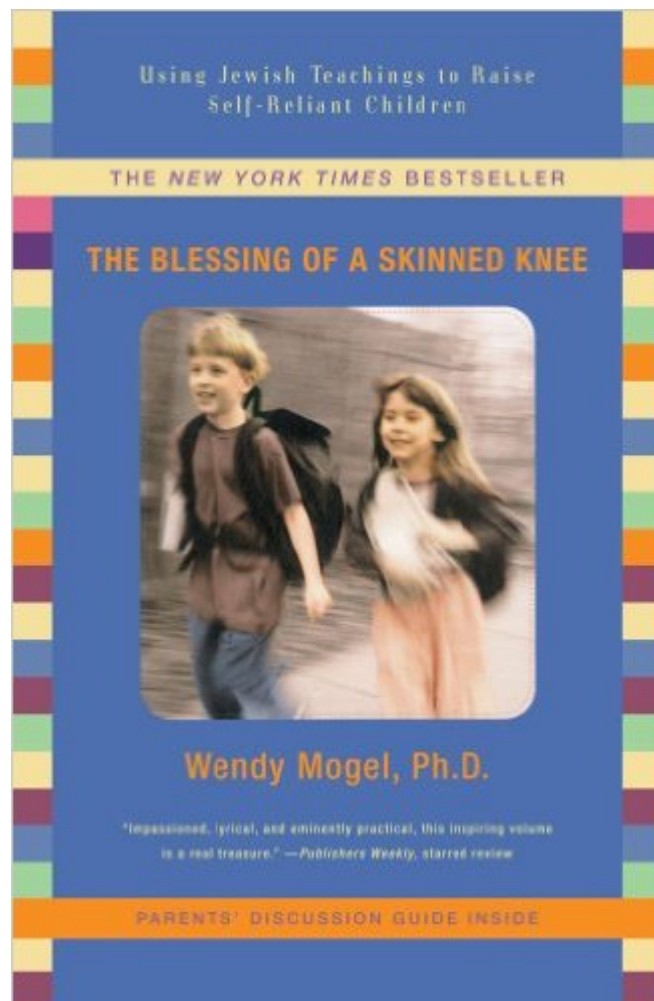


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# The Blessing Of A Skinned Knee: Using Jewish Teachings To Raise Self-Reliant Children



## Synopsis

The beloved bestseller that offers a practical, inspiring new roadmap for raising self-reliant, ethical, and compassionate children. In the trenches of a typical day, every parent encounters a child afflicted with ingratitude and entitlement. In a world where material abundance abounds, parents want so badly to raise self-disciplined, appreciative, and resourceful children who are not spoiled by the plentitude around them. But how to accomplish this feat? The answer has eluded the best-intentioned mothers and fathers who overprotect, overindulge, and overschedule their children's lives. Dr. Mogel helps parents learn how to turn their children's worst traits into their greatest attributes. Starting with stories of everyday parenting problems and examining them through the lens of the Torah, the Talmud, and important Jewish teachings, *The Blessing of a Skinned Knee* shows parents how to teach children to honor their parents and to respect others, escape the danger of overvaluing children's need for self-expression so that their kids don't become "little attorneys," accept that their children are both ordinary and unique, and treasure the power and holiness of the present moment. It is Mogel's singular achievement that she makes these teachings relevant for any era and any household of any faith. A unique parenting book, designed for use both in the home and in parenting classes, with an on-line teaching guide to help facilitate its use, *The Blessing of a Skinned Knee* is both inspiring and effective in the day-to-day challenge of raising self-reliant children.

