

Pacify Your Inner Routine Rebel

Here's a list of common internal struggles that can hold you back from change and how you can decide to reply to them. You can post these in the places you most struggle with following routine. To further drive the point home, you can say these phrases out loud or simply repeat them in your head to pacify your inner routine rebel:

But I don't like routine. I don't have to like routine. But I can choose to incorporate it into my life to create more of the peace, joy, and sense of control that I really want to experience.

Routines will hinder my creativity. Routines give me more time to set aside for my creative work because I'm more efficient at getting other things done. Also, I'm better able to enter the "flow state" because I'm not worrying about what I might be forgetting.

I'll miss out on opportunities. I do not need to make my entire life routine! I can just choose to add structure where I most need it to reduce stress.

I might not feel like doing what I planned to do. I always have a choice of whether I follow my routine, but routine allows me to more easily and consistently move forward on what's most important to me. Routine helps me to do what I want to do even when I don't long to do it.

I don't like knowing what's coming next. I can plan routines, schedule prompts (such as reminder e-mails, alarms, or even people), and then forget about what I planned. Then it still feels like a surprise.

Routines make me feel rebellious. The right amount of structure empowers me to stop worrying about the mundane details of life and frees me to achieve my full potential and to focus on exciting new ventures. Routine is my gravitational pull that keeps me from flying out of orbit. I can practice essential routines when I need them and reward myself with totally spontaneous time outside those parameters.

Routines make me feel like a victim. I have the ability to choose what I include in my routine. I can decide to invest only in routines that are aligned with my personal definition of success and based on realistic expectations. My routines are my servants, not my masters.

Routines make life boring. I have choice in how I perform routine activities. For example, I can choose to exercise a different way each day, or I can spend my writing time in different locations. I can also use routine to decrease negative stress and increase opportunities for new experiences and spontaneity—such as room for a new relationship or a trip.

Sometimes I just need to rest. I can put rest into my routine on a regular basis. I also have the choice to make exceptions to the routine.

If I can't follow the routine perfectly, I don't want to try at all. Developing routines takes time and practice—kind of like learning to ride a bike or speak a language. I can still see value in making progress, and over time, my practice can lead me closer and closer to perfect.

If I plan something and then don't follow through, I'll feel like a failure. My plans and routines are not meant as a judgment but as a way for me to know how to focus, to track my progress, and to evaluate the results. When I don't achieve the desired results, I can reflect on what I can choose to do differently next time without engaging in self-criticism.

I can't focus for long periods. I tend to get distracted. I can limit the length of time that I need to devote to a particular activity and factor time for distraction into my routine. I can also have routines such as going to places without Internet access to decrease the level of temptation.

I can only keep a routine for a couple of days or weeks. Then I fall off track. I can choose to put the right accountability, support, and encouragement into place to help keep me motivated with practicing my routines.

What if I'm not able to keep my whole routine because I'm sick, on vacation, or something else comes up? I can develop an alternate routine for times when I'm not able to complete the full routine. Also, I always have a choice to decide whether the new activity that came up is of more value to me than sticking with my original routine.

I can't do this, so why should I even try? Each day I can choose to take small steps in the direction of my goals. I am capable of making progress and building my capacity to the right level for my personality and needs.

People always mess with my routines. I may need to adjust and adapt my routines to accommodate the changes created by others around me. But even implementing some type of routine puts me in a better place than not implementing any routine at all. I can also choose to set boundaries and help people to understand why I need to follow these routines.

I can just sleep less. Living in a perpetually sleep-deprived state is an unsustainable, unhealthy way of life. Pushing myself to stay up late hurts my overall productivity, increases my stress, and leads to lower-quality results.

Any more rebellious thoughts? Write and respond to them here: