

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1301 Job Burnout vs. Dropping Out — Part 1

Millions of workers across America say they are burned out. That includes thousands of workers here in Guam. A large number of these people have left the workforce. Is the issue really “burnout” or possibly something else? I’m Jerry Roberts, and that’s coming next, on The Extra Point?

I was watching a video report yesterday that focused on a complaint by many workers — about six in ten — that they are feeling burned out. This is a higher proportion than during the pandemic.

Whether they’ve left the workforce or are still employed, the general narrative is that this burnout is caused by their job and/or their boss.

Mike Rowe, the host of Discovery Channel’s show, *Dirty Jobs*, challenges this opinion. Rowe asks why is burnout always blamed on the job and never the worker?

“A thousand different times a day in a thousand different ways we blame the work. I wouldn’t start with because the work is harder or because the bosses are lousier. Maybe it’s your diet. Maybe you’re not getting enough sleep. Maybe you have problems in the bedroom.”

We’ve referenced the work done by Abraham Maslow, 80 years ago, creating his hierarchy of needs which described how people have needs that motivate behavior.

These needs start with basic physiological needs and progress in order to safety, love and the need of belonging to something, which could be a family at home or family at work. Finally, we seek self-esteem and personal growth needs.

If things are going reasonably well with our fundamental needs, then we can effectively focus on our work, do well, achieve goals, and receive recognition for our successful efforts. If things are out of whack with our basic needs or our family, then our ability to do good work

is almost certainly going to be impacted.

Maybe you have financial issues. Perhaps there are drug problems, marriage problems, health problems, kid problems and more. It’s tough to perform at your highest level when your head is occupied with any of that.

Back to Mike Rowe and his contention that we need to focus on the individual worker and what’s happening with them as a key cause of burnout — not necessarily the job or the boss.

Are there poor jobs and poor bosses? There absolutely are. I’ve had some. I get it.

Rowe suggests that we have a work ethic problem in America. Let’s dig into that. If you go looking for a definition of “work ethic”, you’ll find words like moral principles, values, diligence, and responsibility.

To me, it’s always meant carrying your share of the load. It’s giving your best effort because that represents the kind of person you are, not because some manager is watching you. It’s answering the bell every work day because people are counting on you — your family and your coworkers alike.

There are many reasons for people to be out of work. Skills don’t match up to available jobs, an individual physical or mental condition prevents employment, government welfare benefits or family support is sufficient, and simple laziness. Maybe you can add to the list. Still, there’s another big piece to this, and we’ll talk about that 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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