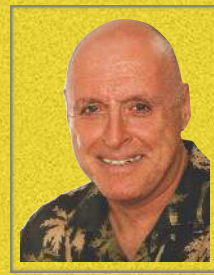


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



629 More on Mediocrity: Multitasking

More today on our revisit to the subject of mediocrity. People generally dislike the word but it just means average. I'm Jerry Roberts, and we're back into it, next on The Extra Point.

Yesterday, we owned up to the fact that all of us — including you and me — are mediocre in some things. We might be generally recognized as good in other pursuits, perhaps even excellent, but even the best of us are no better than so-so in our share of activities and skills.

We also discussed procrastination. There are times when it's okay, particularly if we're using it as a tactic to get information we need to proceed on a job, or we need time to steady ourselves after a setback, or we just need a break. However, if procrastination is our normal method of reacting to situations, or we use it because we don't have the confidence to make decisions, then that's a problem.

Author James Altucher says multitasking is also an issue for many people, and can impact results and self-esteem. We hear people talk about the ability to do a list of things all at the same time, and all of it comes out perfect. We smile, nod, and say, "That is soooo awesome! You've always been so talented." Yet, inside, is that our envy boiling?

According to Altucher, there's a common myth that great people can multitask efficiently. Okay, he says it's a myth. Now, do great people multitask with only great things, and mediocre people multitask with mediocre things?

Look, I can write The Extra Point, have food on the stove in a pan, bake something in the oven, answer a phone call, and go to the bathroom, all at the same time. I'm just not sure how much of that qualifies me for multitasking greatness.

It doesn't exactly match up with someone who is whipping up a seven-course meal from

scratch, entertaining kids, all the while on the phone, negotiating a multi-million dollar deal, or finishing up their submission for the Nobel Prize. I mean, there are differences, right? Just thinking about that makes me feel mediocre.

Most of us are not multitaskers and that's fine. If we get reasonably good at doing one thing at a time, and those things tend to matter, we're going to get by. Our organizations will prosper.

Altucher believes that only about 1% of us are multitasking freaks of nature and can pile one thing on top of another, and get them all done with ease. The other 99%, where I'm sure I reside, just need to be decent single-taskers.

He refers to successful "mediocre entrepreneurs" and says they should strive for excellence in ZERO-tasking. Zero-tasking. Doing nothing. Most of us always feel we have to be "doing something" or we feel guilty.

There were days in the publishing business, and the training business, when I wasn't feeling up to speed, stayed home and did nothing. Or I blew off an afternoon. Maybe I watched a movie or a ballgame. I zero-tasked. I didn't feel guilty. Was I mediocre that day? No, I registered "zero" on the productivity scale. That's not near as good as mediocre. Still, I needed it and came back stronger and more productive the next day.

Lack of originality and acceptance are coming tomorrow, as we end the revisit to mediocrity. Plus, the key to this topic that will set you free.

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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There's also another side to this. Some people live on social platforms, love the arguing and are, in fact, energized by it. They lie in wait for us to come by and would like nothing better than to get involved in a never-ending and juicy back-and-forth with us, which ends like most of them do — accomplishing nothing.

Are there positives? Allissa Richardson, a professor at USC's Annenberg School of Communication and Journalism, said for many non-Black Americans, the coverage of protests has brought them news about the contributions of Blacks throughout the country's history.

Sure, people not too tightly tuned into the news aspects of social media see things quite a bit differently. To them, it's more fun, more entertaining, and they use the platforms for connecting.

So what does the employer do? I recommend sitting down with workers who are physically in the building and others virtually, and talk about it.

If a worker is losing sleep and sacrificing productivity, and they're being adversely affected by the continual doom and gloom, encourage them to give it a break and stay off social media for a day, two days the next time, and increase from there.

There are people who have left for a month, felt great, then returned to find the arguments were the same and they hadn't really missed much. Some have disengaged entirely and don't miss it.

For your own mental health, for your organization's general well being, talk about social media and how to control it, not have it control you and grind away at your emotions and happiness. This is a conversation that affects every organization in Guam, yours included.

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