

The Life of Judy Heumann

By Anna West



If you have ever felt different
If you have ever felt sad
If you have ever felt alone
There's no reason to be mad

The story begins with a tough, little girl
Judy Heumann is her name
In her tale you'll find power and friendship
And that her spirit is not one to **tame**

So let's get a move on, let's start this
story
So we can learn about her glory



In the bustling city of New York in 1947

On a chilly day in December

A little baby Judy was born

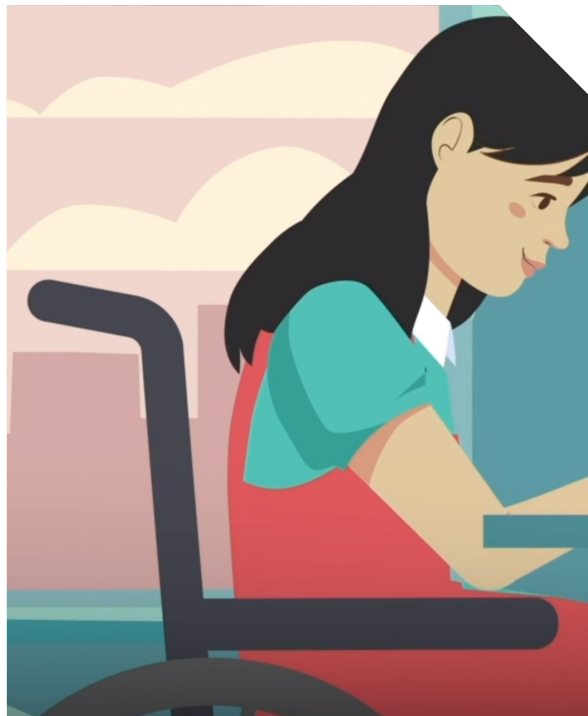
Oh, it was a day to remember



Back in the 1940s, **polio** was more common
It stopped some people from walking
Two-year old Judy got sick
And it was quite shocking



Life got more difficult when
Judy Heumann got the virus
She started using a wheelchair
But it wasn't a minus



New York didn't have ramps
She couldn't leave the sidewalk
So she would yell to her neighbors
"Friends, come down. Let us talk!"

She would play with her friends
They would push her chair
But it wasn't always easy
People would walk away and stare



As she got older, Judy went to camp
For people like her with disabilities
They learned that even in chairs or with
crutches

They were full of capabilities

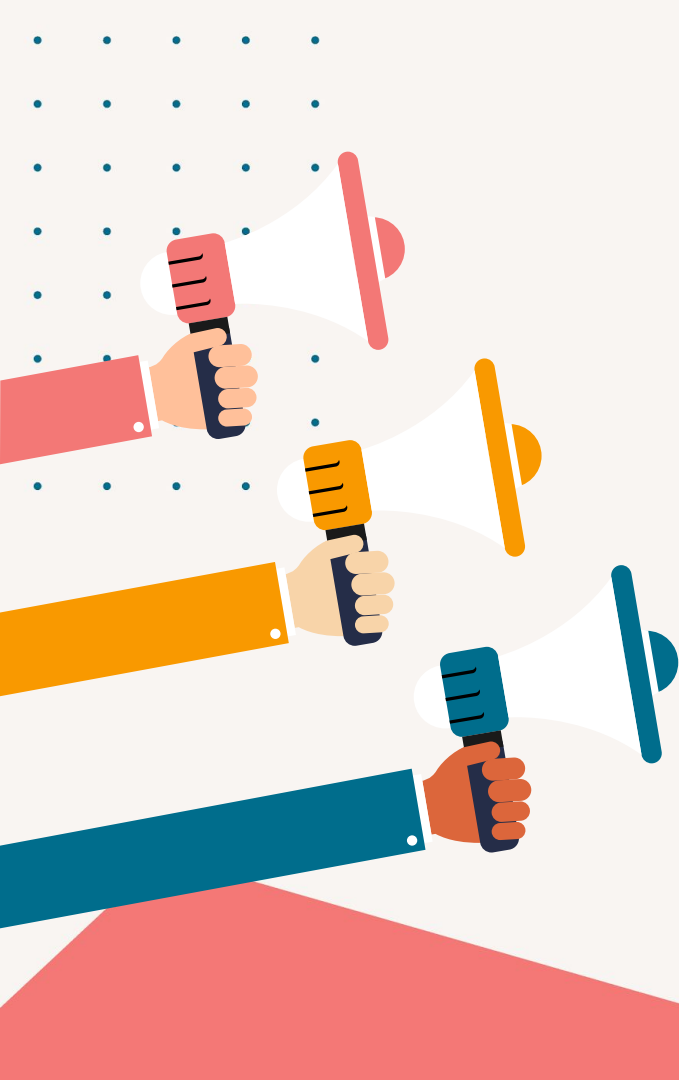
When the world kept them silent
Judy and her Camp Jened friends knew
Their voices would always matter
And there, the **Disability Rights** movement
grew



