



The Music-Preneur Mindset Podcast

Ep54: The Importance of Routines

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Hello! You're listening to [Episode 54: The Importance of Routines](#).

I'm your host, Suz – a mindset coach helping music professionals get clear on their goals and find the time to get it all done while maintaining a healthy work/life balance.

If you've been listening to this podcast for some time, way back in [Episode 10](#) you may remember we discussed how to create a self-care routine. While it's important to incorporate something in your daily life that allows you to recharge and refocus, it's also important to create a larger structure for routines of any kind.

Whether you have an exercise routine, or a routine for preparing to go into the studio or prepare for a show, routines serve an important purpose for keeping us grounded and centered in what we're doing.

Routines provide benefits to our mental health and time management, and enable us to reach our goals faster.

While many assume having a routine takes the fun out of everything – I mean, who wants their life to feel like Groundhog Day every morning? – routines can actually provide you with the freedom to change up your life when you want to without throwing everything into chaos.

For example, in [Episode 52](#) I discussed the importance of having a routine when preparing for a vacation. Having a checklist of things to do before checking out for a bit allows you to take the guess work and stress out of a situation and ensure you're not forgetting anything important.

It decreases decision fatigue because you're not thinking, you're just doing. Who here has ever felt like if you had to make one more decision about something you were going to hide under your bed until all the decisions were made by a higher power? Yea. That's decision fatigue.

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It also keeps your mind focused when things around you are in flux. Traveling, changing environments, meeting new people, starting a new job, starting a new diet, moving, you name it – any change big or small to your environment can cause your mind to race and your stress levels to increase, even if you're excited about the change.

Change is great and it can be exhilarating, but you also have to be able to function within that change. Routines give us structure and tether us to a constant so we can manage change with clarity.

This is extremely important for artists when they are on tour.

You're in a different city every night, you're living out of a suitcase, you're constantly meeting new people, the food is never the same... the only thing that may be constant are your 3 shirts and 2 pairs of pants that you're constantly rotating.

There's a reason touring is so incredibly taxing on people. Sure, it can be a blast, but that doesn't mean Post Tour Depression won't be waiting for you when you get home. A big part of PTD is the fact that you've been out of your routines for so long – going to your day job, going grocery shopping, eating meals at certain times each day like clockwork – and now you're back and the exhaustion from the road meets the structure you've been without and the sheer thought of the work it takes to get back into those routines is overwhelming.

But what if many of those routines never left?

What if you were able to maintain just a few key routines while you were on the road? Maybe you made arrangements to keep your exercise routine going, or you made it a point to continue to eat your meals at the same times each day, or you continued meditating and journaling each morning or evening before bed.

Having a constant in a world of chaos is not only beneficial, it's a basic human need. We are creatures of habit. We may love to explore and try new things and chase adventure, but all animals need constants in their lives.

Otherwise, you are forced to make a decision about every minute thing in your life at every turn – nothing is automated.

Think about newborn babies – it's imperative babies get put on a sleep schedule. If they don't they're more likely to get extremely irritable and it can affect their health, mood, and learned

behaviors significantly.

That need doesn't stop as we get older. Boundaries and routines continue to play an important role as we grow. Kids are on a strict schedule throughout school – Math, Science, History.... all of the different subjects are scheduled at specific times during the day, lunch is served to them at the same time every day, it's all predictable.

I'm not saying our education system is perfect by any means, but that time-blocked schedule that we all went through was necessary as we were growing and changing at rapid rates. If we had a different schedule every day while our minds, bodies, and hormones were in constant flux it would all be too much and many of us would most likely suffer a great deal.

Most kids grow up to be adults who clock in and clock out at the same time every day and life has a way of becoming very predictable. The sun rises and sets, the earth turns and moves around the sun as the moon moves around the earth, the seasons change... it's all a routine.

As a creative, it can feel fun and liberating to push back against the everyday norms but at the end of the day we're still human. You've got to find a balance between unpredictable and chaotic and routines are the way to achieve that balance.

Routines don't have to be long, involved practices. They can be as basic as eating a meal at the same time every day, no matter where you are or what the meal is. Getting on a regular eating schedule can be very beneficial.

You could also get more involved with your routines. As I mentioned in Episode 10, part of taking care of yourself can involve exercise, meditation, journaling, reading, you name it.

Before jumping into the studio you may have a routine to get you in the right mindset. Maybe there are vocal warmups that you do or scales you practice on your instrument or simply sitting down each time and creating a punch list for what you want to accomplish in the session.

If you're producing the session, you may run through certain routines with your tech to make sure all the equipment is working and the levels are where they need to be for the artist before you start recording.

You already have routines that happen without much thinking. I'm sure when you get up there's a routine of some sort that involves going to the bathroom, brushing your teeth,

getting dressed, drinking water or juice or coffee, and so on.

When getting into a car to drive, it becomes second nature to buckle, check the mirrors, switch gears, and pull out of your spot to drive. Whatever you do to prepare before getting on the road I can safely guarantee that the sequence of the steps you took have not changed since you started driving.

