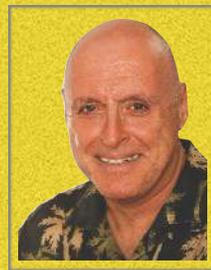


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



650 Important Lessons From Children's Books

A lot of the mysteries of life are revealed in books that we read when we're growing up. I'm Jerry Roberts and today, let's talk about things we might have learned then, and need to remember now, next on The Extra Point.

I read an article yesterday that fascinated me. The premise was that, at some point in our lives, many of us decide we know everything we need to know, or at least most of it. We stop asking questions. We stop being curious.

While I picked up a lot of wisdom from my mom, I also learned quite a bit in books. When characters in the books ran into trouble, I could imagine I had that trouble and how would I handle things.

Books and their characters raised questions, and you had to keep reading to figure out the answers. Let's revisit a few of those.

1. Choices. Take Lewis Carroll's Alice's Adventures in Wonderland. "Alice asked the Cheshire Cat, who was sitting in a tree, 'What road do I take?' The cat asked, 'Where do you want to go?' 'I don't know,' Alice answered. 'Then,' said the cat, 'it really doesn't matter, does it?'"

When I train and coach people I saw it this way. "If you don't where you're going, any road will take you there."

Life is a series of choices, and like you and me, Alice was faced with a bunch of them. Since nobody ever directly told her what to do, she had to figure it out herself, by making an effort. Sometimes it worked and sometimes it didn't.

Alice had frustrations and tears along the way, but what she learned was to make her own decisions and bounce back up, if life knocked her down.

2. Perspective. In Mary Poppins from P.L. Travers, the question was raised, "And to someone very far out there — do you think we would look like ants?" When we're young the world looks like this enormous place. Mary taught — in the larger picture — that the Earth and all of us in it, make up not even a grain of sand when compared to the vastness of the universe.

However, when you think that God, the designer of everything, created each of us and knows us, then we feel big again. Life, and work, is being made to feel big, then sometimes small, and hopefully big more times than small.

Imagine if we helped our coworkers to feel big, and capable, and valuable, much more often than the world makes us feel small, how much better our workplace relationships, jobs, careers, and lives would be.

3. Appearances. The article then asked this question, from Anne of Green Gables by L.M. Montgomery, "Which would you rather be if you had the choice — divinely beautiful, dazzlingly clever, or angelically good?" How come she didn't include unimaginably rich?

In the book, Anne Shirley thought she wanted to be beautiful first and good second. Her real gift was in being clever. She thought for herself and asked a lot of questions. She wanted to know, she wanted to learn.

After a certain age we seem to stop asking so many questions, at least important ones, and just go with the flow. It seems less complicated that way, doesn't it?

These are just three examples of the major lessons taught in books for children. Although the experience is never as exciting as the first time, we might benefit from going back and reading them again.

(Con't.)

And, if you do, and if you have a little person in your life, why not take them with you? If you do, make sure to encourage them to ask a lot of questions...then to find the answers on their own.

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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