

# An American Student, Soviet Jewish Dissident, and the Gift of Hope

Natan Sharansky, born Anatoly Borisovich Shcharansky in Donetsk, Ukraine, in 1948, was an unlikely hero. A brilliant mathematician and computer scientist, he was a young man with a promising future in the Soviet Union. But his life took an unexpected turn when he encountered the plight of Soviet Jews and their struggle for basic human rights.



## Swimming in the Daylight: An American Student, a Soviet-Jewish Dissident, and the Gift of Hope by Lisa C. Paul

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 4129 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 301 pages  
Lending : Enabled



In the 1970s, the Soviet Union was a closed society, and its Jewish population faced severe discrimination. Jews were denied access to higher education, employment, and cultural institutions. They were also subject to government-sanctioned anti-Semitism and propaganda.

Sharansky, who had always considered himself a Soviet patriot, was deeply disturbed by the treatment of his fellow Jews. He began to organize

protests and demonstrations, demanding the right of Soviet Jews to emigrate to Israel. His activism quickly caught the attention of the KGB, the Soviet secret police.

In 1977, Sharansky was arrested and charged with treason. He was sentenced to 13 years in a labor camp. During his imprisonment, he was subjected to torture and solitary confinement. But through it all, he never gave up hope.

Sharansky's story became known to the outside world through the efforts of his wife, Avital, and other human rights activists. His courage and determination inspired people around the world to demand his release. In 1986, after nine years in prison, Sharansky was finally released in a prisoner exchange.

Sharansky's release was a major victory for the human rights movement. It showed that even in the darkest of times, hope can prevail. Sharansky's story is a testament to the power of the human spirit and the importance of fighting for what you believe in.

## **From American Student to Soviet Dissident**

Natan Sharansky was born into a Jewish family in the Ukrainian city of Donetsk. His father was an engineer, and his mother was a doctor. Sharansky was a bright and curious child, and he excelled in school. He developed a passion for mathematics and science, and he dreamed of becoming a physicist.

In 1966, Sharansky enrolled in the Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology, one of the most prestigious universities in the Soviet Union. He

quickly proved to be a brilliant student, and he soon became involved in the university's dissident movement.

The dissident movement was a loosely organized group of students and intellectuals who opposed the Soviet government's repressive policies. They demanded freedom of speech, assembly, and religion. Sharansky quickly became one of the leaders of the movement, and he organized protests and demonstrations against the government.

In 1973, Sharansky was expelled from the university for his dissident activities. He was drafted into the army, but he refused to serve. He was arrested and sentenced to three years in a labor camp.

After his release from the labor camp, Sharansky continued to be active in the dissident movement. He helped to organize a group called the Moscow Helsinki Watch Group, which monitored the Soviet government's compliance with the Helsinki Accords, an international agreement on human rights.

In 1977, Sharansky was arrested again and charged with treason. He was sentenced to 13 years in a labor camp. He spent the next nine years in prison, where he was subjected to torture and solitary confinement.

## **A Symbol of Hope**

Sharansky's story became known to the outside world through the efforts of his wife, Avital, and other human rights activists. His courage and determination inspired people around the world to demand his release. In 1986, after nine years in prison, Sharansky was finally released in a prisoner exchange.

Sharansky's release was a major victory for the human rights movement. It showed that even in the darkest of times, hope can prevail. Sharansky's story is a testament to the power of the human spirit and the importance of fighting for what you believe in.

After his release from prison, Sharansky emigrated to Israel. He became a prominent human rights activist and politician. He served as the chairman of the Jewish Agency for Israel and the Minister of Immigrant Absorption.

Natan Sharansky's story is an inspiration to us all. It shows us that even the smallest of actions can make a difference. By standing up for what we believe in, we can help to create a better world.

## The Gift of Hope

Natan Sharansky's story is a gift of hope to us all. It shows us that even in the darkest of times, hope can prevail. We must never give up on our dreams, no matter how difficult they may seem.

Sharansky's story also teaches us the importance of fighting for what we believe in. We must never be afraid to stand up for what is right, even if it means putting ourselves at risk.

The gift of hope that Sharansky has given us is a precious one. We must cherish it and use it to make the world a better place.



## Swimming in the Daylight: An American Student, a Soviet-Jewish Dissident, and the Gift of Hope by Lisa C. Paul

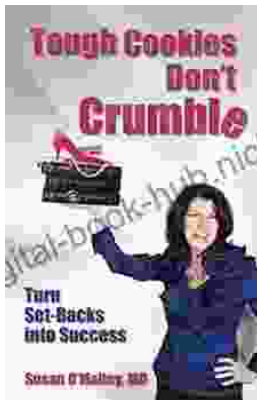
★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 4129 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting: Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 301 pages  
Lending : Enabled



## Tough Cookies Don't Crumble: The Unbreakable Spirit of Those Who Overcome Adversity

Life is full of challenges. We all face them, in one form or another. But for some people, the challenges are so great that they seem insurmountable. They may come in...



## The California-Born Diners, Burger Joints, and Fast Food Restaurants That Changed the World

California is known for many things, but its fast food scene is one of its most iconic. From In-N-Out to McDonald's, some of the most well-known fast food...