

# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 824 Building Self-Awareness is Essential for Everyone

Knowing oneself. That's important, but exactly how important? I'm Jerry Roberts and today, we take a look inward. That's next, on The Extra Point.

When I was in high school, my mom once told me it was important to develop a keen sense of self. I asked her if that could lead to me being self-centered, which she always advised against. She said it wouldn't, if I made the importance learning about myself, not trying to learn how to be self-important.

One day on my first real job, my boss, Big Ed, said much the same thing. He said it was important to know yourself. He said the sooner I understood my values, I'd know what to stand up for.

He said the sooner I understood my emotions and how to deal with them, the better off I'd be. He said I should understand what motivated me, what I liked and didn't like, what I was good at, and what caused me problems.

Ed told me that if I knew myself, I'd make better decisions in life, and always deliver the kind of job performance that I'd be willing to pay for, if it was my money at stake. I don't know that I had many answers that day, but I sure came away with questions.

The term tossed around today in personal development circles for knowing yourself, is "self-awareness." It's carries the same meaning now that it always has...the more we know about ourselves, the more effective we'd be in dealing with all areas of life.

So, how do we work on self-awareness? By studying our own experiences. This is not something you'll do in a few minutes, or in one sitting. You want to give it time. That could be weeks, even months. The first decision is how far back you want to go. Five years, 10 years, maybe longer?

Start with listing the situations that come to mind. Some will be positive and others negative. We need to consider all of it. While it seems to be in style these days for some people to revise history they don't approve of, that will be of no help to you in this exercise.

Go year by year for the period of time you want to deal with. Then, list the events as you remember them. Never mind the chronological order in any particular year. Just list them. After you've listed these, the four points to write about on each is 1) What happened? 2) How did you respond? 3) What was the outcome? 4) What did you learn?

If you put a good effort into this, you'll notice patterns of behavior, and you'll gain a solid understanding of your strengths and weaknesses. More than that, you'll develop a sense of what situations are troublesome for you, which behaviors of coworkers or your supervisor will trigger you, and what you might do to avoid problems.

Go up and down your list and analyze what you've written, and what you've learned. Do it often. This will remind you of the lessons you've learned. That keeps them fresh, with that knowledge hopefully a positive influence on situations that arise in the future.

I've done this. I've replayed movies in my mind, over and over, both good and bad. What led me to the specific decision or action? If it didn't turn out well, what would I do differently today, if faced with something similar? If it's a good movie, is there any way to make it better the next time?

This is a small project everybody can benefit from — private sector, public sector, military, manager, front line worker, business owner, white-collar, blue-collar, you name it.

(Con't.)

Who are you, and how will knowing the answer to that question help you in the future?

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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