



FLYING HIGH

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Jules the squirrel wants to play football, but the eagle, buffalo, and bear tell him he's all wrong for the game. But then the goat tells him that a wise person once said, "If you will it, it is no dream." Jules decides to work hard and give it his best shot, despite all the discouragement. And guess what happens?

JEWISH CONCEPTS

Jewish history is full of examples of people who passionately pursued their dreams, even in the face of overwhelming odds. One such extraordinary person was Theodor Herzl, a Hungarian Jew who lived from 1860-1904. In his work as a journalist, Herzl witnessed events that moved him to think deeply about the future of the Jewish people. He saw a desperate need for a Jewish state, a place where people could live in safety and freedom. Although his ideas were initially rejected by many, Herzl worked tirelessly to raise money and support for the reestablishment of the Jewish people in their ancient homeland.

In *Flying High*, Jules is inspired to pursue his dream by the words of Herzl. When Jules is discouraged because others tell him that he doesn't have what it takes to play football, a friend shares Herzl's most famous saying with him: "If you will it, it is no dream." Jules is encouraged to believe that he can achieve his goals through hard work and determination.

Herzl never gave up on his dream either. Although he did not live to see the creation of the State of Israel in 1948, he laid the crucial groundwork that made this historic event possible. Like Jules, each of us can draw inspiration from Herzl's perseverance and belief in the seemingly impossible -- and use it to pursue our own dreams.

USING THIS BOOK AT HOME

Children have an extraordinary ability to believe in themselves and in the power of their dreams. It is important to encourage this confidence at an early age, as it is all too common for it to be challenged as young people grow older. Talk with your children about the things they dream of doing, whether it's a goal for tomorrow or for years in the future. What kinds of things will they need to do to achieve these dreams? You might suggest that they draw a series of pictures of themselves progressing toward their goals. For example, if your child wants to be a musician, the pictures could include steps such as choosing an instrument, taking music lessons, listening to the music of more experienced players, and playing their favorite songs for an audience.

In our current age, in which instant gratification often seems the goal, children may need to be reminded that success does not happen overnight. As Jules discovers in this story, it takes a great amount of effort, dedication, and repeated tries to achieve one's goals. You can help your children break their big dreams down into small steps, and encourage them every time they complete one of these mini-goals. As the ancient Chinese philosopher Lao-tzu said, "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." There is no place to start but right where we stand!