

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



374 The Pull of Mediocrity – Part 1

If I said the word “mediocrity,” what would come to your mind? I’m Jerry Roberts and today we visit a place that most people will arrive at and never leave. It’s next on The Extra Point.

If your supervisor walked up to you today and said, “You know, everything considered, your performance is mediocre” — how would that make you feel? Mediocre. Before we go any further let’s define the word.

It comes from the Latin word *mediocris* and refers to something being of medium size, moderate, middling, or commonplace. Another word might be “average.” Average ability, average value, average performance. How about “ordinary”... “run-of-the-mill”... “so-so”... “unremarkable”... or “nothing special”? All of these words fall into the same bucket.

Just about every employer will tell you, privately, that the majority of the people on their payroll fit the mold of being average, ordinary, mediocre. They punch in, punch out, and between those two events they do the work assigned to them at a certain pace, getting most of it right, not causing any trouble, and they show up almost every day.

If pressed to describe something remarkable about their performance — again, privately — they likely wouldn’t be able to. Average work is tough to put adjectives around, unless it’s “very” average.

I’ve met people who I can tell are conflicted about this average status. At times they do something more than ordinary and feel good about it, but then may notice that their friends at work don’t appreciate their extra effort because maybe it shows them up a little, and so they back off, not wanting their friends to be upset.

Maybe you’ve seen the video of the crabs in a bucket and one is trying to get out and it crawls

over the others and is getting to the top, but then one of the other crabs grabs it and pulls it back down. This happens over and over and the crab never gets out. Most people who find themselves in mediocrity don’t ever leave it.

Now look, I’m not being critical. Most people don’t want to rev their motor up and learn more, do more, and be more. They’re happy with their eight hours, whatever they make per hour, do “okay” work and at the end of their shift they go home. If that’s you and you’re good with it, fine. If you’re the employer or manager of people who fit that description and you’re good with it, I’m not going to judge you.

Tim Ferriss, author of *Tools of Titans*, said: “99% of people are convinced they are incapable of achieving great things, so they don’t put up a fight against being mediocre.” David Schwartz, author of the *The Magic of Thinking Big*, said: “All of us, more than we recognize, are products of the thinking around us. And much of this thinking is small.” According to Schwartz, most people will never be truly successful. The pull towards mediocrity is too strong. All around us is an environment that is trying to pull us down and most people will never escape the pull.

If you really do want to be in the more group... to learn more, do more, and be more — and you want to break free of that pull, then the next couple of programs will be for you. Some simple ideas that could take you far away from mediocrity. Let’s get after it on Monday.

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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