

Nothing Like a Flight of Fancy for Your Goal Achievement to Take Off

While I enjoy visiting other countries I don't really enjoy long flights, hanging around airports, waiting for your luggage to be unloaded, etc. Still, I recognise that I am quite privileged to be able to travel at all and this was really brought home to me by a news item I saw recently. In India, just 1% of the population get to fly. Even considering that India has a population of well over a billion people this is still a startling statistic for something many of us now take for granted. So what an ex-pilot has come up with is to give disadvantaged children in India the experience of simulated flight - well not quite. Let me explain. The children are given a boarding pass and then are escorted to the plane. Once seated, one of the boys said enthusiastically: "When I grow up I want to fly a plane just like this one." I couldn't help but smile. I knew what he meant but thought "not just like this one". You see this plane is the Chitty Chitty Bang Bang of planes. Its exterior is somewhat decrepit. It only has one wing and the tail section is missing. This sorry-looking plane, lying in a field which separates it from a sprawling metropolis, is definitely grounded. So much for flight simulation you say - well not quite. The children do get to experience a real aspect of flying. For these children, the highlight of this 'simulated flight' is going through the emergency procedures. If you're a "frequent flyer" then you probably pay scant attention to this part of your flight. It's not because you don't think it's important but because you want to focus on safely completing your journey. In fact, this is one of the prime times in our lives when most of us are able to consistently practice positive thinking and we think of achieving our goal, i.e. arriving at our destination rather than thinking of everything that could go wrong along the way. If only we would apply this strategy of being prepared for the worse but keeping our eyes firmly fixed on our goals to other areas of our lives our success rate in achieving our goals would soar. Anyway, back to this "flight of fancy". The children not only get to see the emergency procedures explained, they exit the plane using the emergency slides. For some perhaps, the most fun part of the 'flight'. The reality is though that this scheme may be the only experience that these children have of 'flying'. Still, it opens their eyes to journeys to distant lands - journeys that they might have otherwise never imagined. It stretches their minds as to what they can achieve if they only believe. It gives them a glimpse of what's possible. "The only thing that stands between a man and what he wants from life is often merely the will to try it and the faith to believe that it is possible." David Viscott I hope no one steals that boy's dream away from him. I hope that one day he will get to experience real flight and not as a passenger but as a pilot. I hope that the enthusiasm he felt while sitting in that grounded plane with one broken wing will truly give him the wings he needs to fly.

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