

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1677 Here's to Trees and Baggage Containers in 2025

All of us have troubles because it comes with the territory called life. Somebody once told me that if you don't have troubles, it means one of two things: You're not trying hard enough — or you're no longer breathing. I'm Jerry Roberts, and I'm going to talk about one aspect of trouble today, straight from our training, and I hope it will help you as you pursue a great 2025. That's next on the Extra Point.

In our manager training we sometimes talk about the baggage that employees carry around with them, and how that baggage impacts their attitude, and productivity.

We all have baggage, and it's been piling up since we were young. Our parents and other family members put it there. Kids in school add to it. Some teachers, too. Every boss we've ever had has likely tossed more baggage on the pile.

Our baggage might be a negative mixture of things like:

- Past failures or poor job performance
- Conflicts with coworkers or supervisors
- Low morale
- Lack of recognition or appreciation
- Feeling undervalued or unmotivated
- Burnout from excessive hours or demands
- Gossip, bullying, or lack of support
- Feeling stuck in a position with no growth opportunities

So we come to work every day, dragging this heavy weight behind us. The analogy we use in the training is the need to dump the load of our employer before we walk in.

If we don't, we'll be weighed down by it all day. Our work will be impacted, and so will our general enjoyment. We'll probably pull others in, people who want nothing to do with our baggage.

I came across another way to present the

concept a few days ago, with a story that's been kicking around social media. It goes like this.

Paul hired a plumber named Jim to help him restore an old farmhouse, and he had a rough first day on the job.

First, a flat tire made him lose an hour of work. His electric drill conked out, and then his truck refused to start as he left for the day.

So, Paul drove Jim home, and Jim sat in silence. On arriving at his house, he invited Paul in to meet his family. As the two men walked up to the front porch, Jim paused briefly at a small tree, carefully and gently touching the tips of the branches with both hands. Paul took notice at how purposeful Jim's handling of the tree seemed.

Upon opening the front door Jim underwent an amazing transformation. His face broke into smiles, he hugged his two small children and gave his wife a kiss. Paul enjoyed meeting Jim's family.

Afterward, Jim walked Paul to his car. As they passed the tree, Paul's curiosity welled up and he asked Jim about what he had seen him do earlier.

"Oh, that's my trouble tree," Jim replied. "I know I can't help having troubles on the job, but one thing's for sure, those troubles don't belong in the house with my wife and the children. So I just hang them up on the tree every night when I come home and ask God to take care of them. Then, in the morning I pick them up again."

The two men smiled and Jim continued, "Funny thing is, when I come out in the morning to pick up my troubles, there aren't nearly as many as I remember hanging up the night before."

(Con't.)

I think the story is relevant and lines up well with the baggage concept I gave earlier. Whether it's baggage or troubles, we've all got them.

In my early teens, my mom advised me to not tell anybody my problems. She said: "First, they have enough problems of their own and don't need yours...and second, some people are going to be happy that you've got troubles. You don't want to give them the satisfaction."

I suppose I've followed her advice pretty well over the years, and I only share personal problems when really necessary. That being said, I believe in being straightforward when others are directly impacted by my troubles. People who need to know, do know.

However, I don't burden others needlessly. What's the point of bringing them down because I'm feeling down?

I have a container for my baggage outside of my house. I have another one outside the door of every company I work with. There's one outside the radio station.

And just in case any of those containers overflow in 2025, I'm going to do what Jim did, plant trouble trees right next to them. You might think about doing the same.

I hope the coming year is as problem-free as it can possibly be. I hope it's your best ever. Happy New Year!

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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