

The Waldorf Connection

Waldorf Homeschool



Lesson 2: Rhythm, Schedules & Making It “Fit”

What is Rhythm?

Something that you do over and over is considered a ritual or a rhythm.

It encompasses all the rituals we do. The daily & weekly activities that make up our lives. From waking, dressing, preparing meals, changing diapers, shopping, playing and sleeping.

Yearly rhythms, monthly, seasonal... the ebb and the flow of the tides, the sun and moon. In times before the modern era people lived and worked by these rhythms. Rising up with the sun, plowing fields, planting seeds at the right time of the moon cycle (see Biodynamic Farming created by Rudolf Steiner in 1924).

We have become out of touch with these things as we live in houses and shop for food from the market instead of our gardens.

The ability to give children a sense of rhythm and consistency is very beneficial. Not only does it help them feel secure, know what is coming during the day, it helps you as the parent create a flowing day.



in and out breath- think again of the ebb and flow of a tide and that is basically what in and out breath means.

An in-breath activity is one where a child (or adult) comes back into himself. Like painting or drawing, it is usually a relaxing or quiet activity.

Out-breath is something more active like singing, running, playing, dancing.

Even within activities, there can be in or out breath. For example a meal can be a quiet, meditative occasion or a loud, boisterous one.

The idea is to create a day with balanced in and out-breath activities.

Think of a young child forced to sit for too long- what does she need? To stretch her legs, run and play. The same goes for a child who is kept in an over stimulated situation with no “down time”. He will crave quiet, and rest.

When creating your daily rhythm, take a look at your rhythm and analyze the “types” of activities (either in or out-breath). Do you have too many in-breath ones in a row? Maybe the opposite is true and that is why your child has a meltdown before their nap...

Let's talk more about creating this rhythm.

Foundational Points of Day

Think of these as your “pillars” of the day. The things you must do each day.. Meal prep, naptimes, school lessons (?), bath, bedtime routine.

Once you have these pillars in place, it will free your energy up to be used for fun!

Picture this:

Kids are running around while you are checking emails. “What's for lunch mom? I'm hungry.” Lunch? you think. What time is it? Yikes. You were supposed to throw the laundry in and finish school lessons *before* lunch. Is there anything in the pantry? I think there is no bread. How does this happen?

Ok, maybe you can relate to that situation or something similar.

When we don't have a “plan” things can easily get off track.



Transitions

Moving from activity to another is called a transition.
Some children have a hard time moving smoothly..

Ex. Johnny dinner's ready. Johnny? Johnny!
Get into your child's world by speaking in images or use singing,
music to help transitions.

**Sing a transition song.* There are many simple songs out there or
you can make one up. You end up like the pied piper.. it works!

**Music/bells:* I use a music metal triangle that I ring when it is mealtime.
100% response compared to 50% by shouting "Lunch is ready!"
You can use a recorder, piano, kinderharp, whatever.. even a regular bell..

**Speak in Images:* this is great especially for younger children.
"The horse is so hungry, it feeding time. Can you ride him on into the
stable so he can have his oats?" you come into your child's world of
imgination and draw them using a fun image.

Sample Transition Template

Mealtimes: *Mealtime song or blessing
*Hold their hand and walk to the table
*Ask them to set table or carry something to table

Dinner Prep: *Have child help if possible
*Have a special toy basket for that time of
day *Listen to them read aloud while working

Bedtime: *Bedtime snack (warm milk and honey toast)
*Limit roughhousing & stimulating activities
*Have them get "all ready" & in bed *before* the story

Other Notes About Balance



Boundaries

Moms may not realize that boundaries are a big issue in their lives.. I'll bet there are several areas in your day/life that bleed into each other and it is hard to tell where one stops...

Perhaps you have never thought about boundaries in this way..so it may take some time to look at your day and schedule and see what could be a boundary issue.

Another clue about boundaries is when we feel we have to say “yes” or rather we can't say NO to things, even when we don't want to do them.

I am not talking about laundry or diaper changes, this is more about extra things that get put upon us in a unconscious way.

Example.. you always being the mom to drive the carpool... or you being asked several times a week to have kids over, but never getting to have your kids to their house.. or always being asked to host a festival or bring the bread, etc.. even things in your own household.. “Can you just help me...”

It could be your spouse, mom, sister, friend.. it is ok to say no if :

- 1) Is not align with your family values or path
- 2) Takes you away from another activity you need to be doing
- 3) You agree out of obligation and not with enthusiasm
- 4) Your plate is full and you can not/do not want to do anymore

It is up to YOU to define your boundaries with family and friends. We moms have many hats to wear and it is hard to juggle. Don't make it harder by accepting more and more then wonder why you are exhausted and burned out.

Confidence: Next let's talk confidence. It is hard to go against the grain from what everyone else is doing especially in that 4-5 age range when all your friends children are going off to pre-school and learning to read.

