

GIFTS THAT GROW Wilma Rudolph was born in a shack in the backwoods of Tennessee of very poor parents. She was a premature baby born at four and one half pounds. At age four she had double pneumonia and scarlet fever, that left her with a partly paralyzed left leg. She had to wear a steel brace.

But Wilma had a mother who constantly told her that she could do whatever she wanted to do with her life, that all she needed to do was have faith and persistence and courage and a never-give-up spirit.

So at the age of nine Wilma did away with the brace. In four more years she finally developed a rhythmic stride that enabled her to run. At 13 she entered her first race, and came in dead last. But she wouldn't give up. Finally she began to win and win. She made it to the 1960 Olympics to run the 100 meter race against the unbeaten and world record holder German woman Yetta Mynie. But Wilma won. And again in the 200 meter. Finally came the 400 meter relay. She was the anchor, the last runner on the U.S. team, and her competitor was Yetta Mynie. But just as the baton was handed to Wilma she dropped it, giving Yetta the lead. Yet, somehow Wilma Rudolph caught up, and won!

The gifts inside us are there, waiting for some faith, and persistence, and courage to unleash and grow them!

From N. V. Peale's "Become What You Want to Be,"