

A Leader is a Dreamer

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They said it would never work, that it would lose money, that people wouldn't come to see it. He had a dream and was motivated to invest a lot of his own money into the project. He, in actuality, staked his entire reputation on the three-hour epic of which he was the director, co-producer and star. "Dances with Wolves" took the world by storm and was nominated for twelve Oscars, winning seven of them. Kevin Costner not only danced with wolves, he marched to a different drummer. The world awarded him because he dared to dream. Welcome Kevin to the dreamers' hall of fame.

Zig Zigler tells the heartwarming story of Bernie and Elaine Lofchick. They had their delight dashed when they received the devastating news, your son is a spastic. He has cerebral palsy. He will never be able to walk or talk or count to ten, if you believe the prevailing medical opinions. The world-renowned specialist told them that their son David could make it and be normal but they would have to dream big and work hard. It happened...oh, it happened! That boy whom the experts said would never walk, talk, or ride a bike could, at the age of 13, do 1,100 pushups in a single day, had run six miles non-stop and was wearing out his third bike. He grew to be a strapping 195 pound adult, who has a family and is leading a perfectly normal life. David made it because Bernie and Elaine dared to dream, defying the doomsayers. Welcome Bernie, Elaine and David to the dreamers' hall of fame. May your number increase.

As a leader, there was a time when you had a clear vision, a dream. God gave you a vivid picture, an idea of what He wants to accomplish through your leadership. But as time has progressed, perhaps you have met defeat, been discouraged, been criticized. Perhaps you have given up your desire, your determination to dream, thinking that you misheard what the Lord said, don't have what it takes, aren't gifted enough. Abraham Maslow said that the story of the human race is the story of men and women selling themselves short. Don't let it happen to you. God is not through with you, even though you might feel like it. And it's never too late, even though it might seem like it. I would encourage you to rejoin the ranks of the daring dreamers. Starting to dream again will give you a fresh start—fresh hope for the future.

She was born in a shack in the backwoods of Tennessee. During her early childhood she was sickly and frail; and, due to a severe illness, had a paralyzed left leg for which she had to wear a brace. But she had a wonderful mother who believed in her and taught her to dare to dream. She dreamed of being the world's greatest woman runner. In high school she began to enter races and came in dead last in every race she was in. Then she finally won her first race and from then on she never lost. She linked up with a coach in college who kept the dream alive and took her all the way to the Olympics. She won the 100 meter event and the 200 meter event, she had two golds. She was a member of the 400

meter relay team. Running the last leg she found herself pitted against Jutta Heine, the greatest, fastest woman runner of her day. In her excitement Wilma dropped the baton and everyone assumed she was through...that there was no way to catch up with the fleet-footed Jutta Heine. But she did and she won her third medal. She achieved her dream. Welcome Wilma Rudolf to the dreamers' hall of fame.

I personally am in the dreamer's hall of fame. I wasn't inducted. I signed myself up; and, furthermore, have issued myself a lifetime membership. At 66 years of age I am still a hopeless dreamer, a crazy visionary. I am not ready to retire and spend my time sitting on the front porch waiting for the mailman to show up, or to staring blankly at the TV screen, or while the hours away hitting an elusive little white ball around the green grass numerous days a week. I must tell you though that I am sad as I walk the corridors of the hall, because there are so many empty picture frames adorning the walls. Could there be an empty frame there with your name on it? If you were assured you could not fail what dream would you pursue? Mary Kay Ash observed that most people go to their graves with their music still unplayed. May it not be said of you.

The students had been waiting for weeks for their distinguished visitor to arrive. They fully expected a never-to-be-forgotten speech from the aging statesman. After all, their school was his alma mater. But they were not quite prepared for what they heard. He entered the room, bore his large frame to the lectern and turned to address them. They listened with rapt attention, pens in hand as he began: "Gentlemen, never give up. Never, never, never, never give up." He then took his seat! Sir Winston Churchill had finished his speech, but it left its' mark on future dreamers.

Are you bored with maintaining the status quo? Are you yawning through the review of the rules? Are you tired of organizational policy and politics? Are you restless to cut a new swath? Join the mavericks who don't color within the lines, play by the rules or stay inside the fences. The heretics of yesteryear are the heroes of today: the General McArthur's, Churchill's, Edison's, Da Vinci's. Join the ranks of the visionary leaders ...dare to dream!