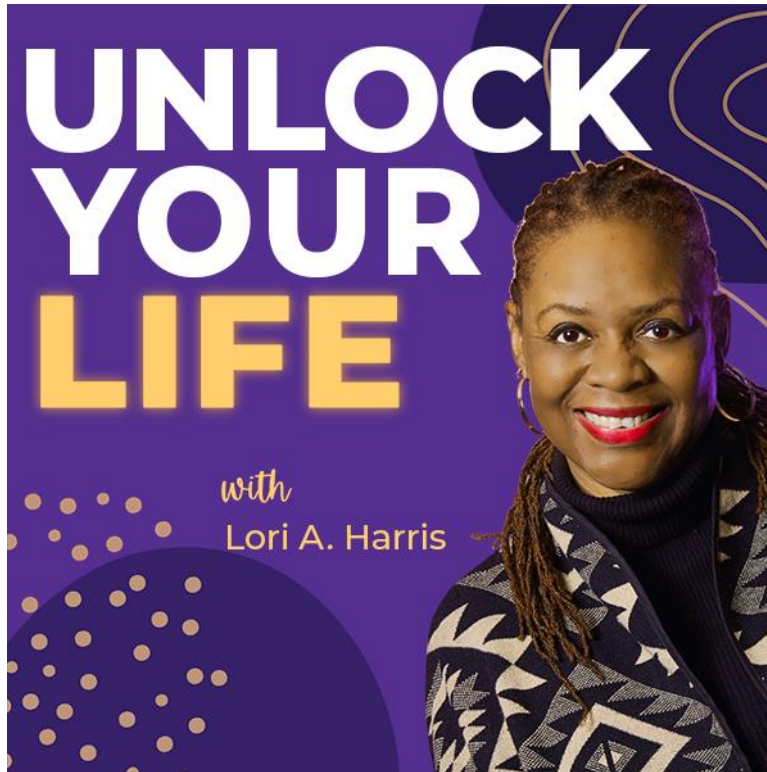


Ep #14: Harnessing the Power of Ritual



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Lori A. Harris

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Ep #14: Harnessing the Power of Ritual

Welcome to episode 14 of the *Unlock Your Life* podcast. Today we're talking about harnessing the power of ritual. Using ritual creating habits that can enhance and improve our lives. Let's get going.

Welcome to the *Unlock Your Life* podcast, a podcast for highly successful visionary women who want more out of life. If you feel that ache of unfulfillment in your soul, you're in the right place sis. Join life mastery consultant Lori A. Harris as she teaches you how to stop living for others and finally put yourself first. Let's dive into today's show.

As we contemplate and think about how we can unlock our life and bring greater satisfaction and simplicity and peace to our life, we can use the power of ritual to enhance it. Now there are several things that one can get from exercising ritual.

First, there's the issue of time. We get to manage or organize the activities in our life that take up our time. Then the second thing is our energy. We get to direct and manage our energy. The third thing is thought. How we organize our thoughts. So we think about how we're organizing our activities for time, how we're managing and expending energy. Then we look to our thoughts and how we organize those and interact with our thoughts.

We know that in our work we are constantly aspiring working towards having greater and greater awareness so that we are awake for longer and longer periods of time. Then we can gently bring ourselves back to center on those occasions, and hopefully they're few occasions, when we find that we are off track.

Now ritual can help simplify and manage our energy. When I was doing research for this particular episode, I learned of a highly successful businessperson. That person has a way of looking at managing their time,

Ep #14: Harnessing the Power of Ritual

their effort, and what could be perceived as a problem. So they look at their life from the model of efficiency.

They think to themselves okay, here I have a question or a problem. If that question or a problem can be solved in two minutes or less, do it automatically. Do it immediately. If the question is going to take a little bit longer, then there are two boxes. The first box says I can resolve this issue today or tomorrow. The second box says this is a long range issue. It's going to require more thought, planning, and energy. So I'll put that over in the third box. With doing that, this businessperson feels well served.

So let's take this example and apply that ritual to kind of a typical day that might occur to a mom managing and parenting young children. So we have this mom. She's looking at her day and realizing, "Oh my goodness. I have a thousand things to do." So applying our businessperson's strategy, we look at the thousand things she has to do.

Well, the first thing is going to take an hour or more. It is paying the monthly bills. So she wants to get started with that, but as soon as she gets started, the mail arrives. There's a notice from the bank indicating she's overdrafted a check. So she's freaked out and a little bit alarmed. Meanwhile her two year old is running around saying, "Mom, mom. I'm hungry. I'm hungry." So then on top of all of that, the phone rings. It's a friend that wants to come by and talk to her about doing a fundraiser for the school PTA.

Now applying our businessperson's method to this particular set of facts, we have mom. Now with that, we're not going to start paying the bills right away because that takes too long. It's not going to be a one or two minute thing. It's at least going to be a couple hours. So we put that away for something we can do today or tomorrow. So then fixing a snack for the little two year old toddler, that's not a problem. That's only going to take a couple of minutes. So we whip together a little peanut butter and jelly

Ep #14: Harnessing the Power of Ritual

sandwich. Within two minutes, baby is on her way. So that's easy. So we go ahead and do that right away.

