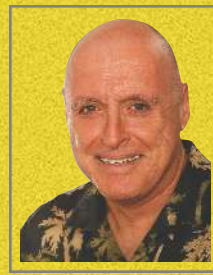


# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 853 Are You Ready for Opportunity to Knock?

I have a question for today. A serious question. Are you ready for a new opportunity if it came your way today? Are you seriously ready? Have you put yourself in the position of checking off the majority of boxes someone might have, in looking for a person with your particular skill set? I'm Jerry Roberts, and today, let's talk about being ready. That's next, on The Extra Point.

Little Tommy Mapother had some learning difficulties in high school. He went to Glen Ridge High School in Glen Ridge, New Jersey. The only thing Tom was known for was wrestling. The problem? He was a below-average wrestler.

The first year he didn't win any matches. But by the time Tom was a junior, he was starting to win. His coach said: "Tom, next year you're going to have a winning record."

Tom was little, only 135 pounds. Every summer he and his mother had the same argument. You see, Tom wanted to play football. His mom said, "Tom, look at you, you're too small. If you play football, you're going to get hurt."

Just before Tom's senior year, he said, "Mom, it's my last year of high school. If I don't play football now, I'll never play. His mother took a deep breath, and it was obvious she was in serious conflict over this. She wanted him to do what he so much wanted to do, but she had the parent's fear that he could be severely hurt. After struggling with it for some time, she finally agreed he could play.

What do you think happened? Just as she had predicted, after a few weeks, Tom did get hurt. It was a severe leg injury. His football experiment was over, but that wasn't the worst of it. The injury was such that the school doctor wouldn't clear him for wrestling his senior year.

Tom was devastated. He was out of sports

entirely. Still wanting to take part in school activities, he decided to audition for the lead part in the school play, *Guys and Dolls*.

He liked acting, and had a personality for it. He worked hard. He developed his skills and was excited. He knew his lines and was ready to deliver a good performance. What he didn't know is that circumstances were about to change his life.

The girl who had the female lead in the play had what is called a "stage mom," a person who is somewhat, well, challenging to deal with. This woman thought her daughter was going to be the next Barbra Streisand. This stage mother made sure there was a New York City theatrical agent at the opening of the play. Her daughter would be the star of the show, the agent would sign her to a contract, and she would become a star.

The agent showed up, was greeted by the mother, sat and watched the play. Unfortunately, for the mom and her daughter, he didn't see anything special in the girl's acting ability. However, he did notice Tom Mapother and said to himself, "This kid has something going for him."

He went to Tom after the show, gave him a business card, and said, "Tommy, I'd like to see you study acting in New York." Tom did that, hustling to stay alive while he strengthened his acting skills, day by day. Three years later, Tom Mapother got a role in a movie. A big role.

You know Tom Mapother, but not by that name. His name isn't Tom Mapother in his profession. He used his middle name as his new last name, when it was time to choose what they call a stage name.

(Con't.)

Maybe you know the story already. Maybe you know that Tom Mapother was legally Tom Cruise Mapother. Tom Cruise danced in his underwear in the movie Risky Business, and went on to become the biggest box-office draw in Hollywood for many years.

He overcame the football injury and threw himself into something else. He worked hard and got better, and better, and took on acting with the attitude of the star football player he'd always wanted to be.

He got himself ready for when opportunity walked into his life. For when an agent, coming at the request of another actor's mother, would see him and change his life.

It's the tireless preparation, going for more when our friends tell us to come to a party instead, or we just settle in to binge-watch on Netflix. It's about not knowing when opportunity will show up, but being prepared for the day it does.

Maybe you think you're in a position where opportunity will never find you. I wonder how many people have used that as an excuse. I wonder how many people have had the surprise and then disappointment, when opportunity beat on their door and then moved on, when they couldn't answer.

So, are you ready? What do you need to do to be ready?

That's The Extra Point. Be responsible and make something good happen today. For 93.3 and the Ray Gibson Show, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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