

RACHAEL MARIE NEWPORT

Out of the Rut
and into the
Running!

**ACCESSIBLE SOLUTIONS TO
EVERYDAY STRESSFUL SITUATIONS**

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Part One: Oh, Those Ruts We Live in!

Understanding what a rut is.

A rut is when you are stuck in one spot and can't seem to get out of it. You feel trapped and powerless to make a change in your life. Life seems very negative and unyielding. This cycle of negativity can sap your energy and creativity to the point where it is a vicious cycle.

An example of a rut would be Tina is a single mom with two children, and works at a job making \$10 an hour. By the time she pays her bills and childcare costs, she has nothing left over. She takes out a payday advance loan which she has to continually take out month after month. The interest is astronomical, but she is stuck in this pattern because she has to pay the money and turn around take it back out again.

Understanding How We Get into Ruts.

There are many reasons why you would get stuck in a rut. Often the underlying cause of these ruts, is tied to how we think about ourselves or how we look at the world. As long as you continue to think the same way or look at the world the same way, you will continue to stay in that rut.

Tina is stuck in a rut. She has a low-wage job and cutting into her income even more by paying the high interest on the payday loan. She thinks there is no way out of this cycle and that thinking keeps her stuck in one place. As long as she has this pattern of thinking and acting, she will remain stuck in a rut.

Understanding Why We Stay in Ruts.

Since ruts are negative and uncomfortable, why would anyone stay in one? You have heard people say, and even said yourself, that you wanted to change something in your life at some point. You may have even tried to take action on something get out of a rut, but found yourself unable to move forward.

First reason people stay in ruts is thought patterns and emotional patterns that are underlying their behavior. An example of this would be say Tammie wants to lose weight. She decides she will start jogging at 5:30 in the morning, go on the grapefruit diet, and lose 30 pounds in 30 days. She also has some unresolved thoughts and emotions about relationships. She has a history of dating abusive men.

Tammie starts her plan and within two weeks she gives up saying I tried but I can't do this. There are several reasons why she was unable to succeed with her plan. First of all, she is not a morning person so jogging at 5:30 AM is a real strain on her. She has not done any regular exercise for a while, so the jogging is too hard on her and she ends up spraining her ankle. She goes on a fad diet which doesn't work well. Finally she has underlying thought and emotions that help keep her in her rut.

Another reason why people stay in ruts is because to get out of it means change. Change is really scary, and staying in a rut actually is more natural. There is a term for this called homeostasis which means keeping things as close to the same as possible. The human body has many tricks it uses to keep things in the pattern it always had. Of course some of those tricks are why the fad diets and changing your exercise level too quickly tend to backfire.

Lack of faith to take the first step is yet another reason why people stay in ruts. This is not a religious statement, but a practical one. In this case faith means going against logic and reason so you can take that first step.

Think of it as you have a large, deep canyon in front of you like the Grand Canyon. You want to reach the other side, but the only way across is this invisible bridge. You can't see or feel it at first, but you know it's there right in front of you. Logic tells you that if you step off into the canyon you will fall to your death. That bridge is there though and you have the faith to take the first step onto it toward the other side of the canyon. As you walk across the bridge, it starts to shimmer and fade into view. As you walk, you start to feel the bridge under you and your hands on the railings. By the time you get to the other side, the bridge is fully visible and solid. But first you must have faith so you can take that first step.

Another reason for staying in a rut is lacking clear direction of how to move forward. You have to have clear-cut goals and a set plan of action to reach that final point. Without this, you will end up becoming so overwhelmed nothing gets accomplished.

When you are wanting to get out of the rut and get into the running, take a look at all of these factors and make sure you address them. Then it's time to take that first step. So now you know what a rut is and why you into staying in a rut, it is time to look at how to move out of a rut.

