



SHANE LYNCH PSYCHOLOGY

Happy Canada Day!

Summer is here! Enjoy!

Remember...

Now that the kids are off school, don't ditch all of your routines. Keep the ones that work or make new ones. This will make the transition back to school in the fall much easier!

About Shane

If any of you have ever done a renovation of any kind, you'll agree that it's not easy.

My wife told me that a colleague told her if she and I can survive a kitchen renovation, we can make it through anything. My wife then quipped: "If we can make it through raising three boys, a kitchen renovation should be easy."

As expected, the renovation ran longer than anticipated and there were some things that didn't work as we'd planned. However, we're almost through and pleased with the results so far.



Summer Routines That Might Stick Around

Most therapists will tell you that the summer months are quieter. While this is not always the case, it is typical for a variety of reasons.

One reason may be obvious: the change in weather. We like to be outside. It's natural for us to be outside, whether that's hiking in the mountains, swimming at the beach, camping, or just enjoying each other's company on a patio. For others it's summer sports and for kiddos it's summer camps. We—especially here in Alberta—love when the weather finally warms up so we can get out there!

As a result of our time outdoors engaging in all manner of summer activities, we often experience benefits like increased vitamin D, lower cortisol (stress hormone) levels and increases in endorphins as a result of increased physical activity. When people feel better they sometimes don't attend therapy or don't attend as



Tips for Dads & Moms

I recently saw a reel online. The reel was of a woman claiming to be a mother who was sharing her plans to remove all structure and routine from her children's day during the summer months. She claimed this was because it was so exhausting to maintain this during the school year, she was just going to let them self-govern for the summer; something she recalled experiencing growing up in the 80s.

As with anything, moving from one extreme to the next is not recommended. Too much rigid structure 10 months of the year and then none 2 months of the year is going to be problematic in either case. Try to keep some routines that work this summer for consistency. You and your kids will be glad you did it this fall.



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often. If some people can benefit this much from the routines and activities we have in the summer months, how can we carry this through into the darker, colder months, come fall and winter?

Our best chance of stretching these benefits beyond summer is to establish routines in the summer months we can then maintain in the fall and winter. Will the activities look different? Probably, although some sports move indoors. However, if we are experiencing the benefits of summer (i.e., more easily engaging in active routines) we often don't realize this can set us up with the creativity required to select and maintain activities that are possible in the fall and winter months. Simply put, when we don't think we need as much or any therapy, we are also in a good position to plan for those months when we might expect we will need it.

Think about when you've had the most creativity, the most "aha" moments or epiphanies. These often occur when we're feeling better, when we're Self lead instead of parts lead. These are the times when we are best able to plan, to build routines that might stick when we really want/need them to at other times of the year.

Building new habits into lasting routines is not as difficult as we sometimes think. Here's the formula you can use to get started:

Existing, fairly consistent habit + new habit = new routine.

For example, if we eat at fairly consistent times during the day (i.e., breakfast, lunch, and dinner), pick one of these to be your "existing, fairly consistent habit." Now choose your new activity you want to become your new habit. How about going for a walk or stretching? Now immediately following dinner, you head out for your walk, or do some light stretches. After you do this 2 or 3 nights in a row, you'll notice that finishing dinner cues you to remember it's time to go for your walk or the stretching. Do this for a week and it will become an almost automatic part of your evening routine. Go out for dinner and you'll be thinking about where you can walk afterward or when you can get your stretches in.

The mistake people make is building new routines on motivation alone. This is really hard when the shorter, colder days of fall and winter settle in. Use existing habits/routines as cues for new ones *and* practice these when you're feeling good(er) (i.e., in summer) so that you're in the habit of doing it in the fall and winter!