Family members mean well, but can question and misunderstand the direction you are going if they don't understand.

So, my best advice is to pick your path and know that this is what speaks to you and is what is best for your family, A friend once told me you as the mom know best for your kids.. better than anyone..

Stand firm in your decisions and give yourself time to see the results.. it is a process and it does take time..

Self-Care

If mom's tank is empty, she cannot nurture her family & others. We cannot do it all by ourselves with no breaks and we shouldn't try. The supermom model is falling away and it's time to realize that it does *take a village to raise a child*.

It is OK to desire (crave) time alone especially during years with young children. They are sharing our energy constantly and we need to replenish it.

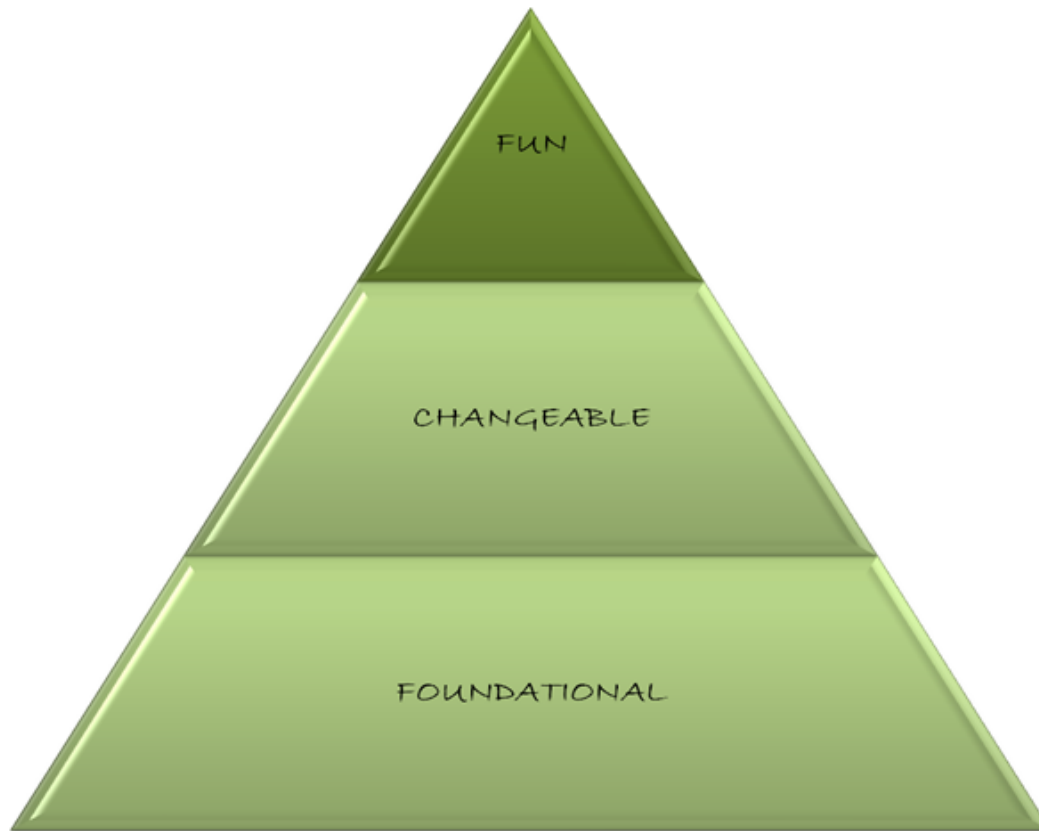
Find a passion or hobby you can use to re-charge yourself! Whether it is a weekly yoga class.. bike riding,, reading,.. a nap.. coffee with friends.. or just a walk by yourself.. something creative is always rejuvenating.. Writing, blogging, handwork, whatever your passion or thing you love doing that you may have put away for now.. That will be the quickest and most powerful ways to refuel your reserves.

Help/Support: think of old times when extended family lived in the same house or small communities where people helped each other and knew each other...

We weren't meant to do this all by ourselves.. Enlist help from Relatives, friends.. If you are living where no family is near or husband is traveling or working many hours. You may be parenting alone.. you NEED time away even if it is an hour once a week.. get a mommy's helper, swap kid watching with a friend.. or set a weekly night out..

My husband and I have Saturday night "Date night". Sometimes it is our only chance to really connect as husband and wife. It is precious and a chance to be "you" just a few hours.

Think of Rhythm in 3 Layers



Foundational: **Laundry, Meal, Shopping**

Changeable: **Child sports, Errands, summer activities, seasonal**

Fun: **What you Love: Reading, Yoga, Knitting**

The Foundational Layer is that which we talked about of that anchor your day. Meals, naps, school lessons, errands, laundry. All those “must-do's” of the days and week.