First of all, make a list of the things that keep you stuck where you are. To go back to the example of Tammie wants to lose weight, she would make a list of what is holding her in place so she can't accomplish her goal of weight loss. She write down I want to lose weight. Then she would close her eyes and visualize taking that first step to lose weight. As she visualizes being thinner, she pays attention to the thoughts and emotions that come to the forefront. She then writes those down. By making a chart that shows her ultimate goal of weight loss and the underlying thought and emotional patterns that keep her from accomplishing it, she has taken the first step.

Part two: Moving out of Ruts

How to reprogram those negative tapes.

As you grow up, things people say or experiences you've gone through create certain thought patterns and emotional patterns. Like the old cassette tapes, these thoughts and emotions are repeated over and over again. They can be either positive or negative, but they are repetitive. They can be reprogrammed from negative tapes to positive ones.

Once you have identified the negative thought and emotional patterns, write them down. Then figure out a way to turn the negative thought or emotion into a positive one. For example, if you grew up hearing that you would never amount to anything you can turn this around by changing it to I will amount to something. The closer to the original negative thought or emotion that the reprogrammed one is, the stronger an effect it will have.

General affirmations do give you a quick boost and they do serve a purpose, but they don't last very long. The reason for this, is they are not closely enough tied to the negative tape you are trying to reprogram. Think of your brain as being like the Internet. Your neurons in your brain have all these web-like connections to each other. So the more connection you can make between an affirmation and what you're trying to change the stronger it is and the longer it will last.

You still will need to do a fair bit of repetition, but if you make the affirmation the exact opposite of the negative tape it will stick longer. As you make a habit of clearly specific reprogramming of the negative tapes, you will find you need to do it less often. This is not a putdown of general affirmations, but they do not work as well for reprogramming negative tapes.

How to be like the phoenix and reinvent yourself.

Sometimes you get in a rut because you have a set of plans for which you want to do with your life, and a door is slammed in your face. When this happens, you feel like a failure and like you can't move forward. You get stuck in a rut. The way out of this kind of rut is to reinvent yourself. Think of it like the old myth of the phoenix. The phoenix is a mythological creature that when it dies it bursts into flame and from the ashes is reborn. As you can see, the phoenix knows how to reinvent himself. Sometimes tragedy in your life can be turned around to change into a new direction that maybe better than your original plans.

How to reinvent yourself is the next question. The key is transferable skills. Remember Tina the single mom with a low-wage job? She wants to get out of her financial rut and to stop having to pay the payday advances. She has set up a plan to make some money online but she feels she has no skills to

offer. To help reinvent herself, she makes the list of all of the skills she has and uses on a day-to-day basis for her job and taking care of her kids. By making a list of the skills she already has, she can move from a point of lack to a point of strength.

Skills, experiences, and education are at least to some degree transferable. This means you can take them from one type of work to another type. For example, if you are very good at writing you can transfer this skill from one field to another very easily. If you are good at math and budgeting, that is another highly transferable skill. Even if you are a stay at home mom and feel you have no skills, you do have skills. Once you have learned a skill it stays with you and belongs to you. You can pull it out anytime of your toolbox and use it in a new way or on a new endeavor.

Tina when she wrote down her skills found out she had a real talent for written and oral communication. She also was very good at research from her time in college before she dropped out to get married and have children. She uses those skills on a regular basis as a secretary and receptionist at her job. She also has excellent phone skills and a fair bit of experience in public speaking. The key for her is to

figure out how to transfer those skills to working online so she can start making money to help get out of her rut. She starts with doing freelance work writing articles and ghostwriting for others.

Over time, she is able to stop the payday advances and then start having extra money to help pay the bills. She then expands into writing her own products. After about a year, she is able to do her online business full time and quit her job. She continued to learn new things, but she had the base because she became like the phoenix and reinvented herself.

How to look at the world differently.

Once you have made the inward changes needed it is time to look outward at the world around you. How you relate to others, and how you view circumstances that happen.

