

Routines & Habits – Are Yours Still Working for Ya? - (part 2)

Did you begin to notice all the routines in your daily life? Were you surprised by either the number of routines you have or when you use them?

The next step is to assess which routines are helpful and which ones aren't. You might easily be able to identify which ones are adding value to your life and which ones aren't useful any more. But for all those you're not sure about, here are two easy questions to ask yourself:

1. Does this routine/habit help me by providing me with more time, peace of mind or less stress?
2. Does this routine/habit have any negative consequences? If so, are the negative consequences creating additional problems in your life? Here is one random example:



- playing games for hours on the TV/computer –
 - (benefit) – relieves stress, it's fun and gets your mind off of work
 - (consequence) – it can take time away from other activities you need to take care of (like paying bills, cleaning, grocery shopping, etc.)
 - (consequence) – it can inhibit interaction with others (really? ah- YES!)

As mentioned, routines are often unconscious actions. Once you make them conscious, you can make choices that better serve you; you'll be able to see that if you don't make changes you will be creating more problems for yourself (and who wants more problems than they already have, argh – no thank you).

So (in the above example) if you suddenly realize you're sitting in front of the TV/computer, pause and remember that you have a choice.

1. Start by setting some short-term goals (e.g. – 2 nights/week you can play games).
2. Have a list of alternative activities you can do (e.g. - maybe you can play board games with the family, go outside for a walk, cook, exercise ...)

It's always easier to let go of a behavior if it hasn't already been engrained in your brain. But even if it has, you can still make changes, it just might take a little more determination on your part.

Your challenge this week is:

- Choose to modify one routine/habit that is currently creating some problem for you