



It's Never Too Late To Start An Adventure ... Or Respond To A Call

by Victor Parachin

After several years of trying to persuade grocers to carry his new brand of popcorn, called Red Bow, the creator was deeply discouraged. “Was I, at the age of 63, pursuing a foolish dream?” he wondered, as he drove gloomily back to his Valparaiso, Ind. office. Were his many years of researching, cultivating and perfecting the new, better popping corn leading him to a marketing dead end? he wondered.

Whenever he approached a retailer, their comments were always the same: “There are over

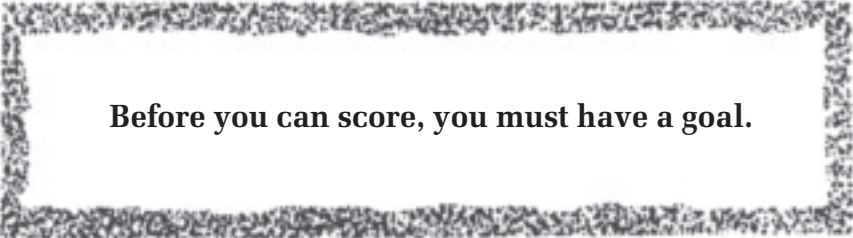
80 different brands of popcorn on the market. We don't have room for another, especially when it costs two-and-a-half times as much.”

Because every response from retailers over the previous four years was negative, deep discouragement set in. However, the man was a committed Christian and a life-long Sunday school teacher. In his discouragement, he turned to his Bible for guidance. Thumbing through its pages, he came across these words from Proverbs 24:6: “For by wise guidance you can wage

your war, and in abundance of counselors there is victory.”

Those words from the Bible prompted him to try another approach. This time he asked

After learning the name of the manager of their seventh-floor gourmet food department, Redenbacher sent a case of the newly labeled product to his home. Redenbacher did not enclose a



Before you can score, you must have a goal.

around for the name of a good marketing company. “A few days later, I traveled to Chicago to seek guidance from my chosen counselors,” he recalls. After describing his new popping corn to the copywriters at the Chicago marketing firm, they recommended the product be marketed as Orville Redenbacher’s Gourmet Popping Corn. In addition, his picture should be featured on the label, they said.

“I drove back to Valparaiso wryly thinking we had paid \$13,000 for someone to come up with the same name my mother had come up with when I was born,” he recalled, after thinking of that day in 1970.

Still uncertain about their advice, Redenbacher decided to test market their idea. He approached the largest retailer in the Midwest—Marshall Field’s Department Store in Chicago.

A month later he phoned, asking: “Did you like it?”

“Like it?” the manager responded. “We want to stock it!”

Excited by his first order, Redenbacher loaded it into his pickup truck and drove it to Chicago, personally delivering it to Marshall Field’s huge State and Randolph Street store. As an additional marketing ploy, he offered to autograph jars of the popcorn. Marshall Field’s executives liked the idea and began heavily promoting the popcorn in newspaper ads. Redenbacher spent three full days getting writer’s cramp.

Today Orville Redenbacher’s product is the best-selling popcorn in the world. However, his success began as he was reaching the age when most people think about retiring. Although he could be called a late bloomer, Orville Redenbacher

and many others like him are living proof that it's never too late to start an adventure. Here are some principles which can help you achieve success at any age.

Begin by remembering you're never too old. Attitude is ageless. Our attitudes are capable of determining whether we will remain open to new opportunities or remain frozen in the past.

Seek divine guidance. As you consider taking on a new challenge, seek divine guidance and blessings on your endeavor. If your journey becomes discourag-

ing, remember this promise from God: "Even to your old age and gray hairs I am He, I am He Who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you. I will sustain you and I will rescue you (Isaiah 46:4)."

Maintain a sense of humor. When things don't work out just the way we expect and life becomes discouraging, the best antidote lies in maintaining a sense of humor. †

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Other Notable Late Bloomers

- *Abraham*, whom God called to be Israel's first great leader, was 75 when he began his mission (see Genesis 12).
- *Winston Churchill*, who became British Prime minister for the first time at age 65 and assumed the epic struggle against Hitler.
- *Golda Meir*, who became Prime minister of Israel at 71.
- *Cardinal Angelo Roncalli*, who became Pope John XXIII at the age of 76 and inaugurated major changes in the Roman Catholic church.
- *Grandma Moses*, who started painting in her late 70s and who had her first one-woman exhibit when she was 80.
- *Margaret Thatcher*, who became Britain's first female Prime minister at age 53.
- *Sadie and Bessie Delany*, who wrote their first book when they were 105 and 103 respectively. Titled *The Delany Sisters' Book of Everyday Wisdom*, it was a bestseller.
- *Samuel I. Hayakawa*, who was elected to the United States Senate at age 70.