Tammie starts over with her weight loss goal. She has identified her thought and emotional patterns around her rut. She starts a reasonable plan of exercise and dietary changes which increase over

time. She addresses the issue of the thought and emotional patterns underlying her rut. But if she doesn't change her outlook, she will still struggle with weight.

She needs to look at men differently. As she starts losing weight, she finds herself feeling nervous and anxious. When men approach her in a positive manner, she starts to withdraw instead of responding in a positive manner. Recognizing that this is because of her thought and emotional patterns, she addresses it by learning about the cycle of abuse and how to overcome it. She goes from being a victim to a survivor. She then can look at the world differently. After about six months of losing weight and changing how she views men, she finds herself dating and enjoying it for the first time. About two years later, she has a solid healthy relationship and is engaged to be married. She also has lost 100 lbs and is able to keep it off for good.

As you move forward out of that rut, be sure to go from inward changes to outward ones. Learn to see the world in a whole new way, and you will be surprised at how much better it can be.

Part three: And off into the running

Setting up goals and a plan.

Now that you know what your rut is and you have started moving out of that rut, how do you get into the running? The first step is setting up goals and a plan. This is the cornerstone to moving forward into the running.

Goal setting is really not that complicated but there are a few important steps to follow:

- **They must be realistic**
- **They must be measurable**
- **You need to set short term, intermediate term, and long term goals.**

Goals need to be realistic and achievable. Setting a goal that in a week you will make a million dollars is not realistic. As in Tammie's original goals where she went on the grapefruit diet and started jogging at 5:30 AM to lose 30 lbs in 30 days. Those were not realistic goals.

When Tammie modified them, she made them more realistic. She went for eating less sweets and starches at first as the only change to her diet, and started by increasing her daily activity for exercise. She decided to try for losing one to two pounds a week instead of 30.

Goals must also be measurable. This means actual numbers so you can measure how successful or not successful they are. For example Tammie setting up a goal of losing one to two pounds a week is a measurable goal. She can over time follow her progress and see if she is meeting the goal and see if it needs to be modified up or down a little bit. If she made a goal of I want to lose some weight there would be no way to measure it.

Whether you set a goal of losing weight like Tammie did, or setting a goal of having a number of people added to your list, or making a certain amount of money per week, make sure your goals have clear

cut wording with numbers so you can make sure you are staying on track.

Another place where people struggle with goals is not setting up short term, intermediate term, and long term goals. You need to set up small and easily achievable goals for the short term which is up to three months. So in Tammie's case she set up short term goals to lose 15 to 20 pounds in her first three months. She based this on the one to two pounds a week goal.

She also set up an exercise plan of at least three times a week riding her bicycle. She started out at first riding only 10 minutes each time then over time increased it by five minutes a week until she was up to an hour for her bike rides. She then increased from three times a week to five. Instead of trying to exercise at 5:30 AM, she rode her bike after she got home from work and before she ate dinner. She found this an easier schedule for her and it had the added benefit of making her less hungry at dinnertime.

She also found little ways to increase her daily activity by parking further away and walking up one flight of stairs instead of taking the elevator to her office at work. In her first three months she not only

met her goal of 15 to 20 lbs, but she actually lost 27 pounds and went down a couple of sizes in clothes.

When you set up short term goals start small and work over time toward your ultimate goals. Instead of you will make a million dollars, start with you will make an extra 500 a month or you will add 300 more subscribers to your email list. Be flexible enough to modify or tweak them if needed either upwards or downwards as well. If you find yourself making 500 a month by month two reach for making 750 a month for example. If you get 300 subscribers on your list in six weeks, go for 500 subscribers. Of course it may need to be tweaked downward as well. If you are struggling and finding you are only making 100 dollars a month, shoot for 250 a month. The main thing is they are your goals based on your situation. Make them reachable in the short term and make them something that will get you closer to your ultimate goals.

