

## **DARE TO DREAM AGAIN**

by Chris Widener

Do you remember when you were a child and no dream seemed too big? Some of us thought we would walk on the moon; some dreamed of riding with Roy Rogers; others imagined stepping to the plate in a big-league game. Every one of us, when we were young, had a common trait - we were dreamers. The world hadn't gotten to us yet to show us that we couldn't possibly achieve what our hearts longed for. And we were yet still years from realizing that in some cases we weren't built for achieving our dream (I realized about my junior year of high school that I was too short and too slow to play professional basketball. The dreamer is always the last to know).

Eventually we started to let our dreams die. People began to tell us that we couldn't do the things we wanted. It was impossible. Responsible people don't pursue their dreams. Settle down, get a job, and be dependable. Take care of business, live the mundane, be content.

Do you know what I say to that? Hooey!

It is time to dream again

Why? Here are just a few reasons:

\* Avoid regret. The facts are in, and someday we will all lie on our deathbed looking back through the history of our lives. We will undoubtedly think about what we wished we had done or accomplished. I for one don't want to regret what could have been, what should have been. So I am deciding today to pursue my dreams.

\* The world needs people like you to dream of something great and then to pursue it with all of your heart. Maybe you belong to a business, school or organization that started out with good intentions but has settled into the same ole, same ole. Shake them up and remind them of how they could really help people if only they would dream!

\* Personal and family fulfillment. One of the things that happens when we stop pursuing our dreams is that a little piece of us dies and we become disheartened, if only in that area of our lives. Stepping up and pursuing your dream rekindles that passion and zeal that everyone has the capacity for and lets us experience fulfillment. Having a purpose puts the zip in our step and the zing in our emotions!

\* Making the world a better place. All of the great accomplishments that have ever happened began with a person who had a dream. Somebody rebuffed the nay-sayers and said to himself or herself, "This can be done, and I am the one who will do it." And in many instances they changed the world for the better. It isn't just the Martin Luther King's and the J.F.K's either. Think of all the people we have never heard of who have started things large and small that help people world-wide every day.

\* Leaving a legacy. How will your children remember you? As one who sought all that life had to offer, using your gifts and talents to their fullest extent, leading the family with a zest for life, or as an overweight couch potato who could have been? Our children need to see that we dream; that we search for something better. They in turn will do the same!

So where do we start? Here are some ideas:

\* Reconnect with your dream. Set aside some time to let yourself dream. What have you placed on the backburner in order to live the status quo? Settle on one or two dreams that you can and will pursue. Don't come up with too many. That will only deter you further.

\* Decide that you will do it. This may seem elementary but many people never decide and commit fully to their dream. They simply keep "thinking" about it.

Tell others that you are going to do it. This puts you on the record as to what you are dreaming about. It makes you accountable. It will help you do it if for no other reason than to avoid embarrassment!

\* Develop a step-by-step plan. This is absolutely essential. You must sit down and write out a few things:

- A timeline. How long will it take to the end?
- Action steps. Point-by-point what you will do and when you will do them.
- Resources you will need to draw from. What will it take? Who will need to be involved for help or advice?
- An evaluation tool. You need to evaluate from time to time whether you are progressing or not.
- A celebration. Yep, when you are done you should already have planned what you will do to celebrate. Make it big!

I have found that there is no better time than now. So, set aside some time today to get started on your dream. Follow the action plan and set your sights for the top of the mountain! You will be glad you did!