

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1223 A Week Without Failure is a Week Wasted — Part 1

It's the regular Sunday dinner for the family. All the kids attend and bring their kids. It's an event enjoyed by everyone, but the patriarch of the family — the dad and granddad — gets the most out of it. You see, he coordinates the family's weekly confessions of failure...and he loves it. I'm Jerry Roberts, and I'll have details on this next, on The Extra Point.

I caught a story about a family that gathers every Sunday. The grandchildren are running around, their parents are laughing and telling stories and jokes, and catching up on gossip. Mom and dad are taking it all in, grateful to have their whole family together.

A key part of the event is when the dad goes around the table to ask each member of the family to tell the story of where they had failed this last week. If any of them report that they hadn't failed that past week, he claims it to be a week wasted.

The dad suggested that if people don't try and fail at something, anything, they had been playing it too safe — or hadn't been looking for opportunity. The third alternative was they didn't try because they were worried over what others might think about their failure.

The dad said, "The only advantage we have over yesterday, is what we have learned." He is teaching courage, creativity, resilience, and giving his kids the permission to fail.

How is it in your life? Do you and your coworkers have permission to fail...to try and stretch and — if necessary — to fall short of the goal?

If you have kids, have you taught them about risk and reward, and that it's okay to fail as long as you give your best effort and come out of it with a lesson that will help them in the future?

In too many workplaces, failure is attached to

fear. "I can't make a mistake or I'll get yelled at?" Or, "If I fail, I'll get written up."

How about where you work? Does a failure come with a public flogging? Some managers do this, thinking they're giving some kind of group lesson that will make things better. What they're actually doing is instilling fear that "If I screw up, that's going to happen to me." So, they won't try.

The result of this is that creativity takes a hit, and people end up playing it safe. They'll know where their lane is, its boundaries, and they will make sure they stay within them. Over time, this can have a devastating effect on progress, employee morale, profitability, and prospects for future growth and expansion.

Every failure comes with a story. What was learned that everyone can benefit from? How can we take this failure, add or subtract from it, and turn it around?

Get straight on this: A failure is just a thing, an event, and it didn't go our way. What you make of the failure will determine how workers see themselves, their roles, their value, and if they should see your shop as a solid career choice. Yeah, all of that.

Give some thought today on how you look at failure, and how those in authority handle it where you work. We'll have more on this topic tomorrow.

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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