

No-Fear Entrepreneur

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by Ronald Kraft

I think I'll wait until next year….

Early in 1980, I spoke to a college faculty who had gathered together for a development retreat at the southern California resort of Borrego Springs. My topic was simple. I was supposed to speak on, "what a faculty member could reasonably expect to accomplish during a semester," but it didn't turn out that way. The night before the presentation, I just couldn't sleep so I took a walk in the desert air. Sometime during that walk a thought kept coming to me, "we are all on a 1000 month journey."

I now understand this to mean that although different lives end sooner, and some people are blessed with longer lifetimes, my answer (completely unscientific) about how long we can reasonably expect to live is 1000 months or about 83 years old. This doesn't mean that we can't have full and productive lives beyond this limit, but I use it as a benchmark or guidepost to help entrepreneurs in determining when to start their venture.

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George called me for the third time during the week before Christmas of 2003. I like George; in fact I had taken a special interest in his business ideas and had helped him to sharpen his idea for a new fast food Mexican restaurant. We had talked a year before about his concept and again about three months later, but I had heard nothing until his Christmas week phone calls. He talked through the plans he had made, the drawings, the menus, and some research about which vendors would be best and even about his plan to borrow a small amount from his Aunt Josie. At the end of the third (and final) call he said, "You know I'm still not quite sure, I think I'll wait until next year."

George's story is all too common, "why not just wait for a better time?"

There are some very real concerns about when to start a business, or any major life change for that matter, but using a 1000 month journey mindset can help you to focus your energy, clear your mind, and make a decision by looking closely at the time you have available to accomplish your dream of opening a business.