



**FOR THE BRS TEHILLIM CIRCLE MEMBERS AND BEYOND...**

## **Tehillim Circle's Inspirational Message for Cheshvan 5778**

### **Spiritually vs Holiness, what is the goal?**

I recently saw a movie at The FAU Livingroom Theater entitled "Rebel in the Rye" about the life of JD Salinger, who wrote in the 1940's a world renowned novel entitled *A Catcher in the Rye*. It is still being read in English literature classes and selling 250,000 copies a year! In the movie, JD Salinger always wanted to be a writer, but after the traumatic experience of being a soldier in WWII, he had PTSD, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

He first sought help from the conventional medical community but found the only solace and healing from a Buddhist Monk who taught him how to meditate. Unfortunately, the Monk also encouraged him to write without any expectation to publish. He eventually published *Catcher in The Rye*, and became a world renowned writer, helping so many young adults grow emotionally. After publishing his book, he became more and more of a recluse, living in an isolated home in a forest, and finally deciding to never publish again. He thought that, that was the noblest goal. He may have been living a very spiritual life, lighting incense and meditating, but is that what God wants from us? No! That is actually very self-serving and self-centered.

Meditation is actually a wonderful tool to help us clear and take control of our mind space in order to lead a Godly, holy life, a life of action directed and engaged in transforming the world. When we quiet the mind, we create a space to hear the cries of others. I have wonderful meditations that I can send you. You are welcome to text me at 561-715-6185.

This month's story is by Sara Yocheved Rigler entitled "Who got the better deal"? Hashem has a plan even though we don't usually have a clue what it is. :)

May you be blessed to take all the joy from Sukkot into your New Year!!

Blessings of Shalom,

*Yocheved*

Yocheved Hande  
BRS Tehillim Circle Founder

## TEHILLIM CIRCLE IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Just a reminder that the Refuah Shlaymah list is intended for critical care issues. As of Rosh Chodesh Kislev, November 19th, we will remove all names from the list except the last 25 men and women's names that were submitted. If people that you have submitted fall under critical care issues and you would like them to remain on the list, please contact Linda in the Shul office at 561-394-0394 or by e-mail - [linda@brsonline.org](mailto:linda@brsonline.org).

Thank you for your cooperation



## Who Got the Better Deal?: An Incredible True Story of Two Siblings

by Sara Yoheved Rigler

**A handicapped girl given up for adoption discovers her idol is her biological sister.**

Had I been in the hospital in Salem, Illinois, on October 1, 1987, when a baby girl was born without legs, my heart would have clenched in pity for this poor child, and my mind would have railed at the unfairness of her fate. So grotesque was her deformity that her parents chose to leave her in the hospital.

Three months later, Sharon and Gerald Bricker decided to adopt the baby. The Brickers already had three sons, ranging in age from 10 to 14. "It bothered me," Sharon later explained, "that there was a little girl who was left at the hospital, and she had no legs. So I thought she needed a family who would love her and take care of her." They named the baby Jennifer, and brought her home to rural Hardinville, Illinois, a town so small that it had not a single traffic light.

Gerald was a carpenter. Sharon had worked in a bakery, but was a full-time mother by the time they adopted Jen. What kind of couple adopts a legless baby? A couple who wants to give, love, and nurture. And that's what they did.

Jennifer grew up in a home thick with love and laughter. Her older brothers adored her. But neither her parents nor her brothers coddled her. "Can't" was not part of the Bricker vocabulary. As Jen would later declare: "If you put your mind to it, you can do it. If you were never given limits, then you think, 'I can do anything.'"

And she did. Alongside her three big brothers, she would climb trees, do handstands and flips, and jump from high places. Using her strong arms, she played softball, basketball, and volleyball, and became proficient in gymnastics and tumbling. Her parents constantly encouraged her, sometimes having to adapt equipment for Jen to play a particular sport. When Jen wanted to roller skate, her parents devised skates that she could attach to her hands.

When Jen was in second grade, she announced to her parents that she wanted to become a gymnast. Her idol was Dominique Moceanu, a petite gymnast whom Jen avidly watched on television. In 1995, at the age of 13, Dominique Moceanu became the youngest gymnast to win the senior all-around title at the U.S. National Championships. And at the Atlanta Olympics in 1996, Dominique, 14, won a gold medal with the other members of the "Magnificent Seven," the U.S. gymnastics team. Jen was inspired watching Dominique, the youngest and the smallest on the team, a true champion.

