

Laundry and Ironies

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If you need to figure things out, look no further than your laundry. The decisions made in the process of doing laundry tell us all we need to know about our overall approach to life. We sort, wash, dry, sort again, fold and put away our laundry, much the same way we manage our lives. If we are to maintain our lives using the same principles of maintaining our laundry, theoretically, we can simplify our complex lives quite methodically. Laundry is a never-ending task. An efficient system is critical. Like life, you are never actually 'done with laundry', that is, until you die, but then you're reincarnated and have to do it all over again (This same theory could apply to doing dishes, personal grooming, grocery shopping, etc.). Perhaps we should give these menial things more careful consideration. If our daily systems of operation - the very things that keep us functioning - are a mess, then, perhaps we can fix the large-scale things from the very core of our operation. If your system is well-maintained, and life is going as it should, then there is no need to reform it. If you leave your 'laundry' pile up, it may be an indication of how you maintain your life, as well. Often overlooked, laundry is considered a low-grade, yet necessary part of life. Everyone, including Presidents and Queens, Donald Trump, et al of that caliber, need a functioning system of laundering their personal belongings. Albeit, Presidents, Queens and Donald Trump do not actually 'do their own' laundry, they too have a need for a functioning system. For those of us in the larger class of world citizens, we simply must tend to our own baskets of laundry. First, we sort. Sorting our lives can be like sorting laundry. We put things in categories and sub-categories. Family, home, work, friends, etc, for example. I have a system of separating my laundry; bleach whites, heavy duty bleach whites, cold bright colors, cold dark colors, khakis and medium colors, delicate fabric and urgency of speed of return. I personally prefer cold water washing because not only is it energy efficient, but because it is overall cleaner. A friend once had an exterminator to her house for an insect problem. He gave us sound advice; nothing (meaning, creepy crawlies thingies) can thrive in the cold water. Most everything washes away in cold water. I adhere to that advice and think of that conversation to this day. So, the biggest pile usually goes first, barring the need for a speedy return on any particular item. Water temperature - the very basis of the entire process - can be a fateful decision. Now, consider the 'detergents' you use in the laundry process. Detergents give you cleansing power. Is it the proper chemical composition for your needs? What about the 'chemicals' and choices in you life. Do you know their long and short-term effects? What are you adding to the water? Adding detergent is another critical step in the laundering process. Are you practicing environmentally and personally safe habits? Before you add detergent and close the lid, ask yourself those questions. In life, we deal with 'high maintenance' people or situations from time to time. Things occasionally require our special attention. They remain separate from the rest of life's pile. Certain laundry items, for example, must never go into a heated dryer. We must be mindful of our actions. Once things are properly dried, we need to fold, or perhaps iron before we put anything away. We can't just leave things strewn about, now, can we? We all have standards. They may be defined by the manner in which we simply do our laundry. Those standards are decided when we sort, wash, dry, iron (or not), put away and ultimately wear what it is we launder. Do we respect and care for our things? Do we leave it up to someone else? Do we tend to things too much - perhaps not enough? Are we satisfied to wear whatever is within reach, merely for the sake of convenience? Or are we more particular about decisions? My mother says, if you earn a degree, trophy or medal to be proud of, hang it in the laundry room where you'll always see it. She's right. We spend so much time doing laundry, why not make it a place of pride and efficiency? Incidentally, she has several ribbons of achievement which she hangs over the washer. They serve as a personal reminder in recognition of outstanding performance and tireless efforts. If we take the time to do something right, it is time well spent. Even if it is as menial a task as laundry.