

The Power of Positive Rituals



**AMERICAN COLLEGE
of SPORTS MEDICINE®**
www.acsm.org

You are at work. It's almost lunch time, and you have made an exercise appointment with yourself. You have been very busy and are considering working through lunch. All morning, the voice in your head has been whispering, "No time to exercise today, you're too busy." When it comes time to exercise, "Can't exercise, have to work."

What really helps in situations like these is to elevate a habit to the status of ritual. The challenge is actually elevating exercise from a habit to ritual status.

Up until now, your rituals may have happened by accident. You brush your teeth every morning right after breakfast, just before leaving for work. You walk the dog very first thing when you return from work. Rituals are created by consistently choosing a given activity on a very regular basis.

Here are the steps to the creation of a ritual:

- Define the ritual very specifically, right down to the time it is to take place
- Create the space for the ritual in your schedule
- Schedule and commit to the activity you intend to make a ritual (use the schedule planner)

On the lines below, define your ritual. Define it in present tense (we need to do everything we can do to trick the mind into believing). An example might be: I am thoroughly enjoying a 30-minute walk at noon every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Now write your ritual below:

Create the space for your ritual by declaring what you choose not to do and choose to do in the time before the ritual and at the time the ritual is to take place (in present tense). Here are some examples:

- I do not waste time surfing the Internet—I do stay on task
- I do not get stressed out when work gets busy—I do take responsibility for my experiences
- I do not work through lunch—I do take breaks to exercise

Now write your "do not's" and "do's":

Now put your ritual into place by making a written commitment.

I hereby commit to the above created ritual.

REMEMBER: The primary characteristic of a ritual is that it is immune to negative self-talk. Your ritual does not succumb to excuses; your ritual happens! This is the beginning of true power.

Signature

Copyright © 2006 MyExercisePlan.com—All rights reserved



ACSM is pleased to partner with MyExercisePlan.com to bring you these resources. Visit MyExercisePlan.com and enter offer code ACSM20 to receive a 20-percent discount off a one-year membership to the site's full range of exercise support services.