Ask an Expert – The Importance of Routines

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Having a routine helps keep us on track both mentally and physically, which can help make our days more positive and productive. According to Mental Health America, a routine is a tool used to improve mental health by organizing the overwhelming everyday tasks into a pattern that seems easier to accomplish. If you are struggling with creating routines, here are five things you can do to get started.

1. Personalize your routine.

It can be hard not to compare yourself to others, especially when you can view the highlights of peoples’ lives on social media. Having a routine that is personal to your situation and needs can make it easier for you. Remember, it is about what works best for you.

2. Keep it simple.

There are many ways to set a routine, and a long list of tasks can feel overwhelming. If you focus on one small thing each month, your routine can look the way you envisioned it by the end of the year!

3. Stack your habits.

Stacking habits is something dentists often recommend when it comes to flossing. Instead of trying to remember to floss at a specific time each day, stack the habit of flossing with something else you do already, such as watching TV in the evenings. Adding one new habit onto something you already do can make it easier to adjust your routine.

4. Add something in for you.

Self-care practices have always been essential, but they are more important than ever with the pandemic. With more anxiety about sickness, more responsibilities due to quarantines, and more unknowns in the world, taking time out of your day to do something for yourself is crucial. For some, there may be more time to devote to self-care, while others may only be able to find a few minutes. Whatever your situation, make sure to find a way to put yourself first in the day to recharge and be your best self.

5. Recognize that not every day will be perfect, and that is okay!

No matter how well we plan or how perfectly timed our routine is, there will always be things that throw it off. Make sure you recognize that plans may change, and allow yourself to be okay if you don't have a perfect routine each day.

Additional routines that help keep our bodies and minds healthy include eating at regular times, exercising daily, and getting the right amount of sleep. These can all help you stay mentally and physically healthy. Additionally, knowing your schedule can reduce anxiety, keep the winter blues at bay, and help you feel more accomplished at the end of the day.

For article references and citations, click here. For more information and tips on mental health, click here.

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