of small-group camps across the U.S. Moody was the key mentor in Robert's life.

**Lloyd B. Sharp** - Was a 20th century conservationist with whom Robert spent a year in 1952 who greatly influenced him. Sharp said: "You do in the outdoors best what you can do in the outdoors." In other words, go to camp to be in the outdoors and learn to exist with friends and nature. Sharp thought it was a waste of time to do things in the outdoors that you could do in the city, i.e., don't go to a camp in the wilderness to play baseball and football. In part, this influenced Robert Crosby's belief that you improve work groups by having them work on their issues, not by having them do some experiential outing not necessarily related to work.

### **Kurt Lewin Lineage**

**Kurt Lewin** - Father of social psychology. Lewin fled Hitler in 1933 and greatly influenced the early Organization Development movement in the United States. The most prominent ways that Lewin impacted me are his formula stating that behavior is a function of the person and the environment  $B=f(P,E)$ , force field analysis, invention of the T-Group or Training Group, focus on the whole work group vs. just the person, group process through action research, and the belief that democracy (managing from the middle between the extremes of autocracy and permissiveness) must be learned anew in each generation. Carl Rogers called the invention of the T-Group "the most important social invention of the twentieth century." The Japanese utilized Lewin's Action Research model in creating their major contribution to lean manufacturing: "The Toyota Production System." Lewin died early in 1947. His lead graduate student was Ronald Lippitt.

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**Ronald Lippitt** - Primary doctoral student of Kurt Lewin as well as mentor and colleague of Robert Crosby from 1957 to 1986. Crosby frequently visited Lippitt during the 1960s where Lippitt was the director of the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan. Lippitt guided Robert through various events that Crosby was leading for the national Methodist church. Lippitt was one of three trainers at the first T-Group in 1947 and a prime developer of the National Training Laboratories (NTL). Lippitt guided Robert's style of working with organizations and groups as well as how to leverage the role of inside and outside consulting to impact positive change.

**Richard Schmuck** - Robert Crosby met Richard in 1965; they became lifelong colleagues and friends. Richard is a foremost scholar of Kurt Lewin. Schmuck took Lewin's theory and applied it to education. His *Practical Action Research for Change* is but one example of how to utilize action research to help student learning and achievement.

### John Dewey Lineage

**John Dewey** - 20th century educational philosopher who believed that experience is essential for learning beyond that of head learning, yet there must be structure to facilitate it. Dewey's book *Experience & Education* clearly outlines his philosophy of education. He thought that traditional teaching methods were too focused on "rote memory" learning. Dewey sought to promote and develop an experiential model of education built on high structure, teacher guidance, and active participation by the students. He criticized the progressive education movement in the United States as one that often moved too far towards permissiveness.

In *Experience & Education*, Dewey outlined a theory called "collateral learning," i.e., What are you learning while you are learning? Compliance? Engagement? Something else? Dewey postured that part of the teacher's role is to develop students who are in love with learning. To do that, teachers must provide structured experiences which captivate and engage the learner. Dewey, like Lewin, believed that democracy (managing from

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the middle between the extremes of autocracy and permissiveness) must be learned anew by each generation. Dewey was a contemporary of Harrison Sacket Elliott.

**Harrison Sacket Elliott** - A major influence in the development of Walter Holcomb. Holcomb got his Ph.D. studying under Elliot. In 1918, at age thirty-six, Elliott published *The Leadership of Red Triangle Groups*. In 1928, Elliott published *The Process of Group Thinking*. Both books represent his lifelong interests in group process, including its application to socio-psychological behavior, democratic principles, and scientific thinking.

**Goodwin Watson** - Goodwin was the first editor of the *Journal of Applied Behavioral Sciences* from 1965 to 1970. When Crosby needed a T-Group leader, he hired Goodwin Watson following a recommendation from a trusted colleague. After two trainings with Goodwin, he told Robert about the first training in Organization Development at NTL and pulled strings to enroll him. Crosby became an NTL associate in 1966.

**Walter Holcomb** - Led Robert Crosby's first T-Group experience in 1953. Crosby came to Boston University because they had courses in outdoor education. When Robert met Walter Holcomb and told him how little outdoor educators knew about group process, Holcomb invited him to his course IN group dynamics which was Robert's first T-Group. After that Crosby took or audited all the courses Holcomb offered. Holcomb also was a scholar of Kurt Lewin and John Dewey and first introduced Robert to both men. Once his students indicated interest, he took the entire class to New York to visit Dewey's famous "little red school house." The push for students to experience first-hand what they were learning about opened Crosby's eyes to a new style of education.

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### Other Key Influences

**John Wallen** - Creator of the “Interpersonal Gap” which highlights several core emotional intelligence skills. For example, he emphasized the role of the receiver when communicating rather than just the sender which is counter to what popular culture continues to maintain to this day.

Perhaps his greatest contribution to the field of interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence is the *skill of being able to distinguish between a judgment and a behavior (this skill he termed Behavior Description)*. John combined four key skills (Behavior Description, Feeling Description, Perception Check and Paraphrase) into a systemic theory of interpersonal communication that became the cornerstone of the experiential training developed by Crosby called “Tough Stuff” and later named “Emotional Intelligence in the Workplace.” According to Wallen, the ability to separate behavior specifics from a judgment, when there is tension, is the toughest of all human communication skills. Robert Crosby worked with John Wallen from 1968 to 1977. Both thought of the other as mentors.