Now the bank notice, that's only going to take a few minutes assuming that the bank answers the phone promptly or we can get online and solve that. So we do that one next. When the friend calls regarding the PTA event, we put that in the latter box, the third box. We're not going to do that right away because this PTA event is going to take some long range planning. So we're not going to waste today's time thinking about something that's long range and off into the future.

Even though mom may not be a very active highly successful CEO, that method of, "Can I do it in two minutes, can I do it today or tomorrow, or is it going to take a little bit longer time?" That method can be applied to all of our lives, no matter what we do on the daily basis or in our business life. So that's just one way that we use ritual to enhance our life and to make it easier to and to simplify things to have a better experience from our day to day lives.

Now one of my favorite rituals that I love to practice that has brought me the greatest joy and peace in my life is to have a vibrant and robust gratitude practice. It's something that I use and employ with my clients every single time we have a session. So when I go into a coaching session, we start with celebrating our wins and practice our gratitude.

The reason that we practice gratitude is we remind ourselves that at any given time regardless of what's happening, we can always improve our own state, our own vibrational tone, our own frequency. The easiest and quickest way to do that is in gratitude. So we start our session with generating gratitude. We don't wait for something really great to happen or something that is extraordinary because life, when we stop to observe it, is in fact extraordinary. We can celebrate the moment and generate a good feeling in that moment.

Ep #14: Harnessing the Power of Ritual

It's such a great way for us to begin and get started with our coaching sessions. It always gets us on the right track, the right page regardless of what was happening prior to the call for either myself or the client. It's a beautiful thing.

So it's important to practice gratitude not because we're in a pursuit for happiness but in fact at this time in history when we're living with such incredible wealth and abundance, we have stepped away from a pursuit of material things. We're more interested in a search for meaning and bringing meaning to our lives. So when we practice gratitude, we enhance our own feelings of wellbeing and deepen our own sense of meaning. According to Viktor Frankl, that great psychologist. He indicates that that's what man or we as human beings are searching for. A greater sense of meaning.

So what are some tools that we can use in order to enhance or build a robust and vibrant gratitude practice? Well, one thing you can do is have a gratitude visit. This is a really fun, fun activity. Saying grace, saying thanks, saying gracias is a really fun thing to do.

The way you get started is first sit down and think about someone that when you think of them, you are immediately uplifted. Your mood is already enhanced. You feel a deep sense of I would love to tell this person how their life and how their caring for me enhanced my life. So you sit down, and you write a letter of thanks. You write a gratitude letter. Then say in concrete terms what it is you are thankful for.

Then you deliver that message. Hopefully, and it's even better if you can do it in person. If you can read the letter out loud to the person that's inspired this feeling of gratitude, it's deeply meaningful. Most people feel a great sense of gratitude from having had someone share with them the impact that they have had on their lives.

Ep #14: Harnessing the Power of Ritual

What will happen is most often it creates a chain reaction, a gratitude daisy chain where that person is now moved to think about the impact in their life that someone else might have had. Or how they came to have the special knowledge that was helpful to you, and they may be inspired to call a friend or a relative or a teacher, coach, or mentor and tell them how they have inspired and changed their life. They just continue to spread and share the things. So that's a beautiful, beautiful exercise. I recommend that you do it.

Now I can share with you one time when I did something similar. I was sitting in a workshop with my coach. I was kind of daydreaming, and my mind was floating away. I was just feeling deep, deep gratitude for the direction my life had taken. I was thinking of all the people who had come into my life at that particular moment.

For some reason, I was reminded of a teacher coach that I worked with when I was studying for the bar exam. This woman had been a professional grader for the state bar of California and had ventured out to start tutoring students on effective means for writing essays for taking the bar exam.

I found her kind of miraculously because this was back in the day when there was no internet. She had a little tiny written ad in the Daily Journal, which is the legal newspaper for the legal community of the state of California. This ad was no more than one inch, and somehow, I saw it. I contacted her and I called her, and I contracted with her for her to help me.

Now, remember, this was back in the day pre-internet. So that meant that she sent me materials. I wrote answers to questions. Then I sent those answers back to her via regular U.S. Mail. We corresponded back and forth via the mail. She transformed my essay writing into not writing some big, gigantic tome, but just basically turning it into an outline. She would say to me, "Hit it and move on. Hit it and move on." I remember that.

Ep #14: Harnessing the Power of Ritual

I know that when I passed the bar, I'm sure that I said thank you to her. But for some reason in this workshop decades later, I was really moved by how this one woman had really changed my life. I decided I wanted to tell her thank you. So I had to find her. So I had a vague memory of what her name might be. I did a google search and I was finally able to come up with her actual name. What I remembered most about her was that she had a saying that was in her essay book, and that's how I verified that I had the right person.

