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This Genesis Gem has an article you will want to read about if you are questioning your job situation.

WHEN WORK IS A PROBLEM

It happens to us all at times, even if we've got good jobs. We have problems with a difficult boss or co-worker. We're swamped with unexpected deadlines. The job we thought would be fulfilling turns out to be boring or the wrong type of work for us. A long-anticipated promotion goes to somebody else. Maybe we feel unappreciated, over-worked, underpaid, at a work plateau or dead-end with no likelihood of advancement, working below or beyond our capacity and training, or the object of prejudice and harassment. Probably most workers feel these dissatisfactions on occasion, but vocational problems result when the frustrations are strong and persistent.

Problems like these take their toll by sapping energy and reducing motivation and productivity. Often these problems lead to anxiety, depression, insecurity, lower self-esteem, disappointment, family tension, and sometimes loss of income with a resulting change in standard of living. Consider the results of losing one's job, for example. According to one report, whenever the unemployment rate rises 1%, there is a parallel rise in suicides, homicides, child and spousal abuse, admission to mental hospitals, and stress-induced illness. If you've ever been laid off you know the tension.

Why Are Work Problems So Common?

Work can be defined as one's major vocational responsibility, including work done at home and activities that are the

primary source of personal income. In large measure, our work determines our incomes and standard of living, status in the community, social contacts, emotional well-being, feelings of self-worth, use of time, and general satisfaction with life.

Problems with a job can lead to discouragement, unhappiness, and a shattering of one's ego, life dreams, self-confidence and feelings of worth. In our society, an individual's worth as a person is often assessed in terms of career success. Because of this, vocational frustrations and failures often trigger a sense of worthlessness, guilt, and sometimes despair. These feelings are complicated if the worker feels that his or her vocational problems have disappointed or created hardships for a spouse, parent, or significant other person.

What Can We Do?

To start, it helps to admit how really frustrated we feel. Knowing what our work problems are doing to us gives us a starting place for making some changes. Some people work problems may result from our actions, such as quitting a job, arguing with our employer so we get fired, or doing such poor work that a promotion is denied. Very often the frustrations lie beyond the worker's control. Think of the impact of being fired or "let go" because of corporate reorganization; not getting a promotion because of poor health, age, or sex; facing early or forced retirement because of mandatory retirement policies: being demoted, transferred, asked to resign or denied advancement because of personality, past performance, values, obsolescent job skills, or inability to build good

interpersonal relationships; or discovering that an employer is unwilling or unable to provide the advancement, training, pay raises, or opportunities that were promised at the time of employment. When we encounter situations like these, it helps to talk with a close friend or sensitive counselor who will listen to our frustrations, perceptions, problems, job experiences, and career goals. We may want to list on paper what is both bad and good about a present work situation, what led to the present work situation, what led to the present job problems, how these could have been prevented, and how they can be avoided in the future. This kind of self-evaluation is likely to be most helpful if a counselor, some other supportive person, or a support group can give encouragement, feedback, and more objective perspectives. Someone has suggested that every Christian needs to have his or her own personal "board of directors" to whom we can be accountable, and from whom we can get feedback and guidance about our lives as well as about our careers.

Keeping Perspective

Despite the emotional pain that comes with vocational problems, it can be helpful to remember that such problems are common, that one's ultimate worth and importance as a human being are *not* dependent on work success, and that vocational difficulties can (and often do) propel people into better, more fulfilling work. Until that happens, the dissatisfied worker needs to evaluate whether or not there are changes that could make things better. Changes might involve talking with an employer or supervisor in an attempt to solve or reduce the problem, enrolling in a training program to improve one's skills, changing one's attitudes and/or goals, finding a new career or

job, supplementing one's work with avocational activities such as a hobby or service in the church or community, taking a more fulfilling part-time job, or starting one's own business.

In all of this, try not to forget your family. When you face unemployment or loss of a job, the financial strain creates difficulty for *all* family members. The family suffers if *your* frustrations are taken out verbally or other ways on them. On the other hand, your family members can offer support, especially if you can discuss and pray together about the problems and future. Family friends, work colleagues, a vocational counselor, or the members of a Bible study or support group can all give encouragement, guidance, objective perspectives and sometimes both tangible support and leads for a new and better job.

Believers should be faithful and good workers whose labor honors God. (1 Thess. 11-12; Col. 3:17, 23-24). Even when we work hard and for the right motives, however, there is no scriptural promise that we will be spared. We can come through these times of stress, learn from them, and grow as a result.

This article was written by Gary R. Collins and produced by American Association of Christian Counselors.

When work is a problem, consider calling Genesis Counseling of Fort Myers. We can help you sort out your concerns. 239-939-5504.

Goal-setting again!

Spring brings up the need for growing again. Genesis is making some changes...as one university student intern is finishing up her internship, another will be joining us. The experienced counselors at Genesis enjoy offering these opportunities to students. They are mentoring and supervising those who will be joining the profession after graduation. Genesis can also then offer free counseling through the interns on the premises. Everyone wins!

As an especially precious goal, we hope to be able to see that all who enter our doors come to know God's love and how

He can give meaning and purpose to our lives. We pray for all those who visit us with their concerns, knowing that life can be difficult, but God is in charge and will see us through the valleys.

Be sure to check our website at www.gcformyers.com occasionally for the latest updates.



Why Are We Here?

Genesis Counseling of Fort Myers wants to make a difference. As summer approaches, Genesis counselors will be visiting churches, doctors' offices, attorneys and others who see hurting people for various reasons to remind them of how we can help.

A testimonial...

Why did I seek out counseling? I suppose now that I look back, there were plenty of reasons, but I finally realized I needed help when I exploded at work one day and my boss told me to go home! I had a bad feeling that I was going to get fired! I don't know what came over me. I have had a really bad attitude for a while but never said much at work. What did I expect? First there was the unexpected death of my mother, then a relationship that went sour, but probably worst of all, most recently my favorite place to go after work had closed down. I know that sounds silly but there was a quaint little deli up the street from my house, and as a single person, I ate dinner there almost every night. I came to know the owner, the servers and all the other regulars. They were

more like family. Now where would I go and who would I talk to after work? That led me to a counselor at Genesis. She listened to all that I had to say. I knew I had to change some of my habits. She reminded me of this through a statement framed on her wall that read "Change or Suffer!" Yes, I needed to make some changes. My counselor worked with me on many facets of my life. I actually decided to find other employment since I seemed so stuck where I was. I took a cooking class and really began to enjoy coming home in the evenings and trying new recipes. I joined a church and became active in a life group on Sunday mornings. I decided to practice what I had learned as a child and put God back in my life! My attitude is so much better these days. I am glad I decided to get some help and encourage others to do the same when life gives you lemons.

- I made lemonade!

A Recipe for You!

Enjoy this dip while avocados are in season!

Guacamole

Ingredients:

2 T chopped fresh cilantro
2 t chopped yellow onions
2 t minced jalapeno pepper
2 ripe avocados, peeled, seeded
2 T finely chopped tomato
2 t fresh lime juice
¼ salt

warm tortilla chips, for serving
Preparation:

Mash together 1 T of the cilantro, 1 t of the onion, 1 t of the pepper, and t salt in the bottom of a medium-size bowl. Add avocados, mash with a fork until chunky-smooth. Fold the remaining cilantro, onion, and pepper into the mixture. Stir in the tomato and lime juice, and serve with a basket of warm tortilla chips.

