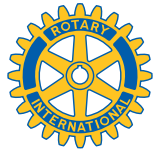


EARLY BIRD WEEKLY



NewbergRotaryEarlybirds.org

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Last week was a "Club Day." That's commonly another way of saying we didn't have a scheduled speaker. That's also when we get a little creative and the meeting flows sometimes with unexpected direction, like a stream meeting a pebble.

Last week's program topic started off with the idea that we'd hear about humankind's predilection to organize, categorize and label one another. The day's focus was those darned Millennials.

Everyone knows that only we {enter your own race/generation/gender label here}'s get it right, right?

Of our 20 or so minutes of "program" time, over 15 of it was spent on a video segment excerpt from an episode of "Inside Quest with Tom Bilyeu."

The YouTube portion that Bill played was called "[Simon Sinek - Millennials in the Workplace](#)."

"Apparently, Millennials are a group of people born 1984 and after." They are labeled as hard to manage, of being entitled and narcissistic, self-interested, unfocused, lazy. Entitled is the big one. Simon says it confounds business leaders so much they end up asking The Millennials, "what do you want?"

The answer is often that they want to work in a place of purpose, to make "an impact," they want free food and beanbags.

So management gives free food and beanbags yet, for some reason, they're still not happy.

According to Sinek, there are four pieces to answering the why. Parenting, technology, impatience, and environment.

Too many Millennials grew up subjected to (he emphasizes these are not his words) failed parenting strategies where, for example, they were told they were special. They were told they can have anything they want in life, just because they want it. Some got into honors classes, not because they earned it, but because their parents complained. Some kids got Participation Medals. "You'd get a medal for coming in last, right? As we know, this devalues the medal others get for working hard, and embarrasses the person that came in last, because they know they didn't deserve it, and makes them feel even worse."

So you take this group of people, thrust them into the real world, and in an instant they find out they're not special, their moms can't get them a promotion, last place gets nothing (at best, fired at worst).

So in an instant their self image is shattered and we have a whole generation dealing with lower self worth than prior generations.

Compound that with the problem of growing up in a Facebook/Instagram world where we're good at putting filters on things. At letting everyone know that "my life is amazing...even though I'm depressed."

So when more senior people say, what should we do, what they actually sound like is, "This is what'cha gotta do!"

So you have an entire generation that, through no fault of their own, were dealt a bad hand. Now, let's add technology.

You send that same text to 10 friends. You know, Hi, Hi, Hi, Hi, etc. Because the dopamine bump feels good when you get a response. (well, for those of us with ten friends.)

Dopamine is the same chemical that makes us feel good when we smoke, drink and gamble. That's why that little screen with its likes and reactions is so addictive.

By allowing, encouraging, unfettered access to these dopamine producing devices, what we are seeing are kids that don't know how to form deep, meaningful relationships. "Their words, not mine. They admit that many of their friendships are superficial."

That they don't rely on their friends. They have fun with their friends, but they know those friends will cancel on them if something better comes along.

Social media isn't bad, in and of itself. Too much social media is bad. The same has been said for alcohol and gambling. It's the imbalance of overdoing it.

Over time, addictions destroy relationships, costs money, causes depression, and just makes your life worse.

But wait, there's more. Impatience.

Our younglings have grown up in an Amazon culture. Want it, order it, have it tomorrow. Watch a movie? Don't look up showtimes, log on and watch a movie.

You don't even have to wait a week for the next episode of the favorite show you just discovered. Just binge watch. "I know people who have skipped whole seasons just so they can binge at the end of the season." [yeah, I know, that's counter to instant gratification ... let him talk]

Dating. You don't even have to bumble through failed pickup lines. Just Swipe Right ... "Bang! I'm a stud!"

Everything you want you can have, with instant gratification. Except... job satisfaction and strength of relationships, "there ain't no app for that. They are slow, meandering, uncomfortable, messy processes."

"I keep meeting these wonderful, fantastic, idealistic, hardworking kids that just graduated school. They're in their entry level job. I sit down with them, "how's it going?"

They say they think they're gonna quit.

"Why?"

They're like, "I'm not making an impact."

"I'm like, "You've been here 8 months.""

It's like they are standing before a mountain with this abstract notion of "impact" being the summit. What they don't see is the mountain.

What this generation will learn is the importance of patience. That the things that really matter, like love or job fulfillment, joy, love of life, a skill-set. All of these things take time.

That's only the first half of the talk. As I listen, and re-listen to accurately capture the salient points, I found myself applying these same traits we assign to Millennials ... to my Gen X self and the way my wife and I raised our own kids.

I was more focused on myself than others, was hard to manage, and plenty lazy.

I remember envying workplaces with really good, free food and active play and exercise spaces. I also remember those businesses going choking on the cost of free when economic tides changed.

Francisco had some poignant input during the post show discussion. [following is not exact quote] "I was about 22 and all I heard was we Millennials were worthless and wanted everything handed to us. Instant gratification really has been a defining element, though. But today, I realize that the things I'm building, all the effort I'm putting in, I won't see the full benefit for at least five years. I am a fairly successful human and have all that I really need."

"I'll get to a point where, omigosh, I need to have a water next to me in case I get tired. I'll check every box. Then I realize that my discomfort is internal, not with what I'm doing. I have a wife with super happy kids, I have houses and cars."

"I can post a picture of my kid with her dog and a hundred people will put a heart next to it. Oh, yeah, that feels great! Yeah, I DO have a happy family."

Point was, he related to Simon's message and brought it home to us using his own experiences and perspectives.

Another messy, successful Early Bird meeting.