



I've always loved writing poetry



# Moment's THOUGHT

**I want to make people stop and think...**

**James McInerney, 43, from Northampton.**

Putting pen to paper, I unleashed my inner thoughts into words. When I was younger, I suffered from depression, so I used writing as a way to escape from the world.

With a particular love of poetry, it always helped me clear my mind – so it was no surprise that I went on to be a professional poet and author as an adult.

Over the years, I built up a fan base and made a respectable name for myself within the industry.

Then, one day, in 2018, walking through the London Underground, I noticed the information boards.

With a famous quote from Nelson Mandela, I had an idea. *My poems would go great on there*, I thought to myself.

My work had always been

focused on mental health and positivity, and I thought it would be a great way to spread my key message to the people of London.

So, getting home, I sent the tube station a message on Twitter.

*How would you feel about putting my poems on your information board?* I wrote to them.

After pressing send, I didn't really think anything would come of it, but it was worth a shot regardless.

However, not long later, I had a reply.

*That sounds like a great idea*, they

told me enthusiastically.

I couldn't believe it.

And so, that day, I sent them a selection of poems from my collection, allowing them to pick their favourite.

At this point, I still didn't know whether they'd actually do it, but the following week, people

started tagging me on social media.

*This is just what I needed today*, they wrote.

Attaching pictures, there it was in black and white – my work and writing on the London Underground.

After that, the project continued to grow.

I started getting in touch with more and more stations across the city and soon enough, my work was all over London.

I couldn't believe how well it had gone and the public reaction was

absolutely amazing.

*I was feeling really low this morning, but this massively helped*, people wrote to me on social media.

It felt good knowing I could help people.

My aim was to get people to slow down and think.

With such busy lives, people don't tend to stop, but my billboards make them – or so I hope anyway!

Helping them take a breather, it's amazing what poetry can do.

Two years on and my work is all over the world.

With billboards across America and Australia, I'm spreading positive vibes one poem at a time.

I don't earn anything from this, but knowing I can make a difference to someone's day makes it worth it.

One woman has even messaged me to say that my poetry saved her life.

*I was feeling suicidal, but your poem made me see the other side*, she wrote.

For me, that's all the payment I'll ever need.

What started as an experiment to make people smile and take a breather from their busy life, is now a multi-nation project.

It's taken a lot of hard work and dedication, but I'm so glad I did it.

The whole experience has been so rewarding and I hope to keep doing it for as long as I can.

I've even managed to get celebrities on board to help me spread my message.

Stop, read and think.

It could make all the difference.

**To read some of James' poetry and writing, please visit his website: [jamesmcinerney.wixsite.com/poetry](http://jamesmcinerney.wixsite.com/poetry)**

**Spreading positive messages to the public**



I have billboards across the globe!



It's been so rewarding for me