

"I Didn't Wash My Car Last Month" by Jeff from Maryland

---

I have something shocking to tell you. Are you sitting down? Brace yourself. Are you ready? Here goes.

I didn't wash my car last month.

Isn't that awful? What's worse is this: I don't intend to wash it this month either. Isn't that terrible?

Washing my car is one of the things I don't do because it doesn't pass my rocking chair test. When I'm an old man sitting in my rocking chair looking back at my life, I'm not going to be saying "Gee I wish I'd spent more time washing my car. If I'd only scrubbed those whitewalls a little more often, I could have had a really happy life."

Applying my rocking chair test keeps me from doing a whole host of wasteful things from dusting furniture to holding a grudge to eating spinach. It also keeps me from doing some really stupid things. I know I'm not going to be sitting in my rocking chair thinking "I wish I'd snorted coke"

Of course it's not always that simple. Take television. It's not likely I'll be sitting in my rocking chair thinking "I wish I'd watched more television." However I might be thinking "I wish I had relaxed more" and watching television is a form of relaxation.

Even trickier is reading. Will I be sitting in my rocking chair wishing I had read more? Or will I have wished I'd spent less time reading and more time experiencing things firsthand? Tough call.

The best thing my rocking chair test does is to remind me that it's better to do than to own. I may be in my rocking chair wishing I had taken more trips, gone to more ballgames, attended more concerts. It's not likely that I'll be thinking "Gee I wish I'd bought a bigger house and a fancier car"

I've made this essay personal because the rocking chair test is personal. Thinks that flunk my rocking chair test may pass yours with flying colors and vice versa. But there's one thing I suspect is true for all of us.

That rocking chair is closer than we think.