

I'M GOING TO CLIMB MT. EVEREST!

We met Maayan (22), an officer in the IDF in Tel Aviv. Maayan is one of the thousands of children helped by a Malki Foundation program during the past 21 years. As a child born with Cerebral Palsy (CP), his family received Malki Foundation support with physiotherapy and hydrotherapy treatments for five years starting 2005.

"As a child, my parents would take me several times every week to therapy. This was not fun. There were times I even cried when the physiotherapist wasn't watching and just wanted the session to end. It wasn't clear to me why I had to do these exercises and other children didn't. Why couldn't I be like the other children? I now understand it was the support, persistence and push of my parents that built my resilience and let me progress and succeed. These were the years that built me."



In grade one, Maayan decided he was done with his walker. He wanted crutches – and through stubbornness, his parents' support and after several hard falls, it happened. "I wanted to prove I could do it even though it wasn't clear my body was ready for it. But I tried and tried and in the end it worked".

Something similar happened when Maayan set out to ride a friend's scooter. Falls followed by injuries and then his parents brought home a scooter. He taught himself to ride. And then he taught himself to ride a bicycle though the doctors had warned his parents that Maayan's physical limitations ruled out riding a two-wheeler. Determination won out. He rides.

Maayan says his abilities to fulfill dreams lie in his childhood and in the importance of treatment and perseverance.

"Cerebral Palsy will always be part of my life but without the structure and support my parents gave me, and the therapies with the Malki Foundation's help, I could not have gotten to where I now am. Childhood was a critical time, laying down the foundations for the habits and dreams that empower me today."

And what dreams! Maayan has successfully undertaken challenging hikes, traveled to Africa, joined the IDF where is an officer in the Intelligence Corps and climbed Mount Annapurna (over 6,000 meters) in Nepal. What dreams are still ahead? Maayan doesn't hesitate: "I'm going to climb Mt Everest! And I know it's going to be easier than getting through the treatments I was obliged to do as a child".

Maayan is definitely a special person with enormous willpower and resilience from whom we can all learn a lot. He emphasizes over and over again the central role of persistence – his own and his parents'. And the support of the Malki Foundation without which, he says, he would not be where he is today.

Your support of the Malki Foundation is what gives Maayan and many other children with disabilities the ability to grow and develop. Maayan and his parents are thankful for your support over the years.

