

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1498 High-Performance and Depression is Real

Achieving high levels of success in one's field is something a large percentage of workers strive for. Many people struggle for years to learn and build skills, while building a good reputation as a top-notch performer. For some, there's a downside to chasing after this goal. I'm Jerry Roberts and we'll tell you what that could be, next, on The Extra Point.

Many individuals who have consistently excelled in their work for an extended period can experience a strong sense of despair when faced with setbacks, or a lack of recognition.

They've put in years to get to where they are, then something doesn't go their way. Or, they come to realize that their efforts simply aren't appreciated.

While many workers can just shake this kind of disappointment off and move on, others can't do that and it can lead to depression.

In a recent interview, world champion gymnast Simone Biles shared her thoughts about what she went through following the disastrous 2020 Tokyo Olympics, where she had a bout of what gymnasts call "the twisties."

Explained, twisties can cause a person to lose their sense of space and orientation as they're in the air, causing them to lose control of their body and do extra twists or flips that they hadn't intended. They may do additional twists or flips in the air, could land badly, and sometimes this can result in injury.

The twisties can happen to veteran gymnasts who have performed their routines hundreds of times. In Biles' case, she cited her mental health as a concern and withdrew from the team competition, as well as most of the individual events she was scheduled to compete in.

Similarly, there can be a dark side to being a high performer in the workplace, and setbacks can be devastating.

Confidence can be shattered, and people are left feeling lost, questioning their abilities and self-worth. The pressure to deliver, to maintain their previous level of success, becomes overwhelming, leading to a downward spiral of negative thoughts and emotions.

If you've been a listener to this feature for very long, you know that I am a strong advocate for managers and leaders focusing on recognition for their team members. Our course, RPM — Recognition, Praise and Motivation, has been taught for nearly 20 years in Guam, and has changed beliefs and attitudes about this topic that is of critical importance.

When people bring good results over a period of time, yet don't get fed with appreciation, it can trigger a feeling that they are overlooked, undervalued, or under-appreciated. Think about it. They've been scoring for this team for years and now they're not getting the love they used to get. Can you see the problem?

Whether it's a setback or a lack of recognition, some people find themselves slipping into depression. Here are some steps that experts suggest to counter the situation:

1. Seek support. Reach out to trusted friends, family, or a mental health professional who can be supportive and non-judgmental. There are emotions that need to be expressed.
2. Go easy on yourself. Embrace the reality that setbacks and even a boss who doesn't do a great job with praise, may be a part of the journey, and it's okay. You can handle it.

As well, get out of the perfection business. Nobody ever said you had to be. You can still be great. You just don't need to be perfect.

3. Reset goals and reaffirm values. Whatever you did to get you to this level may not be what you need now. Who are you and what do you want?

(Con't.)

4. Prioritize your mental health. We talk a lot about this. It's exercise, mindfulness, adequate sleep, and finding ways to disengage from work in fun and meaningful ways.

5. Surround yourself with individuals who understand and appreciate your journey. Now, to be clear, I didn't just tell you to get a divorce, to walk away from your friends, to leave your church, or anything else. All I'm saying is that having supportive people around you is a comfort and motivation.

Do these things and you can come to grips with setbacks and disappointments, and have a different view of your situation.

Biles is arguably the most accomplished gymnast of all time, and making the 2024 U.S. Olympic team to compete in Paris should not be a problem for her.

That being said, when asked about the possibility of not making the team, Biles gave a statement she probably couldn't have made prior to her troubles in the Tokyo Olympics, and her subsequent rehabilitation.

She said: "If I don't make it to Paris, it won't absolutely crush me."

Those are the words of someone who seems to have found a new sense of emotional stability and maturity.

That's the Extra Point. Be responsible and make something good happen today. For 93.3FM, the Ray Gibson Show, and First Hawaiian Bank, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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