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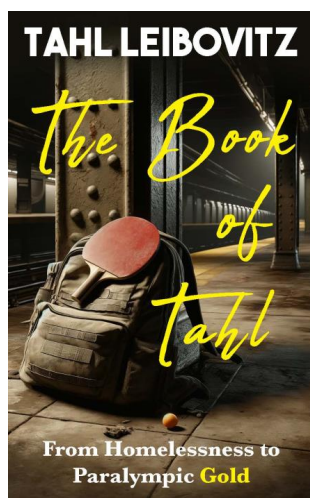


The Book of Tahl From Homelessness to Paralympic Gold

(With a Foreword by Will Shortz, New York Times Crossword Editor)

He stands 5'3" on badly deformed feet. Bone tumors prevent him from straightening his arms or flexing his wrists. His hands and feet sweat excessively, forcing him to change socks several times a day. And from the age of 14 to 21, he was homeless, sleeping in subway cars and on roof tops, stealing food, clothes and money, and defending himself from the violent attacks of those who prey on the homeless.

Forty-nine-year-old Tahl Leibovitz is one of the most highly decorated and celebrated American table tennis players of all-time, a Paralympic Gold Medalist and USA Table Tennis Hall of Fame inductee who will represent the U.S. at the 2024 Paris Olympics/Paralympics in late August.



He is also a high school dropout who went on to earn four college degrees, including a master's in social work from New York University's Silver School of Social Work. Today, he is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker with a thriving psychotherapy practice in New York City.

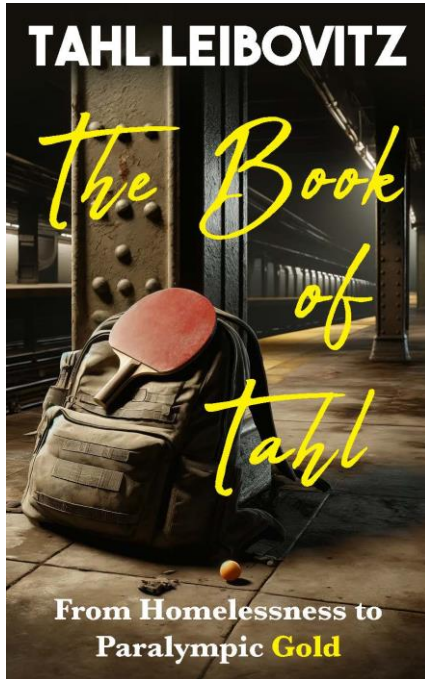
Tahl's memoir, *The Book of Tahl: From Homelessness to Paralympic Gold*, has all the ingredients of a modern-day retelling of the Horatio Alger story: Childhood illness, abusive alcoholic father, bipolar mother, a homeless teenager hustling for survival on the streets, and a remarkable storybook ending as a world-famous professional athlete and prominent psychotherapist.

Tahl pulled himself up by the bootstraps of his strong character and an overarching determination to become the absolute best table tennis player at the youth club in Queens where he practiced for four hours every day of his homeless years on the streets.

(more...)

“That was how I overcame the shame of being different, being deformed,” he says. “By beating all the able-bodied table tennis players. Luckily, the people who ran the youth club didn’t know or care I was homeless and left me alone.

“Table tennis saved me,” he adds. “I didn’t take drugs because I knew that would impact badly on my improvement as a table tennis player. As my game improved and I became a really good professional player, the self-confidence born of that accomplishment washed over to other areas of my life.”



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Note: Tahl will be competing in the Paris Paralympics from August 29 – September 7 as a member of TEAM USA’s table tennis team. He will be available for interviews during the Paralympics and after his return to New York City on September 9.

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