**Howard Thurman** - In 1953 Thurman was rated one of the top 12 most influential religious people in America. He was the first black, as well as first non-Methodist, Dean of the Chapel at Boston University. Robert and his wife, Ruth, went to church at the Chapel their first weekend in Boston and found Howard Thurman delivering the sermon. Over the next year Robert went to every Sunday evening discussion.

Martin Luther King was finishing his Ph.D. at the same time and claimed Thurman as his mentor. In 1936, Thurman had led a black delegation to Asia. Gandhi heard of this and asked to speak to the leader. Gandhi told Thurman that even greater change could be done in America but those trying to make the change would have to give up “hate and violence.” Those trying to evoke change must love those in power. People in power

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know how to stop an uprising based on hate and violence but do not know what to do when faced with a crowd of non-violent protesters exhibiting love towards those they are trying to change. Howard Thurman is considered the godfather of the civil rights movement.

**Will Schutz** - Creator of FIRO B which stands for Fundamental Interpersonal Relationship Orientation. The B stands for Behavior. It measures your preferences on three dimensions: Inclusion, Control, and Affection. (Affection means: “How much do I share my thoughts and feelings?”) Robert's first session with Schutz was in 1965. Robert became an expert in FIRO B and its application to groups and systems.

**Leland Bradford** - Founding Executive Director of the National Training Laboratory (NTL), which was at the center of the Organization Development movement in the United States. Dr. Bradford was an internationally recognized educator and a U.S. delegate to many postwar international conferences, including the first United Nations Conference on the Elimination of Prejudice. He was a colleague of Kurt Lewin and, in 1946, took part of the famous Connecticut workshop on race relations that led to the social invention called the T-Group. Dr. Bradford co-edited, *T-Group Theory and Laboratory Method: Innovation in Reeducation*, published in 1964 and considered to be the definitive work about T-Groups. That book was Robert Crosby's primary guide during his early days of leading T-Groups. Bradford wrote or edited six books and more than 150 articles.

**Ken Benne** - Ken Benne was one of the three founders of NTL. He was a philosopher of education and the head of the Human Relations Center at Boston University where Robert attended his first T-Groups in 1953 and 1954. In 1958, Robert attended the National Training Laboratory's “Train the Trainer” event. As part of the training, he was able to observe each founder (Ken Benne, Ronald Lippitt, and Leland Bradford) leading T-Groups.

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### Honorable Mentions

**Carl Rogers** - *Client-Centered Therapy* was Roger's groundbreaking book outlining his unique way of "holding clients" in therapy and tuning into them. Rogers believed that you help clients by creating a structure in which they are able to solve their own problems. Robert Carkhuff helped break down Roger's work into eight distinct skills which enable practitioners to develop a helping relationship.

Essentially, Carkhuff Skills are a form of "deep listening," the basis of helping therapy clients and coaching business leaders. Crosby first read *Client-Centered Therapy* in 1952, a year after its publication. Five years earlier, Rogers, with John Wallen, published *Counseling with Returning Servicemen*. The principle that "If I hold the structure, the client can heal himself" is part-and-parcel of Crosby's consulting practice. Roger's famous teachings in *Client-Centered Therapy* and Carkhuff skills were a major part of the graduate program Robert Crosby started in 1973.

**Carl Whitaker** - Whitaker was a family systems therapist who worked with hospitalized schizophrenics early in his career. He began to notice that patients would make great strides through treatments received in isolation in the hospital, only to completely relapse when exposed again to their families. Out of this, he developed a Systems Theory and eventually only treated whole families at the same time. Along the way he developed a unique style that highlighted playfulness in the therapist's role.

Whitaker's "*Win the battle of structure but lose the battle of initiative*" is foundational for group development. By structure he meant the process flow of the session, the actual steps taken, and in what order. Initiative is what people want to work on. Robert Crosby and Whitaker met at Crosby's graduate school. Carl Whitaker wanted to work more there; unfortunately, he passed in 1995 before he could.

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**Edwin Friedman** - A student and colleague of Murray Bowen. Friedman's theory of self-differentiated leadership became a cornerstone of Robert Crosby's leadership development. The concept, translated into a way of being as the leader, is integrated into all of Crosby's books and trainings. Friedman was a frequent visitor to Crosby's master's program until his death in 1996. His book *Generation to Generation* is perhaps the top book on Systems Theory related to self-differentiation ever written.

**Salvador Minuchin** - The creator of "Structural Family Therapy." Minuchin was a family-systems therapist who focused on boundaries within the family and on how well those in different roles were doing their jobs. He broke the family down into the Parental Subsystem and the Siblings' Subsystem, determining whether the boundaries were healthy, too strict, or too diffused. All family systems practitioners see the presenting problem as a symptom of a greater systemic dysfunction and treat the system as a whole, rather than treating the symptom and missing the root of the problem. One of the three original faculty members at the Leadership Institute of Seattle/Saybrook University, Dr. Ron Short, after a sabbatical with Minuchin, first introduced Robert to these concepts in the 1970s.