

what he really wanted to do most. Finally, he concluded that the one thing he wanted more than anything else was to be a minister. But when he thought about it, he found he was too old. After all, he was forty-five, had three young children and little money.

But fortunately he mustered all of his strength and told himself, "Forty-five or not, I'm going to be a minister."

With tons of faith but little else, he enrolled in a five-year ministerial training program in Wisconsin. Five years later he was ordained as a minister and settled down with a fine congregation in Illinois.

Old? Of course not. He still has twenty years of productive life ahead of him. I talked with this man not long ago, and he said to me, "You know, if I had not made that great decision when I was forty-five, I would have spent the rest of my life growing old and bitter. Now I feel every bit as young as I did twenty-five years ago."

And he almost looked it, too. When you lick age excusitis, the natural result is to gain the optimism of youth and feel of youth. When you beat down your fears of age limitations, you add years to your life as well as success.

A former university colleague of mine provides an interesting angle on how age excusitis was defeated. Bill was graduated from Harvard in the 1920s. After twenty-four years in the stockbrokerage business, during which time he made a modest fortune, Bill decided he wanted to become a college professor. Bill's friends warned him that he would overtax himself in the rugged learning program ahead. But Bill was determined to reach his goal and enrolled in the University of Illinois—at the age of fifty-one. At fifty-five he had earned his degree. Today Bill