

Routine Creates Freedom!

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Note: As I always maintain, everything I say below is only my opinion, which is based on my own experiences and observations. – Swami Devanand

It is a common belief among people (especially young ones) that any sort of “routine” is boring and dull; it is antithetical to “freedom” and “adventure”.

After some thought and analysis, I have come to believe that “routine” is actually a good thing, because it in fact *creates* opportunities for freedom and adventure.

How is that? I think it depends on how you define “routine”.

A routine basically consists of habits that take care of all the *mundane* but *essential* requirements of your life. A daily exercise, for example, takes care of the need to stay fit.

Once you define such a routine and dedicate the required amount of time and energy to it, you become *free* to pursue any adventure in the remaining time and energy. And that freedom is unencumbered by mundane worries and practical matters – precisely because they are all already taken care of by your “routine”!

So, the key, as you can see, is to set up your routine carefully.

Routine is a collection of habits!

Humans are intelligent beings - we possess highly developed brains. Using the ‘computer’ metaphor, we can say that the brain does all the “soft” work for us, while the body does all the “hard” work.

Brain’s capabilities are numerous, but, for the sake of this discussion, let’s divide them into two types: One type uses emotions, impulses, intuition – which we will refer to as “Feelings”. And the other type uses logic, intelligence, analytical ability, reasoning, etc. – we will call this simply as “Logic”.

When you use “Logic” you benefit immensely, because the brain is capable of analyzing difficult conundrums and solving complex problems for us. But, the reality is that most of our actions are driven by “feelings”.

Consider an example. “Logic” informs us that doing physical exercise is a good thing for our bodies. And yet, a simple feeling called “lethargy” prevents many people from following that sound advice! To make matters worse, “Logic” usually fails to thwart your emotions! If you try to reason with “lethargy” the benefits of exercise every morning, you will always fail!

That’s where “habit” comes to rescue! Habit is a way to overcome the “unreasonable” dominance of feelings in our lives! If you develop a habit of exercising, the feeling of lethargy doesn’t even get a chance to interfere.

So, that is the trick: whenever your “Logic” informs you that something is good for you, look for a way to make it a habit. Sensible and reasonably intelligent people develop habits to ensure that they are able to do all the good things without risking disruption by our whims, moods, or negative emotions.

What’s a habit? It is a mechanical (un-feeling) way of doing something – your feelings don’t get a chance to interfere, because you do not think, consider pros and cons, or convince yourself every time about the benefits! You simply do it!

For example, I am convinced that reading books is a good thing, and so, I have developed the habit of reading a few pages every night before going to sleep.

Routine consisting of such carefully designed habits is certain to get important things done and create long-lasting and unfettered freedom in your life!

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