## Higher consciousness via hands



Talma Brill: 'The power of chirology is astounding.' (Talma Brill)

Chirologist Talma Brill legitimizes hand reading as a tool for diagnosis and healing

• By ARIEL DOMINIQUE HENDELMAN

alma Brill has been looking at people's hands her whole life, but it wasn't until she was 40 that this curiosity and passion took a new turn.

"I remember the hands of my teachers from high school, even though I don't remember their names," Brill shares. "I remember hands more than faces."

When Brill began seriously to study chirology, the practice of hand reading, it was a hobby. She was working as a high-school teacher of Bible and literature classes, and occasionally would study the hands of her students and teach them about chirology. She then met a Jungian analyst who would prove to be pivotal in her journey. She told the analyst about chirology, and how fascinated she was by it, but that she didn't know if it was feasible to develop it into a profession. The analyst gave Brill her hands and asked for a reading.

"So I did," Brill recalls. "She said that there are many good teachers, but there are not many good hand readers. She told me to go for it and that she would start sending me her clients. When I saw that reaction, I knew that this was my calling. I enjoyed being a teacher, but chirology is my way."

Brill's method of chirology is meticulous and methodical. She always reads both hands; asking the person who comes for a consultation to turn their palms toward her as she scans them back and forth with a serious, penetrative gaze. She also takes prints of both hands and studies them as well to gain a complete picture. She explains that the left hand reflects childhood and what someone brings with them into the world, while the right hand represents what they are doing with it as an adult (or for younger children, what they could do with what they have been given).

"They also represent the inner world and the outer world; the left is the private persona and the right is the public one," Brill explains. "It's very interesting to see both hands and what growth and development there is from the left to the right. I love to see the growth in the right hand compared to the left because that shows me that this person is open enough to learn, be aware, and grow out of their personal circumstances. If I'm doing a hand reading for an adolescent of 15 or 16, in a way this person is still a child, but not really. If I see a lack of self-confidence in the left hand, but I can see in the right that there will be a big change, I can tell them that, in the future, they will be much more confident and will see themselves with new eyes. The moment I give them this information, they start to make their first steps toward it because they know that it's possible.

Brill, who is located in Mevaseret Zion, is not only a practitioner of chirology; she wants to legitimize it in the eyes of the wider world and show that it is a powerful tool that can increase someone's awareness about their strengths and weaknesses and how they operate in the world. In this way, it provides an opportunity for people to find out about themselves in a new and deeper way. This tool can be especially effective

during times of crisis or change, but is useful at any time. She tells a story of a woman who came to her during a devastating period in her life. Her husband had just left her for another woman. While reading the woman's hands, Brill began talking about her creative potential, which came as a complete shock; the woman was not in touch with this part of herself at all. After the reading, they stayed in contact, which is not typical for Brill. Years later, she came to the woman's home and saw that since their first meeting, the woman had begun to develop her creativity. She was drawing and expressing herself beautifully through art in a way that was once completely foreign to her. Brill saw before her eyes the transformative potential of chirology.

"What is important for me is to put this subject on the map as a serious diagnostic tool," she states. "How can the hand tell me who you are? That's important to know first. What are your talents, strengths and weak points? The cortex of the brain controls the functions of the body and there is a huge amount, in fact the largest amount, devoted to the hand. The simple reason is that the hand is the direct tool of the brain for doing everything. Most of our movements are with our hands. The rationale is that if in the cortex the hand is represented so extensively, when we go one step further, maybe this is the explanation of the phenomenon that certain features in the hand can tell us very deep information about our personalities. The hand is a reflection of consciousness."

According to Brill, the hand reflects consciousness in a general sense; expressing the details of human consciousness is something that even the best psychologists in the world struggle with, given that humans are so complex. The practice of hand reading is an ancient one that began in India thousands of years ago. It then came to Europe and remained a respected source of knowledge. In modern times, however, hand reading has been discredited, due in part to its ancient roots. It is seen as outdated. It may also be due to its association with astrology and tarot cards, keeping it out of the realm of valid, psychological diagnosis.

"This is the difference between palm reading and chirology," Brill adds. "Palm reading still uses the language and the subjects of the old tradition; how many children you will have, how and when you are going to die, and so on. Astrology is even further from us because when I take your hand, it's still your hand; it's part of your body. A fingerprint is completely unique, like a signature, it's totally personal. Palm reading is like fortune telling, whereas chirology is the modern method, which is psychological, and for me, far more serious. The power of chirology is astounding. What I need to do to advance that is scientific research."

