



# ALL KINDS OF STRONG

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*Sadie Rose isn't very big. She can't run that fast and she can't lift heavy things. But when emergency strikes, Sadie Rose learns, along with the rest of her community, that there are many kinds of strength – and it turns out that she's very strong, after all.*

## JEWISH CONCEPTS

*Al tistakel b'kankan, ele b'ma sh'yesh bo.* “Don't look at the container, but at what is in it.” This Hebrew maxim, taken from a collection of ethical teachings known as *Pirkei Avot* (*Ethics of the Ancestors*) 4:27, would serve the neighbors in this story well. To those who see Sadie Rose as weak, sage Mrs. Mindel rightly points out that there are “all kinds of strong.” It is human nature to judge quickly or jump to conclusions sometimes, but Judaism teaches us to look beyond the superficial and find each person's strengths and positive qualities. They are always there!

Sadie, her family, and friends miss their “*shul* (synagogue) in the old country.” They were part of the major wave of Jewish immigration to the United States between 1880 and 1924. Many Jewish immigrants arrived at Ellis Island and stayed on the Lower East Side of New York City, but many others took different routes. During this time, numerous German Jews moved to small cities and towns throughout the Midwest, West, and South. Many Eastern European Jews brought farming skills to rural areas throughout the Northeast.

The bond between Sadie and Mrs. Mindel is special. Sadie won't rest until she has helped her dear friend recover from the pervasive sadness she feels after her home burns down. Sadie instinctively understands *kol Yisrael arevim ze la-ze*: “All Jews are responsible for each other”--a teaching well worth extending to the larger community.

## USING THIS BOOK AT HOME

Talk with your child about times you may have jumped to a conclusion, only to be happily surprised when taking a deeper look. Perhaps you were “judging a book by its cover,” or perhaps you met someone you didn't initially care for, but with whom you later became good friends. Invite your child to think about times when she or he “looked at the container, not at its contents.” We all need to keep open the possibility of changing our minds--whether it involves new foods, a subject in school, or, most importantly, the people we meet.

Learn about your family's history: talk with your child about how your family came to be where you are today. Children love interviewing relatives about the “olden days.” What kinds of jobs did the immigrant members of your family have when they came to the new country? Were they farmers, peddlers, or cobblers?

How can your family care for the community around you? Consider the following:

- Visit a home for the elderly.
- Send greetings or packages to those serving in the US military. If you'd like to reach out to Jewish soldiers, contact the Jewish Welfare Board Chaplains Council.
- Raise money at a lemonade stand and find a local cause to support with the proceeds. This is known as giving *tzedakah*.