

Routines, Rituals and Adventure By Karen Hayns

21st March 2019



These new favourite words became the subject of a fascinating conversation I had with a coach and friend of mine following a morning of entertainment and adventure.

To set the scene, there we are, headsets on, ready to do a live radio show about life coaching. Literally off the bat! I remember thinking, we're on air! But I needn't have worried. We were treated to great hospitality from our wonderful DJ who lined up the topics of conversation effortlessly, topped off with us getting to play some of our favourite music. It all felt very different and very creative.

Two hours later we emerged buzzing and headed off for a debrief which went something like this:

Routines:

We know that life is all about routines because they provide the familiar structure we need to go about our daily business. This show was in no way any part of my current routine, and so with something new came the inevitable question: Can I do this? What might be in store? Will I be in for any surprises?

Rather than talking myself out of something, I discovered that seizing the moment can offer you something new.

In fact, how can you have so much fun doing something so unfamiliar? And all without a sniff of preparation. It broke all the rules! This tells us that going off-piste every now and again is good for you!

So, in the spirit of going off piste, ask yourself, what is it about my routines that I enjoy? How do they help?

Then, broaden it out a bit to include other aspects of your life. Is there something in the off which could present an opportunity? An event or something similar where you could try something new? Also have a think about which routines could do with a bit of a shake up? What have you become bogged down by? What are you bored of? You get the gist...

Rituals:

This is where it got interesting. The topic of conversation we mulled over was weight-loss. Something I'm very passionate about having struggled with my own weight for decades until I asked for help and started adopting new rituals around food. Rituals help you feel in control and that makes them powerful. This is especially true when you're learning to adopt new habits.

The distinction I would make between routines and rituals is that routines are the things we do without thinking, so they're habits in action. Like being on autopilot. A ritual feels deliberate and purposeful, so whilst we're acutely aware of what we're doing, they may also feel out of character – at least to start with.

We came to realise that if we practice a ritual enough, bingo, it becomes a habit. Rituals take some work, but with practice, it's where the all-important change we seek in ourselves takes place.

Holding onto that thought, what habits would you like to break or stop? What new rituals would you like to adopt to create some new routines?

Adventure:

In a nutshell, this is how to turn something you're not looking forward to or maybe avoiding, into an adventure.

The story here was taking a friend to hospital for an appointment. A situation where the fear of not knowing what might happen would typically make you anxious and fretful. So, what do you do? You take a picnic! You accompany your friend in the examination room, offer support and lots of light banter and make it an experience to remember.

Of course, this is not to make light of more serious situations, however, inviting adventure in where there would otherwise be fear or doubt, is a novel way to overcome situations we would rather avoid or prefer not to have to deal with.

Now it's your turn!

What springs to mind when you think of your routines?

What new rituals could you adopt?

And as for adventure, why not seize a moment today and go off-piste. It's often the small things we dare ourselves to do that work wonders...