## Book Information

Paperback: 304 pages

Publisher: Scribner; Reprint edition (December 2, 2008)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0142196444

ISBN-13: 978-1416593065

ASIN: 1416593063

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 0.8 x 8.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 8.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars Â Â See all reviewsÂ (173 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #11,701 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #2 inÂ Books > Religion & Spirituality > Judaism > Jewish Life #18 inÂ Books > Parenting & Relationships > Parenting > School-Age Children

## Customer Reviews

I just finished this last night, and I plan to go back through it again. It's one of the better books on raising children that I've ever read. Mogel is a child psychologist with a definite slant--for her, a lot of the answers to parenting problems lie in encouraging spiritual growth, in ourselves and in our children. You don't have to be Jewish to find great material in this book--I'm not--but you definitely need to accept the premise that human beings are happier in a spiritually enriched environment. I have already started implementing some of Mogel's suggestions for fostering responsibility in children and encouraging them to be grateful for what they have (as opposed to constantly needing more to be satisfied). Moreover, I mean to stay mindful of her emphasis on a parent's need to accept a child's basic nature. If you can name the personality trait in your child that drives you insane, Mogel says, you have already named his greatest strength. Helping to raise him to his greatest potential involves teaching him how to utilize his nature, not how to subvert it. Unlike some modern psychological parenting texts, *The Blessing of a Skinned Knee* doesn't pretend that children are blank slates to be filled with whatever we please. Instead, Mogel offers practical suggestions for working with the material we're given. One of the elements of the book that I would most share with my friends involves discipline. Mogel breaks down transgressions by intent and offers concrete ways to deal with them compassionately and calmly. She several times references Biblical exhortations to discipline--not in a pro-spanking stance, but in reminding parents that this is a responsibility that comes with the territory. I wish that some of the more stern parents of my acquaintance would read her arguments against shaming children. Mogel does not believe that discipline requires humiliation. Those who swing the other way--me included--could benefit from her section on restitution. My 8-year-old suffers an overly developed sense of guilt, and I am hoping that following her suggestions for restitution will allow him to feel a healthy sense of closure and relief. While every reader of books of this type needs to exercise discretion in determining what will work in his or her household, there's a lot of solid advice here. It doesn't address every situation or every concern, and I don't believe it intends to. What it does is provide a framework for a new way of thinking about parenting which might be useful when you encounter those situations not covered.

I have read countless parenting books and consulted professional child and marriage psychologists for guidance in raising my two wonderful daughters. In comparison, Dr. Mogel's *The Blessing of a Skinned Knee* is WISDOM, not guidance. Her book helped me to recognize that my responsibility is to be concerned most with building strength of character, not strength of grades and achievement. That I need to help my nine-year old and seven-year old with WHO they are, not WHAT they are. Our achievement-driven age sends the opposite message, and, consequently, it is so easy to lose

sleep over the wrong things. In an inspirational story of personal and professional transformation, Dr. Mogel tells us of how her own search for effective parenting strategies led her to discover that a religious tradition -- in her case Judaism -- gives her a structure for making healthy parenting choices. As parent raising two daughters and as professional psychologist offering advice to parents and teachers, she gives us a framework upon which to base our decisions and behavior to help our children grow into healthy, independent adults. With this new understanding, I re-read some of *The Blessing of a Skinned Knee* before going to bed each night, and my sleep is getting better.

A friend of mine recommended this book to me when I had spoken to her about battling feelings of guilt as a new parent. This book is splendid for helping parents to feel secure in their parental authority and confident about setting boundaries. I suspect that some people could misread this book as encouraging tyrannical behavior or giving permission to disconnect from involvement in your child's daily concerns. In fact, the book encourages parents to remember that, ultimately, they are the decision makers and not every decision requires "buy in" from your child. Likewise, a child must learn responsibility, which involves being allowed to make some mistakes. Both of these concepts are presented gently and with careful consideration of the needs of both child and parent. As a parenting book, I can highly recommend this for any reader able to take what is wanted and leave the rest. If you tend to be an all or nothing thinker, this may not be the ideal read for you. As a book on Jewish teachings, I can not judge as I am not Jewish and am not educated in Jewish theology. I found the considerations of Jewish teachings in the book to be useful and thought provoking, and I think any Christian would find it so.

After seeing the recent trend in families that I know trying to let their kids "become individuals", a book to remind you that it is okay to be a parent to your kids! Too many of the parents I know are so busy trying to not stifle their kids, that they neglect to teach them common courtesy and respect for their elders. This book is not the solution to all behavioral problems with kids, only an insightful reminder to look at our own interaction with our children. It is a reminder that before you can teach children self-respect they need to learn how to respect others.

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