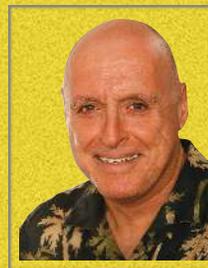


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



355 Decision Fatigue and Ways to Deal With It

Do you have too many things to deal with, too many decisions to make, and you find yourself drained by the process?, Is the quality of your decisions bothering you? I'm Jerry Roberts and today, we'll talk about decision fatigue, That's next on The Extra Point.

Decision fatigue is the term coined by social psychologist Roy Baumeister a number of years ago, that the ability to make good choices tends to deteriorate after we've been making decisions for an extended period.

The condition plays out several ways:

- Reduced ability to consider options and make trade-offs
- Decision paralysis
- Making impulse purchases
- Losing self-control

We may also find our patience is lacking and we begin to look for shortcuts in our decisions, fatigue is likely to have set in. This is why we grab dinner in a fastfood drive-through after a tough decision day, rather than try to figure out what to make at home.

Columbia University reported on a study that Israeli prisoners who were going before a judge for a parole hearing were definitely impacted by decision fatigue. It turned out the biggest factor whether or not a parole was granted seemed to be the time of day the prisoner went in front of the judge. Prisoners who appeared early in the morning received parole about 70 percent of the time, while those who appeared late in the day were paroled less than 10 percent of the time. The judges were tired and their ability to make a good decision had been impaired.

Decision fatigue is a real issue and I've got nine ways to handle it.

1. Plan decisions the night before. Prioritize them and...

2. Delegate as many decisions as you can. If at work, who on the team can make the call? If at home, how about your spouse or kids? Sharing the decision making load helps.

3. For what's left, make the most important ones early in the morning when you're fresher.

4. For decisions later in the day, eat first. Don't make any decisions when you're hungry.

5. Maintain energy and focus. Take breaks as needed to get your head back together for what you need to do, or delay the decision until it is.

6. Use the standard operating procedure model and develop checklists as reminders on how to do the little things throughout your day. Just following a checklist that you know works uses up less mental energy.

7. Put a time limit on decisions.

8. Go with your gut feelings. Most of the time you'll be right.

9. Don't try to be perfect. Strive for that but understand your limitations. Maybe you'll be better off letting somebody else look at the situation and add their comments, while you move on to something else.

Follow these nine suggestions and decision fatigue should be less of an issue for you.

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

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