Routines cue certain behaviors and/or thought processes to take place, as I've already mentioned. So if you're someone who has trouble sleeping, especially when you're in a new place while on tour, honoring a nightly routine will be extremely beneficial as it will cue your body that it's time for bed even if you're in a new environment.

When I first moved away for college I was having trouble sleeping so I'd put on a movie that I liked to watch when I was home – Ever After with Drew Barrymore. Whatever, don't judge.

It was something familiar for me to surround myself with as I tried going off to bed. Soon it became my goto when I couldn't sleep. I'd hear the opening scene and my body would be reminded it was time to rest.

To this day if I watch that movie I now barely make it past the 2nd scene before I'm off to dreamland.

If you're feeling burnt out, overwhelmed, pressed for time – it's going to sound counter intuitive but make an effort to slow down and start automating some part of your day. If you are doing music full time decide on certain blocks of time each day that are for work, and other blocks that are for personal time.

Try to work in one specific area of your home if you don't work in an office, and try to take breaks around the same time each day.

Automating bits of your life will not only free up your brain power and energy for other more pressing matters, it will cue your brain on what's important to focus on next. Routines train your body and mind on what they should be doing at a given moment in time.

So now that I've laid out some benefits to having routines how can we effectively create routines in our daily lives?

Some are easier to create than others. New habits do take time to form and sometimes it does take a bit of discipline and accountability.

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My advice is to start small. Think about where you could use more structure. Maybe it'd be helpful to built a routine around your social media management. Maybe you'd benefit from a nightly routine for better sleep and rest. Perhaps a routine around building your fan or client base would be most useful right now.

Start with one area of your life/career to structure and put measures in place to hold yourself accountable. Remind yourself of why this routine is important to you and how it will impact your goals. Get a buddy or ask for help when it comes to staying accountable to your why.

Don't make the routine overly complicated or dependent on other things in your day going a certain way. For example, don't say your routine is going to be to run outside every day for 20 mins and then the next day it's raining or snowing so you decide the routine can't happen.

Instead, commit to 20 mins of increased movement and maybe add drinking water or a protein shake to the routine. Then keep building in the new habits an over time you'll have a routine that's effective.

After being sick for a few months due to a Lyme relapse I fell out of my normal routines. My sleep schedule was off, I had to change my eating habits, my exercise routine fell apart, and my usual working hours soon became unpredictable.

So I recently revamped my old daily checklist of healthy habits that I had built up over time and I'm back to folding each of them into my days a little at a time.

If you go to the show notes page I've created a PDF you can download where I share my daily routine or checklist of things I do to not only practice self-care but also stay focused on different areas of my business.

You'll notice some activities are marked for every day, and others are only on there to do a few times a week or even just once a week. You'll also notice that I don't have specific times scheduled for these tasks.

My schedule often changes, but I have decided to group certain tasks together and know to do them before beginning a certain time block of work or before leaving the apartment. You may want to assign times to these tasks and overall routines – that's ok, too, you can do that!

Routines can be as strict or as lax as feels right for you, but do consider having them on

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some level in your daily life. They don't have to be overly complicated and they don't need to be long or involve any sort of intense brain power or activity. You don't need to incorporate the same activities that I have on my list, but feel free to use mine as inspiration to find what feels right for you.

In that same PDF I've created a page where you can make your own checklist. Remember to start small and build as you go.

Be sure to go to www.therockstaradvocate.com/ep54 and download the workbook to get started!

If you have a routine of your own I'd love to know what's working for you! Tell me in the comments of the show notes page or shoot me an email! Or hell, tag me on social media (that's @rockstaradvo) and let's talk all things routine!

I know as a creative soul the idea of routines can feel like a drag but try it out and I know you'll find that they can be more flexible than you may think and still provide incredible results and benefits to your overall well-being.

I always like to think of routines as Root-tines, like roots of a tree that keep us grounded, and if you know anything about the slash between rock and star in my company name - you know I'm all about being ground, as a rock, in order to reach your full potential as the star you were meant to be.

So keep shining and keep rising!

If you're in a rut and not sure what you need to focus on first, try out my Next Steps Quiz! I've been told it's pretty accurate... answer a few questions and not only will I let you know what next step to take BUT I'll also provide you with a FREE download to help you get there!

The link to the quiz is in the show notes - that's www.therockstaradvocate.com/ep54.

You'll also find links to my new End-of-Day Mindset Check-In notepads that I've designed for you to have a quick and effective nightly routine in order to start off your next morning on the right foot. They're only \$5 and FREE shipping and handling!

So if you're stuck on where to start with a new routine, these pads are the perfect item to get you in the groove with simple, effective routines.

As always, I thank you for listening and I'm here if you have any questions. Email me at anytime: suz@therockstaradvocate.com

Until next time, Rockstar! Have a wonderful week and I hope to see you back here next week so we can get grounded to get rising! Take care.