

# KEEP TRYING

Thomas had received a UFO balance ball game as a present for remembering to do all his chores for the entire week. The goal of the game was to get all five balls into their slots at the same time. Only, it was harder than he imagined it would be.

Thomas would get one ball to slide in a hole, but when he tipped the UFO to roll the next ball toward a hole, the first ball would roll out! And he would have to start all over again.

“I can’t do it!” he wailed.

Father came in at just that moment. “What’s the matter, Thomas?”

“It’s too hard!” Thomas groaned, pointing at the UFO game. “I don’t think anyone can do it!”



Father laughed and then sat next to Thomas on the couch. “Well, you know, when things seem hard it’s usually because you haven’t practiced enough yet.” He picked up the game and put it back in Thomas’ hands. “If you keep trying, I bet you’ll learn how to do it. Remember when you first started riding your bicycle? You said it was too hard and that you’d never get the hang of it.”

Thomas thought back to a year ago when he rode a bicycle for the first time. He remembered he had fallen down repeatedly, but Father had encouraged him to keep trying. Now, he could ride his bicycle without falling! “Yes, I remember,” Thomas said.

“And when you were first learning to read, did that seem easy to you?”



“No, it was tricky at first.”

“But you kept trying—”

“And now I can read!” Thomas proclaimed.

“You see, it’s about patience and not giving up when something first appears difficult. I experienced the same when I was your age. I loved to swim, but I was quite slow—too slow to make the swimming team. But I kept on practicing and trying out for the team, and finally, after a year of swimming classes, I made the school’s swimming team. What’s more, I even won a medal at one of the swimming meets.”

“Wow, Dad! That’s so cool!”

“Yes, but what would have happened if I had given up because I thought it was too hard to make the team?”



“You never would have won a medal.”

“That’s right. Games can help build character. This game is teaching you to not give up.”

Thomas picked up the UFO game again. He thought about how happy he’d be once he mastered it. He began to slowly roll the balls toward the slots. The first ball slid in to a hole! But there were four more balls to slide into place. Carefully, he tipped the UFO so that the second ball rolled around the outer rim. It, too, slipped into the next open slot. Only three more balls to go!

And then disaster struck! Thomas had jerked the UFO a little too fiercely, and now he’d need to start over again.



Father gave Thomas' shoulder a pat.  
"Keep trying, son. You'll get it soon."

Determination gripped Thomas.  
He took a deep breath and started  
over. The first ball rolled in. Then the  
second. After a few moments of fierce  
concentration the third, fourth, and  
fifth followed.

"Dad, look! I did it! All the balls are in  
their slots!"

Father whooped and clapped his  
hands. "Yes, you did it! I knew you would.  
Aren't you glad you didn't give up?"

Thomas nodded. He knew that in  
the future, he would try to always  
remember to keep trying even when  
things seemed difficult at first.

## The End

*Authored by Aaliyah Smith. Illustrations by Alvi.  
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