

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1232 Add Washing Dishes to Your Daily Routine

I've often heard that performing mundane and repetitive tasks is a great way to help ideas flow. The key is to get involved in something that doesn't require conscious thought. The body takes over and regulates the work, and the mind is free to create. A recent survey indicates there could be even greater benefits. I'm Jerry Roberts, and we'll dig into this next, on The Extra Point.

Years and years ago, I found that performing simple jobs like cleaning had extra value attached to them. Working in the kitchen or bathroom, sweeping, mopping, folding laundry, and other similar tasks not only get things cleaner and neater, but also help with stress and creativity.

Research done at Florida State University has concluded that stress could be significantly reduced if those basic jobs were done *mindfully*.

The study featured 51 students who read one of two passages on dishwashing before they got started. Half of the students read a short mindfulness passage that was focused on being mentally present for the task, being dialed in and totally aware that they are washing the dishes.

The other half of the class read a passage that just described dishwashing, but nothing about being mindful of the job.

The people who focused tightly on the details of the dishwashing as described here, were conscious of every movement they made, of their breathing, the smell of the soap, the temperature of the water, the feel of the dishes — and all other thoughts were shut out.

As a result, their stress levels went down by 27%. Their mindfulness in concentrating on the job slowed their breathing, and they registered a greater sense of well-being. Those who weren't so mindful of the job didn't gain

the same benefits from the exercise.

Amazon chairman Jeff Bezos believes in the power of washing dishes, as it gives his brain a break. To him, it's the same as meditating and he washes dishes as often as he can.

As you may know, Bezos' chief rival in the world's richest person competition is Elon Musk of Tesla, Starlink, and Twitter fame. While I was unable to find if Musk does dishes on a regular basis, I did scrounge up a video on YouTube that had him washing restaurant dishes in an episode of the TV show, *Big Bang Theory*.

Back to Bezos. He and others also see doing basic chores as a way to let your mind wander, and it very often wanders into creative ideas.

I can testify that many of my ideas have come from simple cleaning jobs, or doing repetitive exercises like walking or stepping. I've had ideas come to me in the shower. The sound of the water and the feel of it hitting my body lulls me into an almost hypnotic state, and thoughts start caroming all over the place.

If you are feeling stressed and uncreative, grab the sponge and scrub those dishes. You'll feel you accomplished something worthwhile when they are clean, and you'll also feel better.

You might come away with a good idea or two — along with cleaner, neater stuff.

That's the Extra Point. Be responsible and make something good happen today. For 93.3 and the Ray Gibson Show, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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