

a training session, I tried it on Cecil. I said, "Cecil, when does a man's productive life begin?"

He thought a couple of seconds and, answered, "Oh, when he's about twenty, I guess."

"Okay," I said, "now, when does a man's productive life end?"

Cecil answered, "Well, if he stays in good shape and likes his work, I guess a man is still pretty useful when he's seventy or so."

"All right," I said, "a lot of folks are highly productive after they reach seventy, but let's agree with what you've just said, a man's productive years stretch from twenty to seventy. That's fifty years in between, or half a century. Cecil," I said, "you're forty. How many years of productive life have you spent?"

"Twenty," he answered.

"And how many have you left?"

"Thirty," he replied.

"In other words, Cecil, you haven't even reached the half-way point; you've used up only forty percent of your productive years."

I looked at Cecil and realized he'd gotten the point. He was cured of age excusitis. Cecil saw he still had many opportunity-filled years left. He switched from thinking "I'm already old" to "I'm still young." Cecil now realized that how old we are is not important. It's one's attitude toward age that makes it a blessing or a barricade.

Curing yourself of age excusitis often opens doors to opportunities that you thought were locked tight. A relative of mine spent years doing many different things—selling, operating his own business, working in a bank—but he never quite found