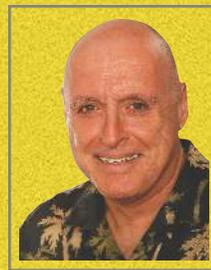


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



793 Is it Time to Change Things and Take the Long Way?

In a world where we are constantly looking for ways to save time and be more productive, it's easy to forget about the value of taking the long way. I'm Jerry Roberts, and we'll talk about that today, on The Extra Point.

Rush here, rush there. Get this done, that done, faster, faster, faster. It's a constant battle against time and expectations. I was talking with someone a few days ago, and he used the term "longcut" as opposed to shortcut. I sort of giggled and said, "Yeah, I don't take many of those 'longcuts.'"

As I began to think about it, a story from my past came into my mind, and I'd like to share it. I was living in the San Francisco Bay Area in the 1980s, working out regularly at a gym, in the best shape of my life. I had no shortage of workout partners and I learned a lot about how to work out to maximize results.

One of those partners was a guy who liked to do a complete workout of "max sets" for every exercise, and we'd do a whole week of them every once in a while.

A max set is pushing or pulling as much weight as you can for one, maybe two repetitions. Any more than that, and you're not doing the maximum. I liked these tests of power once in a while. It was good to give it everything you had, and to see how far you had progressed.

Our max day was set, but the guy showed up and asked if he could work with me later in the week, that he was trying to do something to improve his form. He felt he wasn't getting the full benefit of the exercises.

I was good with that and went ahead with my workout, but I also observed what he was doing. It seemed he had cut his normal weights in half, and was performing very slow and deliberate reps, with his eyes laser-focused on the muscles being worked. We didn't work out

later that week. He began doing these slow, low-weight routines each time he came to the gym.

Shortly thereafter, I did a little traveling and then my schedule changed, so I used the gym at night, instead of afternoons, I didn't see the guy for probably three months.

I switched my schedule again, and I was back to afternoons, and one day he walked in. I had to look twice. He had gained quite a bit of muscle, and my first thought was that he was taking performance enhancing substance. I remarked, "Hey, you look great. You're bigger since the last time I saw you. What are you doing?"

He looked at me and laughed, "I know what you're thinking. Naw, no steroids." He began to tell me about those focused reps. He said he had to start out at about half the normal poundage when he began, and he made every rep count, going slow and ensuring perfect form.

He had worked his way back up and was lifting even more than before, and each rep was still perfect. It was all about focused effort, no unnecessary movements, no cheating the system.

To drop back a minute, this fellow wasn't doing badly before he started the high-focus regimen. His form looked pretty good, he could bench press about 350 pounds and squat over 400. Not bad at all. That said, he knew he wasn't really getting better and his methods wouldn't get him to the results he hoped for.

He said that changing his workouts and going back to fundamentals, with lower weights to start, allowed him to eventually soar past his previous performance.

(Con't.)

Doing those reps to perfection, slowly and carefully, had strengthened his muscles and his mind. Taking a big step backward enabled him to take a much larger step forward.

He took the long way to get to where he wanted to be. What can we learn here? What are you and I doing that we could do so much better if only we changed our methods, and applied the same kind of laser like focus?

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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