After years at camp
Judy and her friends had to go
They decided to move together
To somewhere near San Francisco

In the town of Berkeley
They knew that they deserved rights
They wanted to be treated equally
And it was worthy of the fight





A large group of people **assembled**
They decided to **protest**
They stood outside government buildings
But they needed to nest

They stormed inside the buildings
They stayed there for **one night**

Two nights

10 nights

24 nights

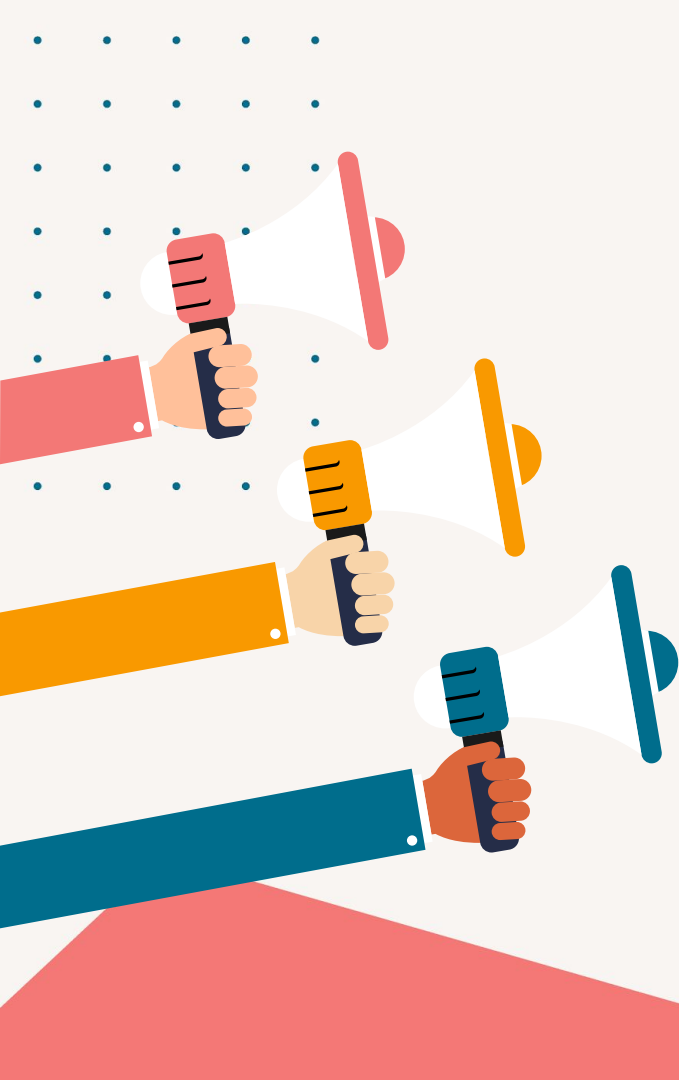
They didn't care how long it would take
They knew they deserved their rights



Because they couldn't leave,
The Black Panthers heard their call
Shipments of beds, food, and shampoo
Were there to help them all

"Where is Judy in this part of the story?"
You may begin to ask
Well, let me tell you that she was the
leader
Of this giant task





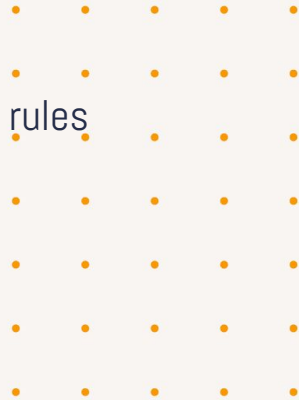
Judy organized the **sit-ins** around the U.S.
To push the government to enforce a bill for
Section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act
So that cities had ramps, accessible schools, and much more

After a day

And another

And 25 total

The bill was **acknowledged** once and for all!
Now there were ramps, access to schools, and rules
And this was normal **protocol**



Judy's mission to bring equality has not quite
ended

While, the **sit-in** and protests had passed 504
She had helped millions of people
But there was much more in store