Intermediate goals are the most overlooked and they are the most critical. Often people set up only short term and long term goals and then find around months four to six that they falter on their plans. Think of it as the short term goals are the appetizer

the intermediate goals are the main course, and the long term goals are dessert.

Tina's short term goal with her freelancing was to get away from the payday advances. Her long term goal was to be able to quit her job as a secretary/receptionist and save on child care costs by working from home on her own business. She met her short term goal easily, but without intermediate goals, she wouldn't be able to accomplish her ultimate goal of quitting her job.

Her intermediate goals included making at least \$2,000 a month from freelancing work and starting to create her own products. She planned this for months four through twelve. She sometimes made more than \$2,000 sometimes less, but it averaged out to about \$2,000 a month. By months ten and eleven, she was up to \$3,000 a month. After a year from when she started, she was able to give her notice at work.

You may think that \$3,000 a month does not sound like a lot of money, but it was significant to Tina who was making \$10 an hour and having to pay child care costs out of that. For her it meant getting out of the rut and that is what matters.

Your intermediate goals may be very different from hers they will be what fits you and your situation. The important thing is to have incremental changes over time that take you from the small short term goals to your long term goals and help keep you in the running.

Long term goals are usually the ones that everyone wants to go to first. It may be making at least \$100k a year or having 50,000 people on your list. It may be losing 100 pounds, or quitting your day job for good. Whatever your long term goals are, be sure to allow at least one year to accomplish them. These are the big ones and you will not get there overnight. You may even find you have one or two long term goals that take three to five years to accomplish and that is fine.

For example Tammie wanted to lose over 100 pounds and it took her 15 months to accomplish that. She then added a long term goal of having a healthy relationship that ended up in marriage. That one took longer but she was able to achieve both because she set up realistic and measurable goals. She made sure she had short term, intermediate term, and long term goals.

Goals are only part of the picture, however, you also need a plan. If you think of goals as shooting arrows into a target and seeing how close to the bullseye you get, then think of the plan as learning how to shoot arrows and having a bow and arrows to shoot with.

Once you have your goals in place then you set up the plan. Again the plan will be based on your situation, but there are some basics that should be in any plan.

You need a list of skills, tools, and what you still need to learn to accomplish your goals. You also need to set up a budget for how you will pay for the investment costs of your goals.

For example Tina set up in her budget the costs of having her website hosted and her autoresponder. She also had advertising costs. Over time these costs increased as she was able to spend more money on investing in her business. She set it up as a pay as you go budget because she had very little resources to start. So when she first started, she used a free website then moved to a paid one with webhosting. She started advertising with free classifieds and networking, and then moved to paid classifieds and other forms of paid advertising. She

had her early clients write testimonials of how well she did for them and put them on her website with permission from the clients. She started with Open Office because it was free, then invested in MS Office.

Her skills part of her plan she had excellent writing and research skills and could type 60 WPM. So she was able to produce what the clients needed in a timely manner. She was very familiar with working on a computer and working with MS Office from her college classes and her day job.

Some of the tools that Tina used in setting up her business included her home computer, her internet connection which was tied to her landline phone, her word processor, and a website. Over time she added more tools like an autoresponder to make emailing easier, but when she first started it was with the bare minimum to get up and running.

She also made a list of things she needed to learn about to expand her skill base especially as she moved from freelancing to also creating her own products and marketing. For example, she learned some basic HTML so she could better work with her website. She also learned about how to build a list and market to that list. She learned where the best

places to get clients and how to use sites like Facebook and Twitter to help bring visitors to her website.

So when you set up your plan based on your goals, make sure to look at skills you already have, tools you already have or need, a budget, and what you still need to learn to get into the running. You will be the one who takes those steps to get out of the rut and into the running, though others can help you along the way.

Organizing yourself.

You have your goals and your plan now what? It is time to look at organization. How you structure your time, tasks, and distractions is very critical to accomplishing your goals and plan.