Sharon and Gerald enrolled Jen in a gymnastics class, then a class in tumbling. Over the next four years, Jen won several tumbling competitions. When she was 12, Jen became the Illinois State Champion in tumbling. She also competed in three national meets and one Junior Olympic meet.

With her positive, upbeat attitude and strong self-esteem, Jen was always accepted by her schoolmates. In the early grades, whenever a child stared or asked where her legs were, Jen answered matter-of-factly, "This is the way God made me."

Once a child in her class referred to her as "handicapped."

Astonished, Jen replied, "I'm not handicapped."

"But you use a wheelchair," the boy declared, to prove his point.

With the umbrage of an insulted adolescent, Jen countered, "That's just to keep me from getting dirty."

### Enter Her Biological Family

Jen had always known that she was adopted. When she was 16, she asked her mother if she had any information about her biological parents. Sharon took out the official adoption papers. It was supposed to have been a closed adoption, but by a clerical error the name of her biological parents appeared at the top of one page. The name was "Moceanu."

Jen's biological sister was the Olympic gold medalist Dominique Moceanu.

"You had been my idol my whole life," Jen wrote to Dominique four years later, "and you turned out to be my sister! I was in extreme disbelief... My uncle is a retired private investigator, and he got in contact with Dumitru, your father. He talked to your father, and he did not deny that I was their biological child, but he would not return my uncle's phone calls after that. So we stopped trying to contact you for a while because I did not want to seem pushy, and I wanted to do this right."

Worried that Dominique would think she was crazy or trying to cash in on the fame of a celebrity, Jen took four years "to do this right." She copied all the relevant documents. She assembled pictures of herself, which eerily resembled pictures of Dominique's younger sister Christine. And she wrote a long, heartfelt letter. Finally, as Dominique would later write, Jen "put her heart in a package and shipped it off to a complete stranger."

Dominique's reaction was shock – and anger at her parents for keeping this secret from her for 20 years. As a child, Dominique had longed to have siblings. She had no idea that, when she was six, her parents had abandoned their baby in the hospital. When she was eight years old, her sister Christina was born. "I treasured her from the day she was born," Dominique wrote in her autobiography, *Off Balance*. "Christina was my everything, and I was so happy to have her."

After getting Jen's package, when Dominique confronted her father, he stated flatly that they were impoverished immigrants without money or health insurance, and a Romanian doctor at the birth told them that raising a handicapped child would involve large medical expenses. So he decided they could not afford it, and put the child up for adoption. And that was that.

As for Dominique's mother, she painfully related what had happened:

Your father said that our little girl was born with no legs. I never saw my baby. I never held her, never touched her, never even smelled her. I desperately wanted to, but your father told me we had to give her up and that was that. ... You know your father – once a decision is made, that's the end of it. (*Off Balance: A Memoir*, page 23)

## Two Very Different Childhoods

Indeed, Dominique knew her father. Born and raised in Romania during the oppressive, Communist Ceausescu era, Dumitru Moceanu was an abusive, controlling husband and father. Immediately after marrying 19-year-old Camelia, he, with his bride, immigrated to the United States. Nine months later, Dominique was born.

By 1996, having won a series of gymnastic championships, 14-year-old Dominique had become America's darling. She was featured in *Vanity Fair* and her first autobiography, *Dominique Moceanu: An American Champion*, hit #7 on the *New York Times* Best Seller List.

But behind the limelight lurked a dark, menacing shadow. Dominique's father was a classic abuser: controlling, violent, and given to bursts of rage. As Dominique would describe him in her memoirs:

As a father and husband, he ruled our house with an iron fist. Decisions were made by him, obeyed by us, and explained by nobody... My home life throughout my childhood was turbulent, at best. Tata's rage and temper tantrums took a toll on my family. We [she, her mother, and sister] often found ourselves hiding in separate rooms. I can barely recall a single holiday when my father didn't make a scene or create some kind of chaos. We were *always* walking on eggshells. (*Off Balance: A Memoir*, page 21)

At the age of 17, Dominique ran away from home and filed for “emancipation” – to be legally and financially independent of her parents. It turned out that her father had taken almost all of her post-Olympic earnings from shows and endorsements – almost a million dollars. The high-profile court proceedings left Dominique free, but feeling guilty, pained, and humiliated, as she was denounced by the media, which blazoned the headline: SPOILED BRAT DIVORCES PARENTS.

