



## Map Your Routines

**Introduction:** Routines, habits, and rituals offer us mental space and security. They also have a significant impact on our mood and energy levels. To conserve energy and refocus our ability to care for ourselves and others, attention should be given to deliberately constructing needed routines and reevaluating existing routines. Pay particular attention to rituals as these can have a disproportionately large impact on our wellbeing.

### Step 1: Map your Daily Rhythms

- If your daily rhythms have changed recently, write out your before AND after rhythms (i.e. COVID-19)
- Example: Tuesday → AM Routine → Drop kids at school → Errands/Grocery Shopping → Basic house tasks → Drop by clinic to do management tasks → Pick up kids → Piano Lessons → Home → Prep dinner/eat dinner → Homework → Bedtime Routine
- Writing out daily rhythm examples can highlight the smaller routines that should be listed in Step 2.
  - Example: 'Errands/Grocery Shopping' above could be broken down into its own routine
- It may be helpful to expand the word 'work' in your daily rhythm to include your typical workflow
  - Example: Drop-off patients → Morning surgeries → Lunch/call backs/charts → Afternoon appointments → Discharge surgery pets → Check tomorrow's schedule → Catch up on charts

**SUNDAY:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**MONDAY:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**TUESDAY:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**WEDNESDAY:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**THURSDAY:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**FRIDAY:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**SATURDAY:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



**Step 2: Brainstorm your Daily/Weekly Rituals**

- Examples: Sit in parking-lot in silence for five minutes before going into clinic, kiss kids good-night and sing the rainbow song, say grace at dinner, pancakes for breakfast on Saturday, snuggle with partner and watch Law & Order rerun on Thursday nights, coffee date with best friend on Tuesday, long showers.
- Make sure these rituals show up in your Routines or Daily Rhythms

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**Step 3: Evaluate your Routines, and Rituals**

1. For each routine, ask what face value is served by the routine and look for an underlying value (if any)
  - a. Example: A bedtime routine might get you into bed (face value) but it also prepares your mind for sleep (underlying value)
2. Look at any recently lost routines and compare them to their replacement routines
  - a. Have both the face value AND the underlying value been replaced?
3. Identify self-care items and rituals within your daily rhythms and routines
  - a. Notice which of these items are included in a lost routine or daily rhythm and haven't been replaced in a current routine or daily rhythm
4. Identify elements (or complete routines) that are stress points
  - a. How many of these elements are truly Essential & Urgent? (See Create a Mind Map Handout)
  - b. How many of these elements could be delegated?
  - c. Would reorganizing these elements into different routines or rhythms help?
5. Identify where time-filler habits show up. How much time are they actually taking up?

**Step 4: What is missing?**

- What is missing from your daily rhythms, routines, and rituals that you would like to see included?
  - o Hint: Self-care items!
- How might an existing routine or daily rhythm be altered in order to include a new item?
  - o This may be as simple as replacing a time-filler habit with something more concrete
- You may want to return to this section after completing the next handout: Evaluate your Self-Care

**Step 5: Consider Family Rhythms, Routines, and Rituals**

- Writing out Daily Rhythms, Routines, and Rituals from your family members' perspective may be useful in identifying family stress points, particularly for young children.
- Pay particular attention to family member rituals that have been lost as a result of recent life-changes