

Why Work and Illness Don't Mix

Written by Steve Marr
Tuesday, 04 July 2017 13:42

Pro athletes need to perform even when banged up a bit because a game is on the line. The key is to know when to play when injured and when to stay off the field. The two important questions are:

Is my team better off with me in the game, or not?

Is my injury likely to get worse if I play?

In short, is playing a wise choice for the athlete and the team?

My past athletic powers were limited. I did play some ice hockey and cracked two ribs in an unrelated dumb stunt. Wisely neither my parents nor the coach would let me play. If I had been a \$5 million a year professional player, the trainer would have found a way to tape me up and send me back into the game. I suppose for \$5 million you need to accept some pain. In this instance the coach was very clear that I could hurt myself if I played. If I did, I wouldn't be much use to the team. One collision with the opposition would likely have ended my participation anyway. In other words, I was a liability.

I used to believe there was something virtuous in hauling myself into the office while hacking and coughing. In my eyes I was a hero and role model by coming to work even when I was sick. In reality I was ineffective while infecting others.

Rather than helping my business team, I was a liability. I thought it was better to work at 50% rather than stay home. However, by staying home I would have recovered faster and return to being 100% useful. Also, if I infected others, I cost the firm more hours of productivity.

Another negative aspect was that when I refused to stay home sick, it encouraged others to come to work sick so they wouldn't look weak or uncommitted. This encouraged the spread of

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disease throughout the organization; not a wise decision.

Paul wrote, "Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others." (Philippians 2:4 ESV) It is a good principle to remember if you wake up sick and consider going to work anyway.

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