So I looked her up on the internet, and I called her. I left a message on her voicemail. I said, "Hey, my name is Lori Harris. I don't know if you are the right person that coached me two decades ago when I was studying for the bar exam, but I want to just tell you thank you whether you are or you aren't. I know that you were engaged in the practice of helping people realize their dream of becoming a lawyer. I just want to tell you thank you for that because your work makes a difference.

"Because of you working with me, I've had a very successful career as a lawyer, and I've helped hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of people. I'm very proud of the work that I've done as a lawyer, and I just wanted to tell you that. I'm not sure if you're the right person, but I remember from your introduction to your study materials that you had a phrase.

"The phrase was 'I know that you can do this. If you don't believe anything else, believe that I believe that you can do this. So take something into that exam with you that is infused with belief. I don't care if it's a pet rock or your favorite rock that you got from your grandmother. Take something in with you that you can hold and believe that you can do this'." So I said, "I don't know if you're the person who said that, but I do thank you for your work." And I hung up.

Then a couple of days later, I received a voicemail message on my phone where she said, "Oh Lori, thank you so much for your message. It meant so

Ep #14: Harnessing the Power of Ritual

much to me. I am in fact the one who helped you with that exam. I just appreciate you calling me. It meant so much to me. I'm going to hold onto that voicemail message for those times when I feel like it's really tough and my students are giving me a hard time. I'm going to transcribe it because what you said to me was so very uplifting. I just want to thank you for taking the time to call me.”

As I recite this story to you or retell this story to you right now at this moment, I'm remembering what it felt like to get that voicemail message. I'm getting goosebumps in my body right now just thinking about how good it felt to share that moment of gratitude. It's uplifting.

One more tool or variation you can do with practice and gratitude. Actually, I'll give you a couple of more tools. The first one is when your birthday rolls around, you can call it your gratitude once a day. Take this moment to celebrate your birthday and to think about all the things in life that you are grateful for.

For every year of life, write something that you really love and you're grateful for. For every year, you write a thing. So as you get older, the list will get longer. If you pile these lists up, you can review them over time. It's a great way to go into your next continuation day, your next gratitude day for the next year. So I offer that to you. Think of something that you're grateful for.

The last exercise you can do is a daily exercise. It's the one that I bring to my practice on a regular basis. So every morning before I get out of bed, I make a point to look at the ceiling and remind myself of what I'm grateful for. I think of a couple of things. When I'm really good, I write them down. I think of a couple of things that I'm grateful for and I allow myself to feel deep gratitude. Why am I grateful? How does it feel? What difference has this made in my life at this particular moment?

Ep #14: Harnessing the Power of Ritual

Then when I go to bed at night, I recall those things I was grateful for in the morning. Two to three things. Then before I go to sleep, I give myself two more things before I go off to sleep. So that's five things of gratitude that I've expressed gratitude and appreciation into the universe prior to going off to sleep. It feels so, so good.

I want to recommend it to you. When you practice gratitude, it lifts your spirit. It lifts your day. Since wherever you go there you are and you're with yourself all day long, don't you want to feel good? I know you do. So bring gratitude to your day and watch what happens.

Well I want to thank you for listening to another episode of the *Unlock Your Life* podcast. In this episode we talked about the power of ritual and the benefit of having rituals that enhance our lives. I gave you a couple of tips for how to look at the tasks at hand and organize it. Can I do it in two minutes? Can I do it today? Is this something more long range? That's one thing that you can use to manage the activities that take up your time and manage your own energy.

Then we took it a little bit further with a gratitude practice. I have shared with you how you might write a gratitude letter and allow yourself to really feel deep gratitude for an individual that has made a difference in your life. Then you can up the ante by reading that gratitude letter aloud. We can also have a day of gratitude on the day of our birthday. For each year of life, we name one thing we are grateful for. So as we are blessed to age, our gratitude list will just continue to grow and expand.

Then finally we can practice daily gratitude with when we rise, we practice gratitude in the morning. As we drift off to sleep, we add more evidence of gratitude in the day for what went on that day. I encourage you to practice gratitude and watch what happens. Watch how good you feel in your own skin on a day to day basis and learn how to lift your own state, calibrate

Ep #14: Harnessing the Power of Ritual

your own vibrational frequency, and move through your day with greater ease and greater joy. Try it.

Well, to celebrate the launch of the show I'm still giving away soft, cushy *Unlock Your Life* podcast hoodies. I'm giving them away to lucky listeners who follow, rate, and review the show. While it doesn't have to be a five star review, I'm really hoping that you are loving the show, you'll share it with your friends, and give me your honest feedback. I'm working to create an awesome show that provides lots of helpful value to you.

So here's how to do it. Go to loriaharris.com/podcastlaunch to learn more about the contest and how to enter. I'll be announcing the winners very soon. Thanks for listening to the podcast. Remember, it's your life. Make it a great one.

Thanks for listening to this episode of the *Unlock Your Life* podcast. If you want more information on how you can transform your life and do it quickly, visit loriaharris.com. See it on the next episode of the *Unlock Your Life* podcast.