

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1073 Overwhelmed? Some Ideas to Navigate Through it

Yesterday, we spoke about a birthday party that wasn't wanted, happened anyway, led to a termination, a lawsuit, and eventually a \$450,000 judgment for the person who didn't want the party. It's a crazy world, and getting crazier. I'm Jerry Roberts, and today let's talk about being overwhelmed and what to do about it. That's next, on The Extra Point.

The guy who got the judgment against his former company for staging the unwanted birthday party had requested no celebration because he felt he would be overwhelmed by the attention. It would bring on a panic attack.

A lot of people are overwhelmed by work and life these days. We see it all around us but like the iceberg, most of this is hidden from plain view. Many people walk around our companies, looking pretty much normal, but feeling dread and pressure we may not feel.

In a recent course I led for managers, the discussion turned to the daily state of mind of workers, and what to be aware of. A manager has to know his/her workers well enough to understand the signals being given off when they are being stressed.

We may not be able to eliminate the trouble they have, but hopefully we can help them effectively cope with it. It's a win if we can.

If we do not recognize those signals, or do not have the kind of trustworthy relationship with a worker which gives them the confidence to tell us that something is going on, then that's one less coping mechanism they have to fall back on.

Overwhelm happens when we can't see the light at the end of the tunnel. Every path seems like a dead end, and there's no way out.

I've done some studying in this area, and a

few ideas have come together. I'm not a scientist in the field, but I've been in the land of overwhelm a few times, and maybe something I've learned will help if you're there, or someone in your workplace is.

1. Write down what's going on. When I've been up to my eyeballs in work, still with a ton of responsibilities in my personal life, I put things on paper when I start feeling boxed in... overwhelmed.

By doing this, I get everything that's worrying or bugging me out of my head, and I can see it all laid out in front of me. This doesn't move me any closer to solving the larger issue, but it somehow looks more manageable. This makes me feel a little more confident, and a little less stressed.

Get the whole thing onto paper, and see if it doesn't improve your outlook.

2. Prioritize what you have to get done. Prioritizing mounts a game plan, and provides momentum. Sometimes, we look at our troubles, lose perspective, and everything looks like a huge mountain we have to climb. Yeah, there are mountains, but often fewer than we imagine.

3. Ask for help. If nothing else, tell your boss, "Hey, I'm going through something right now. I may need a couple of days off." Or, "I'm struggling with some stuff, and I need to know that you've got my back."

Most managers want to help when we're having troubles. They know something is wrong, but some are afraid to bring it up, or feel they won't know what to do.

(Con't.)

On the other hand, you may have a boss who is totally dialed in, and is ready to offer genuine assistance. It's worth a try to find out.

Maybe you can confide in a close friend, and that will help. Sometimes, sharing our problems with people who know us well can provide a big lift.

Is all this easy? No. Can you fall off the wagon at various points along the way? Yes. That said, doing these four things will hopefully help you or someone you care about to navigate through overwhelm.

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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