Then, at the age of 26, married and expecting her first child, Dominique discovered that she had a sister she never knew. The most poignant parts of her memoir are her comparisons between the traumatic childhood she suffered and the golden, happy childhood Jen enjoyed:

As Jennifer describes it, her home life was stable and full of love and support. She says her parents had minor arguments and bickered here and there like any other family, but they always “talked out” their problems, so there was never lingering tension in their home.

Jennifer’s words, “talked out,” stuck in my mind. How I had wished my parents did more talking when I was young. I mostly remember Mama and Tata either arguing when they disagreed or not talking at all. And the tense moments in our home were far more common than the peaceful ones. Many of Christina’s and my childhood memories were plagued with fear, sadness, and occasional threats of violence. When I think about these painful times, I am happy for Jennifer that she had such a positive home life – and I can’t help but think that the Bricker home was a better place for Jennifer to grow up than mine was. ...

During our first conversation, I found myself thinking, *Thank God someone was watching over her, so she didn’t have to suffer like Christina and I did.* (pp. 102-103)

On October 1, 1987, in a hospital in Salem, Illinois, a baby girl was born without legs. Her sister, born intact, became a champion Olympic gymnast, showered with fame and wealth. Whose life was blessed? Whose life was cursed?

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This article can also be read at: <http://www.aish.com/sp/so/Who-Got-the-Better-Deal.html>

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# WOMEN'S TEHILLIM REFUAH SHLAYMAH

October 19, 2017

Peninah bat Craindel  
Avigile Malka bat Chana Yehudis  
Alta Haita bat Devorah  
Tziona bat Sara  
Shoshana bat Rochel  
Zeesa bat Gnessa  
Tziporah bat Chana  
Devora Elka bat Sara  
Devorah bat Pesel  
Cyrel Libah bat Chana  
Sara Leah bat Maya Elanit  
Eta Chaya bat Rachel  
Shoshana bat Bella  
Gila Fruma bat Ita Chaya  
Shulamit Hinke bat Gittel  
Riwella bat Freida  
Chana Naomi bat Esther  
Daniella Gittel bat Rus  
Bracha Avigayil bat Rochel Geeta  
Naomi Orach bat Tatiana Shalhavet  
Iris bat Daisy  
Dina Gayla bat Faiga Chava  
Yocheved bat Freidel  
Chaya Yocheved Alexandra  
bat Chaviva Tova  
Esther Revela bat Fruma  
Sprintza Shaindel Bat Henya Rochel Shayna  
Rochel bat Feige  
Sara bat Chaya  
Dina Malka bat Devorah Tsiral  
Avigayil bat Rochel Geeta  
Ariella Simcha bat Sarah Leah  
Esther bat Doba  
Aliza bat Mesodi  
Suri bas Lea  
Sara Faige bat Bluma  
Luba bat Chana  
Dina bat Chaya  
Baila Ruth bat Sarah  
Ayelet Mariah bat Ranana  
Blima Yosefa bat Chaya  
Esther Hadassa Chaya bat Pearl  
Orli Rachel bat Yehudis Rus  
Liba Rivka bat Esther Malka  
Muna bat Salima Shulamit  
Ruth bat Sarah Immeinu  
Leah bat Mechel L'Chaya  
Laya Goldie bat Yetta  
Chana bat Sarah Rivkah  
Gaya bat Shayna  
Benyamin Eliezer Ha Levi ben Isrus  
Aryeh Michael ben Liza  
Chaim Yitzchak ben Shaindel Hinda  
Eitan Nissim Tzvi Ben Vera Faiga  
Nechemia ben Shayna  
Eliyahu Pesach ben Rachel  
Shlomo Yehoshua ben Esther  
Aharon ben Ora Chana  
Daniel ben Ahava  
Shmuel ben Hannah  
Eitan ben Deena  
Chaim Bare haCohen ben Chaya  
Meir Hillel ben Raizel  
Izzy ben Tebal  
Dovid Yosef haLevy ben Etle haCohen  
Chaim ben Ziporah haLevy  
Yaakov Dovid ben Avigail  
Yisrael Aaron ben Bayla Golda  
Israel ben Josefa  
Yosef Issac ben Yehuda Moshe  
Walter Spatz ben Yisrael  
Moshe Lazar ben Shayna Chaya  
Menachem Koppel ben Faiga Hannah  
Yerachmeil Eliyahu ben Esther Revela  
Yisroel Moshe ben Yocheved  
Moshe Zvi ben Rochel Leah  
Arich Leib ben Baila Rochel  
Shalom Meir ben Perel  
Benzion ben Chana  
Isaac Shaya ben Taliya Levana  
Shmuel ben Eva  
Moshe Dovid ben Hannah  
Shmuel ben Chana Menucha  
Yerachmiel Moshe ben Hinda  
Pinchas Tzvi ben Yechezkel  
Arkady ben Chaya  
Alexander ben Roza  
Leo ben Leah  
Baruch Tzvi ben Rikva Baysa  
Simcha Shmaryahu ben Ita  
Yehudah ben Rochel  
Tuvya Yaakov ben Masha  
Yoel ben Etel Tziviva  
Mordechai ben Hassya  
Josef ben Rochel  
Yaakov Moshe ben Gittel  
Yosef Avraham ben Chana  
Chaim Nachum ben Leah  
Michael Mendel ben Chava  
Ayia HaCohen ben Nellie Sura  
Yehezchal ben Leah

