

# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 1526 When Your Brain is on “Empty”

Do you ever have those days when you're chugging along your to-do list, getting things done, and then you hit a wall — you can't think? It's like your brain has run out of gas. Ah yes, you do know the feeling. So what should we do? I'm Jerry Roberts, and we'll dig into this next on The Extra Point.

It could be 10:30 in the morning, the stimulus of breakfast and coffee has worn off; or maybe 3:15 in the afternoon as your eyes start getting heavy from the carb-loaded lunch you had. You were knocking down the work effortlessly just a few minutes ago, but now you're staring at the computer screen and productivity is fading to a blur.

It happens to most of us from time to time. Some people call it “the blahs,” and I'm sure there are many other terms we might apply.

Names aside, the bottom line here is that we know nothing worthwhile is going to get done until we get past this feeling. What can we do?

1. Get out of your chair and walk around. If you can, get outside and breathe some fresh air. You can take a walk around the parking lot. Movement is the key.

Exercise and movement boost blood flow to the brain. Endorphins are released to enhance mood and focus. All this improves cognitive functioning.

2. If possible, switch off to a different task that requires more focus, and hopefully you like. If it's challenging, that's even better. When you're finished and your mood has lifted, you can get back to what you were doing before and your energy level should be higher.

3. Put YouTube to good use. Choose a video that has nothing to do with your work, but you are interested in. There are countless topics on YouTube, and you can learn something new anytime you want.

Your brain is always working, so it's not an

issue of “waking” it up. What's going on here is that your focus sharpens as you're taking in information that you didn't have previously. When finished, you can now switch back to the previous task and the enhanced focus will still be there.

A word of caution. Be careful with this, because one video can lead to many, and you could blow off an hour skipping around.

4. If YouTube is not your thing, then listen to a podcast or audiobook. Take a coloring book with you, or a puzzle, or a game. Whatever your choice is, you're taking your mind away for a brief vacation from work.

If you can slip into what the cool kids call a power nap, then you may open your eyes to a renewed feeling of readiness.

Prayer or meditation can also help. If you find you still can't concentrate, ask your boss if you can close your eyes for 15 minutes. Then, wear an eye mask to block out light, while headphones or ear buds can cancel noise.

I have done all of these things successfully, so I know they work. The key is to try each strategy or come up with your own, tweak as needed, and use whenever necessary.

You can stare at the computer screen and hope that something changes, but I've found that doesn't help. For me, it's often the combination of movement and learning a new skill or idea. That gets me going again. What will work best for you?

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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