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Emptying the Dishwasher at Night

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THIS I BELIEVE

My grandmother empties the dishwasher at ten o'clock at night, precisely the time that everyone else in the beach house goes to bed. Or at least tries to go to bed. The incessant, metallic clanking of pots and pans prevents any chance of relaxation. One night, in a fit of sleep-deprived frustration, I insolently asked why she feels the need to make such loud noises at such a late hour. My grandmother's answer was simple: she feels like she has to. She can't go to sleep with the thought that the dishwasher is full of clean plates and cups. At the time her answer seemed ridiculous. What's so bad about a full dishwasher? After thinking about it, though, I began to understand her reasoning. Going to sleep with the dishwasher full means that it has to be emptied in the morning, and that another burden must be added to the already long list of daily household tasks. The dread of waking up to the mountain of work keeps my grandmother up throughout the night. Getting one task done the day before, even at ten o'clock at night, frees up a half an hour the next day. This allows her to have some time for herself or to get a head start on food shopping, a task she insists on completing before noon. I decided to "unload the dishwasher at night" in my own life. Instead of putting off assignments to the next day (or the next week), I sit down and get it done that day. I've discovered that it is much more gratifying to go to sleep with a clear conscience than it is to worry about all the things I have put off until the next day. This is what I believe: empty the dishwasher at night.