## WOMEN'S TEHILLIM CIRCLE SCHEDULE

On Friday, October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2017, Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan  
please rotate to the next 3 Psalms as follows:

PSALMS	READER/S	PSALMS	READER/S
1-3	Tanya Reinfeld & Toby Albert	79-81	Deena Kinken, Sari Halpern and Helen Silkin
4-6	Bonnie Weinreb & Baila Kaplan	82-84	Becky Michael
7-9	Leah Chana Levy & Chaya Sura Bukhover	85-87	Pam Cohen
10-12	Rhona Cohen & Tova Goldberg	88-90	Bonnie Jacobson
13-17 (5)	Ruth Bejar	91-93	Pam Silverman & Davida Nakdimen
18	Debbie Rand	94-96	Joyce Hacker & Andrea Lieberman
19-21	Jackie Lome & Elana Belizon	97-99	Marion Santhouse
22-24	Sarah Margolies & Rita Rubin	100-102	Rachel Bensimon & Shari Matz
25-27	Rosalie Somsky	103-105	Anna Cohen & Eliana Galer
28-30	Chana Feinberg	106-108	Avigayil Alpern & Margo Rosman
31-33	Ellen Averbook & Jane Teichner	109-111	Penny Pearlman
34-36	Carolynn Jarashow and Gigi Kaminetzky	112-114	Gila Griner
37-39	Betty Maikhor	115-118 (4)	Marissa Levenson
40-42	Sara Schandelson	119 (1-96)	Beth Plotkin
43-45	Susan Siedler and Shifra Coker	119 (97-176)	Gwenn Lerman & Shoshana King
46-48	Michal Marcus	120-123 (4)	Georgina Rice
49-51	Suzanne Scheiner	124-126	Shirley Girnun
52-54	Chani Salamon & Fay Eisenberg	127-129	Betty Goldberg
55-57	Linda Melcer & Orly Sabag,	130-132	Diane Charme & Leora Rosenberg
58-60	Malka Morris & Miriam Fox	133-135	Rochelle Etedgui
61-63	Carol Hordish & Mimi Furst	136-138	Susan Rotsztajin & Ana Kan
64-66	Tova Gil & Bruia Kodsi	139-141	Jean Cohen & Irene Berger
67-69	Yocheved Hande	142-144	Carol Kahn
70-72	Dorothy Perkins & Tamar Nawy	145-147	Pam Abitbol
73-75	Amy Wolnerman & Caroline Kalter	148-150	Esther Abrams
76-78	Sara Brudnoy		Tanya Reinfeld & Toby Albert