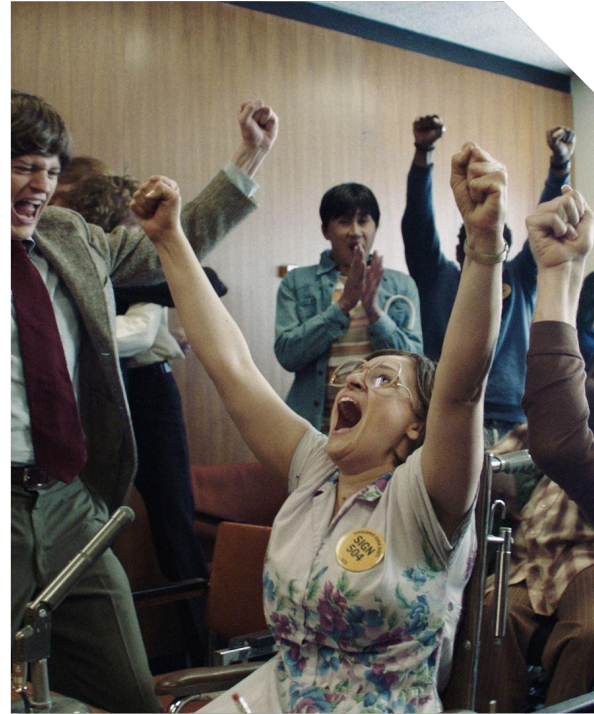
Since those days, she has created
organizations

She has even helped President Clinton
She made sure that **special education** was fair
But even after that, her work was not done



Judy went on to work at The World Bank
But years later she got a knock on her door
President Obama was looking for her
“Judy Heumann,” he said, “for you, I have a
big chore”

“Will you please support me?
I need your advice.
On how to make good decisions on
Disability Rights.
Please don’t make me ask you twice!”



Judy went along and hasn't stopped
Every day that she is on this Earth
She looks around and says
"You have so much worth"



So when you feel like the world is against
you

Remember that you are like Judy Heumann

You deserve to be heard.

You deserve to be treated like a human.



So here's the final lesson

Before we need to say goodbye

Don't let people hold you back

Don't just look away and sigh

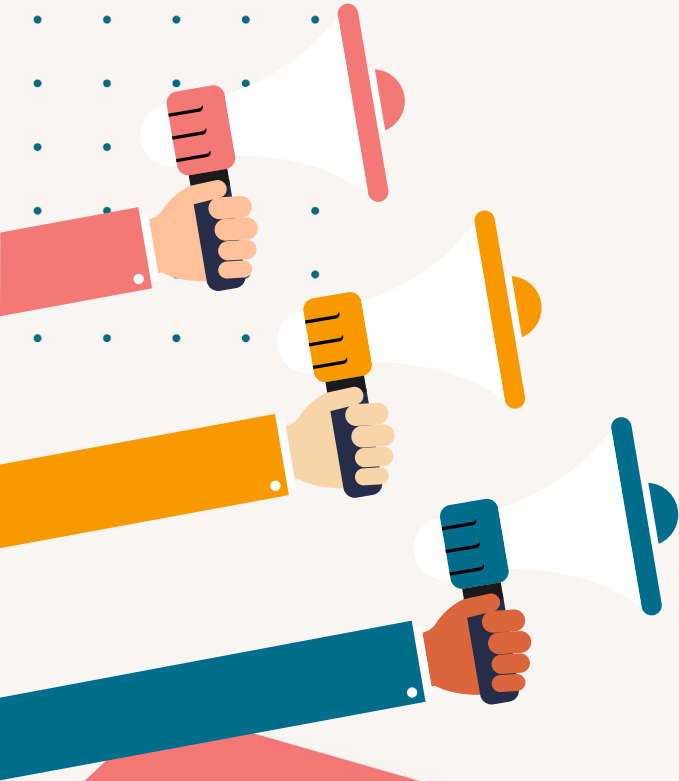
Be like Judy.

Be *proud*.

Remember your *power*

And fight really *loud*.





The End





Glossary


Acknowledge: accept

Assemble: to get together

The Black Panthers: A group of people who fought for the rights of African-Americans

Disability Rights: belief that people with disabilities deserve dignity, opportunities, and choices

Enforce: to make sure that everyone follows the rule



Glossary

Polio: Polio is short for poliovirus. It is a sickness that makes your muscles less strong. It was more common when Judy Heumann was young but now there is a vaccine (shot) so people don't get sick.

Protest: to show people that you disagree

Protocol: the proper or agreed upon way of doing something

Section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act: this part of a law made sure that every person with a disability could go to school and every workplace made sure that people with disabilities could work there



Glossary

Sit-in: A type of protest where you sit inside and don't leave

Special Education: a type of teaching where students are taught in a way that matches their individual needs

Tame: to make gentle, calm, and obedient





Discussion Questions



1. How do you think Judy Heumann felt when people would walk away from her and stare at her?
2. How do you think it felt to not be allowed to go to school because of a disability?
3. What makes you feel proud of yourself?