IT WAS in this vein that Brill published her book, first in Hebrew six years ago and then in English just five months ago. Titled *The Hand: The Mirror of the Soul, Diagnostic and Applied Chirology*, the book quickly became a bestseller on Amazon in three different categories: hand reading (Amazon does not yet offer a chirology category), psychological research and psychiatry.

It is unusual for a book about hand reading to become a best-seller in psychological categories, but it is also a microcosm of what Brill is trying to accomplish; to legitimize chirology as a tool capable of identifying conditions of the personality such as talents, tendencies, emotional needs, powers of the ego, moods and more. The book delves into how chirology can be effective in guiding people with their professional or educational directions, and in aiding communication with troubled adolescents.

Chirology can even be helpful in diagnosing physical and mental health disorders. Brill conducted two studies in this regard, both of which are detailed in the book. Conducted in partnership with Dr. Saul Stier, the studies were done at the Abarbanel Mental Health Center, the largest mental hospital in Israel, associated

with Tel Aviv University. They show that Brill was able to identify the hands belonging to mentally ill people from those of normative people. In statistical studies, significant results are those below 0.05. Essentially, the smaller the number, the more significant it is. This is because it indicates less of a possibility that the result came by chance. In both studies, the vast majority of Brill's findings were very significant. They showed that there were differences between the hands of schizophrenic patients and those of "normal" people.

"I found that it is possible to decipher mental illnesses from mentally healthy people through chirology," she says. "I wanted to know if this tool could withstand the scientific test and be validated, and it did."

Brill would like to continue to conduct studies on chirology as a diagnostic tool for physical health, but she needs to find more willing partners in doctors and nurses to aid in future research. For now, she is open to the possibility.

A third study she conducted was done independently, comparing the haredi (ultra-Orthodox) population in Israel to the non-haredi population (it is important to note that Rabbi Yaakov Ariel of Ramat Gan ruled that chirology is kosher and there is no halachic problem with it). The study happened by chance; Brill knew a haredi woman who sent her daughter for a hand reading. When the woman was extremely impressed with the results, she wrote an article in a haredi publication about Brill and chirology. This brought many more haredi women, and some men as well, to Brill for consultations. She immediately saw that the behavior of the hands was different. When taking a print, she asks the person to relax their hands. The haredi women did not know how. Their hands remained stiff and cautious. When asked to drop their hands down, they also didn't know how. They remained cautious and asked repeatedly if they were doing it correctly.

"It says something about the body/mind connection," Brill notes.

It gave her the idea to take a group of hands from prints she had previously collected that she knew belonged to non-religious people, and to make a comparison with the haredi group. She found suitable parameters within which to work and gave the results to a statistician to make the comparison. The outcome was incredible and much stronger in the women. It showed a conflict between a devotion to their way of life and a wish to be free of it; to be more independent. The study, conducted 15 years ago, prompted Brill to write that she thought it indicated a change coming in haredi society, instigated by the women.

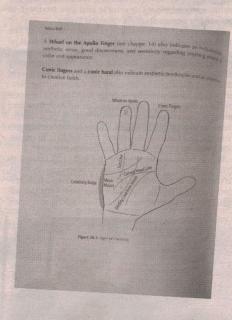
She says that certain features of the hands are much more prevalent on the hands of haredim than on the hands of others. So if a haredi person comes to her and she does not find these features in his hands, she asks him if he was born to a non-haredi family, or if his parents were ba'alei teshuva, so he didn't have a standard haredi education. In such cases the answer is almost always yes.

"Chirology is a strong tool and because of this you have to be careful with it," Brill states. "You have to be responsible. If you tell a person something negative or frightening and it isn't true, that can have a big effect. It plants a seed in their consciousness. I take it seriously this responsibility. At the same time, I can't let my ego get involved. Some people come to me and ask if they should marry a particular person or get divorced, and I tell them 'I don't know, what do you think? It's your power, your life, and your right to make your own decisions.'

"If I can see the influence and impact of what happened when someone was a child, then I can also see how that determines their emotional needs in their marriage now, but it is to empower the person to grow in their way of thinking and appreciate themselves more."

www.chirology.co.il/ www.amazon.com/Hand-Mirror-Soul-Talma-Brill/





According to Brill, hands represent:

— The left reflects childhood and what someone brings with them into the world, while the right reflects what they are doing with it as an adult.

— The inner and outer world; the left is the private persona and the right is the public one.

(Photos: Ariel Dominique Hendelman)