



Week 2 - Lesson 2

Instil Healthy Rituals

Rituals are quite different from routines, habits and practices, but all can be woven together to create a framework for living well.

Routines and habits are behaviours or actions that are repeated so often that they become automatic. These are important as we can “autopilot” our most regular tasks. It may be the way you begin your morning with a walk, cup of tea or shower, it **may be the end of you day routine, mindfulness, gratitude, optimism** are all learned skills, they initially take practice to become automatic and routine.

Both routines and rituals are necessary because they help us structure our lives. Instilling healthy routines into your day can help to nourish your physical, emotional and mental wellbeing. While routines require discipline and are important to daily life, you probably don't attach a whole lot of meaning to them. But what if you did?





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What about rituals?

When you think about rituals what comes to mind? Chanting, Weddings, Full Moon celebrations?

Rituals are more present in our everyday lives than you may have noticed, and it nurtures our wellbeing. Rituals are incredibly powerful when performed on purpose. They allow us to experience everyday life with a deeper meaning and enjoyment. Rituals may occur in your daily life, or they may be cyclical within your month or year.

The main difference between a routine and a ritual is the intention you put behind each. Rituals are meaningful because you are putting mindfulness into practice.

You are engaged in the process of performing a ritual in a way you may not be engaged in performing a routine task.

In our own lives, rituals can allow us to pause, take a breath and reconnect with our inner needs. Whether connecting to the sacred means getting back in touch with nature or the divine, rituals are the perfect way of integrating that into your daily life through seemingly mundane acts.



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Rituals:

-  Transform the mundane into intention
-  Foster a greater connection with ourselves and others
-  Focus moments of gratitude throughout the day
-  Nourish our parasympathetic nervous system – rest/digest
-  Encourage self-love
-  Allow intention to deeply nourish our needs
-  Give comfort and a sense of control when life gets challenging
-  Support our need for structure and balance
-  Can provide balance within the menstrual cycle
-  Can provide balance within the life cycle

Rituals and routines can help to ensure that we are able to Better stress levels lead to improved mental health, more time to relax and less anxiety.

What rituals work for you?

We all have different starting points with regards to health, daily rhythm and discipline, energy and time. Do not over commit, take it easy, and choose components that you feel comfortable with and can achieve.



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Rituals:

-  Begin to become aware of what your daily routine is at the moment
-  Does it nourish your wellbeing?
-  Is there a routine that nourishes you – skin brushing, shower, walk in nature? How could you bring intention and gratitude into this routine?

Rituals can be particularly helpful with transitions throughout the day; from morning rituals to a lunchtime pause to the bedtime wind-down. They can powerfully signal to your brain and body that you are ready to make a shift in mood and energy and move with intention into the next activity.

The below Morning rituals are ideas to assist you in embedding healthy and nourishing routines into your day, week, month or year.

Morning Rituals

With so many changes in our world, the normal may have changed for you or prompted a drastic change to our daily routines. Now more than ever rituals are important, no matter how busy you are, incorporating empowering morning rituals into your daily routine can have a massively positive impact on your day.



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Morning Rituals

Depending on your time, your family requirements you can create rituals that are quick and easy to complete or when you have more time expand, begin with something that is easy to maintain and build as you have space.

- 🌻 Begin your day with a glass of warm water and lemon in it, Intention: take a moment before you drink it to close your eyes bring to your awareness your intention for the day (see below for ideas on intentions)
- 🌻 Set the alarm a little earlier and you'll have time to exercise and eat breakfast, fueling your body for the day.
- 🌻 Take a moment in nature to begin your day
- 🌻 Use a morning cold shower to awaken for the day
- 🌻 Yoga practice – sun salutations stimulate cortisol to help nourish an awakening practice
- 🌻 Keep a five-minute journal
- 🌻 Remind yourself of three things or people that you are grateful for early in the morning before getting out of bed.
- 🌻 Put on your morning playlist to start your day with joy
- 🌻 Do a body scan
- 🌻 Incorporate a breathing exercise
- 🌻 Write yourself a list of your favourite ritual ideas and embed them into your morning rituals.





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End of Work Day Rituals

Ending your work is an essential time of the day, especially for those working from home. It doesn't matter how you end your work day just that it ends with intention. Working from home for long periods of time can start to affect our mental health, it's important to keep on aware of how you are feeling and creating an end to your work day.

The importance of rituals at the end of the workday, especially when many of us are working in the same space where we are then spending time unwinding, any behaviour that signals that shift between the two phases of the day can be helpful.

- Shutdown Rituals – whether travelling to work or at home
- Actively Disengage – close your workspace up, close the door, pack your things away to disengage.
- Unplug and Recharge - clocking out is easier when it involves an active change of behavior.
- Wardrobe Change – swap clothes or shower to signal the end of the workday.
- Change Your Scenery. Relocate, even if means to a different part of the same room.
- If travelling to work – use a ritual before coming back into the home, a tree to leave the day with, a moment to breathe and centre before stepping into the day
- A song to play to dance off the end of the day

Whatever routine you choose, rituals and behaviors signaling the end of the workday can facilitate the transition from having a work to home life no matter where you are.



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A Healthy Night Ritual

Having your own bedtime rituals can help you to destress from work and can assist with sleep even when other daily pattern change. Sleep is where your body and brain heal. Many of your hormones (which impact your mood) require sleep to be reset.

- Use your dinner ritual either to share experience and show gratitude to yourself or others in your family for the food prepared and shared.
- Shut off the overhead lights or dim the lights
- Pop on your favourite essential oil or light a candle with a scent that nourishes and calms
- Have a bedtime ritual to help to relax and disengage from the day with meditation and writing in your gratitude journal.
- Deep breathing exercises before bed
- Evening yoga practice for Yoga Nidra or Yin yoga
- Disconnect – pack your screens away at least an hour prior to bed
- Take a moment to grab your journal to reflect on the day
- Check in with your morning intention





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Instilling a Healthy Monthly Ritual

In a world where we're taught to self-care in a 24hr world what does self-care actually mean and look like during our menstrual cycle?

Knowing that day-to-day, phase-to-phase our cycle looks and feels extremely different, we can imagine our rituals of self-care would look different too.

Some days we're craving nurturing and support, others we're bouncing with vitality to get out and play. Rituals support healthy menstruation, reducing cycle signs, your moods and emotions, as well as connecting you with your cycle in a way to increase awareness and use of each phase of the cycle for its amazing powers. Check out each phase deep dive for more information.

Remember!

Although these empowering rituals and routines are a great way to start your day, don't punish yourself if you miss a step. If you feel overwhelmed, there's no guilt in taking a step back and reducing your routine.

Remember you are a cyclical being and that your rituals may be easier to maintain at different points of the month. Remember to check in with yourself and not become too attached to your rituals. Your definition of meaning and purpose will most likely change throughout your life. So too will your rituals, they are a gift to yourself – make it fun, make it intentional, and most importantly make your rituals and routines work for you, not against you.



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Intentions

- I intend to lead by example
- I intend to love unconditionally
- I intend to breathe easily through my day
- I intend to nourish my body, mind and spirit
- I intend to manifest happiness naturally
- I intend to see the goodness around me
- I intend to be kind even when under pressure
- I intend to be open to being kind and showing love to my body and all its amazing capacity

