

New Habit - James Taylor and wash myself off, every day, with love, prayer and self-respect

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It's Labor Day weekend. I'm on the train going to Long Island to see James Taylor perform at Jones Beach with my sister. The trains are free, a gift from the MTA to repent for a long hot summer of interrupted and irregular service. Thank you. The hiatus from fares inspired more passengers than I expected to join me on my trip. Great.

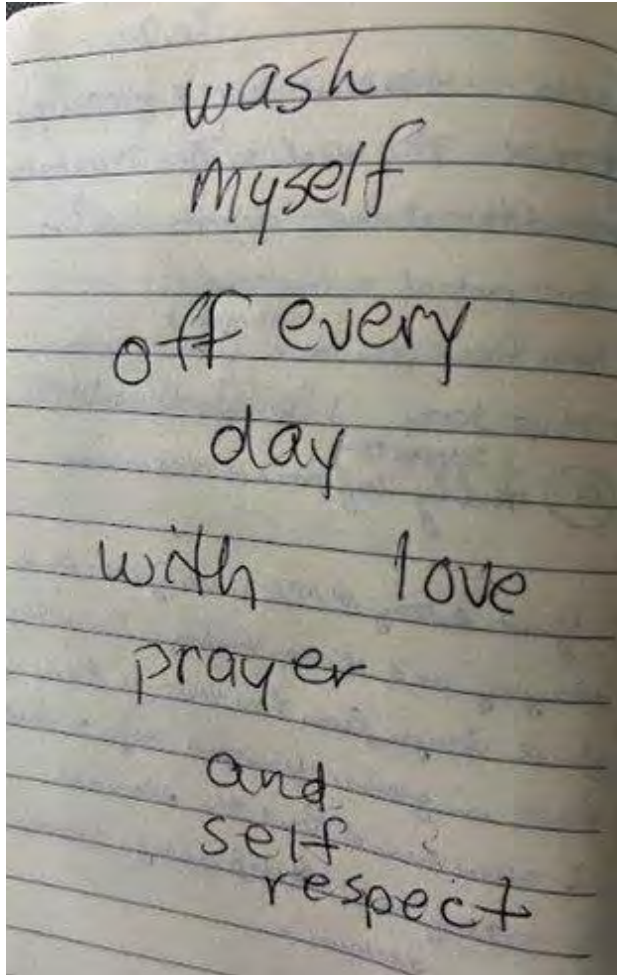


Photo by Jeanne Carroll of James Taylor singing

Spending time among other humans never used to be an issue. But these days I find myself not wanting to share airspace. I hear music, personal conversations, TikTok snippets, angry motorists and political points, jabs actually. A plethora of auditory and visual prompts set my brain spinning. Each new tidbit must be dealt with. It lands in the common room of my consciousness. If I don't address it right away things pile up. Anxiety and stress begin to build. To take action, energy is required. Even if the language is different, my brain tries to decipher what is being discussed. Is it just me?

In order to stay sane something had to change. My go-to crew for group discussion are my heavenly homies, a group of friends, relatives, thinkers, doers, saints and sages that I discuss stuff with in my internal meeting room. When I have matters of great importance, I ask angels and My God to offer advice and support. For this 'How do I quiet my mind?', I asked God.

The answer came as I was driving at night, in torrential rain. I was just turning onto the highway when the inner insistent voice spoke, 'Wash myself off, every day, with love, prayer and self-respect.' I frantically groped for primitive tools, paper and pen and scribbled the words. Since I had just reintroduced prayer to my spiritual diet, I knew this was God because we have been remembering and discussing its value.



I'm not a hoarder. I do like to keep things. Moving from a whole house to a mini apt downstairs gave me lots of chances to get rid of stuff. Some junk, some memories, most are not missed. Seems I have to do that to my inner life as well. I have to go through piles, clean out the corners and wipe off the counters. So much uninvited and un-addressed stuff rolls in and sits in my mind. Too many YouTube videos, reels, text messages impact my happiness level. They breed anxiety, comparison, restlessness, second guessing.

In the past, I used a physical representation to remind me of an invisible change. I'd post a note or do something else to remind me. When I left the house with my reminder bracelet on and returned without it, i knew I had to put more effort into this proposed change. It required more of a mindful determination. I enlisted the aid of my heavenly homies. I asked for them to poke me when I needed to be reminded to wash myself with love, prayer and self-respect. It works! Bubbles, breezes and whispered support have lifted me in a way I never could have imagined. Just this simple change has cleared out the piles of crap in my mind. I am able to sense the simplicity of living with intention, with God. Once again, I feel like I can do what God needs me to do. The inner clutter can be washed away with a breath, if I remember.

This life is such an adventure. I eventually learned how to use my new phone instead of chucking it across the room in exacerbation. Paying bills without using a check is natural now. These are all new skills I developed due to changes in technology. We all change to accommodate physical demands. I have to remind myself to caress my growing inner self, to put into place a new habit that will support growth and change. I find that making inner peace a priority, encourages self-love. The more I stir love into my life the more positive and life-giving energy courses through my day. Then I notice things slowly synchronize to a happy creative buzz of life. This is good for me because once again I feel like I am walking with my God. This is my happy place.



Photo by Jeanne Carroll with friend