Think of time as a pie and no matter how you slice that pie, the pie is always the same size. There are only 24 hours in a day and that never changes. To accomplish more requires making better use of those 24 hours instead of trying to get more hours in a day.

This means increasing your productive time so you get more done in a shorter period of time. It also means being realistic about how much you can accomplish with your time. Just like having a financial budget for your plan, you need a time budget. If you try to do too much at once, you will end up doing less not more.

For example, Tina had a lot of demands on her time. She worked a full time job, was a single mom, and she was building an online business as well. She learned to treat time the way most people treat money. She only took on new clients as she had the time to work for them instead of just taking everyone that wanted her services. She scheduled time on the weekends to spend with her children doing family activities. She even scheduled mundane tasks like dishes and mopping floors. As her business grew, she hired someone to come in once a week to do some of the heavy housework so she could spend more time on her business.

One of the things she did do though was to also schedule some non productive time where she could relax. You need sleep, food, activity, and time to just vegetate to stay healthy. Without those things you will actually be less productive instead of more. It is a

balance. There were times when she skimmed on these things to meet a deadline, but then she would schedule some time for herself to replenish the reserves.

She also allowed extra time when she was learning a new skill or how to use a new tool. For example when she was learning some basic HTML code or how to use her autoresponder. She decided to add some video to her website and put some videos up as part of her advertising on social media. During those times, she took less clients to allow time for the learning curve.

When you set up your schedule be sure to allow time for the mundane tasks, for the learning curve, and for time to just relax and replenish your reserves. You will get a lot more done in the long run. Remember to treat time like you would money and budget it wisely.

One of the biggest myths is how you multitask. It is not really doing four things in the same second. Instead its working on a small part of a task then moving to another small bit of another task and so on. For example Tammie did this with her dietary changes. She started by cutting down on starches and sweets, then she added more fruits and veggies,

then she switched over to whole grains instead of white flour. All of those dietary changes were part of the main task of changing her diet, but they were parts of it not the whole. While she was making those changes, she also made incremental changes in her activity level. First the increasing her walking in day to day activities and riding her bike for longer periods of time, then she added in going to a gym three times a week to do an exercise class and weightlifting. She was doing both the diet and the exercise, but not in the same moment. She did a bit of each then did the other.

If you try to do too many tasks at once you will find nothing gets done. Instead break up the tasks into smaller chunks and switch from one to another. If this does not work for you, then just focus on one task till it is done then move to the next. Even a computer with its ability to “multitask” is really just moving very rapidly from one task to another so that it appears to be doing them at the same time.

You might spend say 15 minutes working on writing something, then spend 15 minutes on posting to social media sites, then another 15 minutes on writing, then take 30 minutes to eat a meal and watch a television program or read a chapter of a novel.

That is more productive than trying to write, eat, watch TV, and post on Facebook all at the same time. Again, it is a matter of balance.

Another thing to watch out for is distractions. This is the ohhh shiny syndrome. Distractions can take away time and they also can take away money. The key is not to completely stop all distractions, but to budget them into your schedule.

For example Tina found it was very easy to get wrapped up in the social media sites especially on Facebook. Since she didn't want to lose clients, but needed the social media sites to get new clients, she came up with a system. She used a kitchen timer and set it for 30 minutes and when the timer bell went off, she closed down Facebook and went back to writing for her clients. Then after working for a couple of hours, she would spend another 30 minutes on Facebook and other such sites. She set up her email with folders so that she could see at a glance if she had one from a client, otherwise she would ignore her email until she was done with her projects for the day.

Whatever your distractions are instead of completely getting rid of them, find ways to allow them in smaller doses into your schedule. Especially if they are also part of your plan and are needed to

accomplish your goals like the example of social media in Tina's business.

Taking Action to Change your Future

Now you have the framework to build your path to get out of the rut and into the running. The next part is up to YOU. You need to take action and make it happen.