When creating your daily rhythm, add these in first to create your foundation. You will then see the gaps in-between where you can plug in the fun stuff!

The Changeable Layer is that which is seasonal or lasts a set time like kids sports, or swimming lessons, gardening during the summer, etc. This will affect your weekly schedule and of course the daily as you sprinkle in these temporary activities.

The Fun Layer is exactly that! Your **extra** time to do all the things you have been waiting to do! It could be activities with your family, playgroups, yoga for you, beach day, park time, painting, or just being outdoors in nature.

Important

Take time to discover your family values and goals. This is great to do with a spouse or as a family with older children. What is important to you? What activities do you want to include in your rhythm? Is being eco-friendly a priority? Volunteering? Outdoor sports?

Once you decide where you want to be, you can add this into your rhythm and schedule. Otherwise, it will never happen. You have to be proactive in this or daily life will swallow up your good intentions.

Check your rhythms now and see where you can add in family goals.

Weekly Rhythm Map Timeline

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
cleaning	music	bake bread	work	homeschool coop	family day	church

Current Schedule:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
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Do you have something everyday?

Can you see a place to create an open space?

New Schedule:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
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Creating Your Daily Rhythm:

This will take some practice and refining and is always a work in progress.

Use the exercise sheet below to list what your current daily rhythm looks like, label the In-Breath and Out-Breath activities so you get the “birds-eye” view.

Where can you make adjustments in the balance?

Are you trying to squeeze too much into your day?

Do you need more structure?



Daily Rhythm Map Timeline



Current Schedule:

Does your rhythm need more inbreath or outbreath?
Is there free time for play and balance?

New Schedule:

Donna's Sample Daily Rhythm

Morning: Morning Routine (dress, make beds) Breakfast, Laundry

Mid-Morning: Walk, Circle Time, Main Lesson

Midday: Lunch and clean-up dishes

**Afternoon: Free Play girls
Donna work**

**Midafternoon: Come together for story,
handwork, or craft**

**Late Afternoon: Music practice
Meal prep
Bath**

**Evening: Dinner
Clean-up dishes and sweep kitchen floor**

**Bedtime: (7:30) Get ready (jammies & brush teeth) Story with candle
Tuck-in**

**Late Evening: Grown-up time
or reading**

Meal Idea Chart

	<i>Breakfast</i>	<i>Lunch</i>	<i>Dinner</i>
M	Omelette	Pasta	Chicken
T	Eggs	Egg Salad	Stir Fry
W	Oatmeal	Hummus w/raw veggies	Fish
T	Yogurt & Fruit	PBJ	Casserole
F	Cereal with Fruit	Soup w/grilled cheese	Pizza
S	Pancakes	Yogurt w/granola	Crock Pot
S	Waffles	Salad with fruit	Mexican

Waldorf Moms Top Tips to having a Rhythmic Day*



✧ [Valarie Budayr](#) The night before I write down the 5 most important things to accomplish the following day and put it on the fridge. When I wake-up I take a few quiet moments for myself. Important to take breaks throughout the day.

✧ [Jennifer Jo Lickiss Tan](#) Planning meals and meal times on week days. You can do this on weekends and even plan to feature Steiner's grain and color of the day.

R [ebecca Richard](#) A wise woman ([Kristie Karima Burns](#) !) once told me to have three pillars that you work your day around... for us, it is our breakfast together, our afternoon walk, and our group snuggle at bedtime. Besides that, I second [Jennifer Jo Lickiss Tan's](#) meal planning suggestion (my grain of the day meal plan is prob. my most popular blog post). I think having a household management binder that is nice to look at and full of all the info/lists I need inside page protectors so I can check things off/write notes with wet erase marker keeps me organized- I think lots of people have all this stuff

✧ [Kristie Karima Burns](#) :)_Those three pillars or anchors are what keep me together each day! Another thing I always tell people is to have a clear goal for what you want your rhythm to feel like because even if you don't "make it" each day you at least need something to strive for, The third thing I always keep in mind is that some days the DAY has its own rhythm. If a child got ill perhaps this is the day to learn about caregiving and compassion. If there was a snow storm perhaps this is the day to build an igloo (takes an entire day but is so worth it!)

Waldorf Education Grain of the Day/Planetary Chart

	<i>Grain</i>	<i>Planet</i>	<i>Recipe Idea</i>
Sunday:	Wheat	Sun	muffins, bread, pancakes, cereal
Monday:	Rice	Moon	rice cream, brown rice, rice milk
Tuesday:	Barley	Mars	warm barley cereal, soup
Wednesday:	Millet	Mercury	millet w/veggies, millet porridge
Thursday:	Rye	Jupiter	bread, swedish rye cookies
Friday:	Oats	Venus	oatmeal, cookies, "oatloaf"
Saturday:	Corn	Saturn	cornbread, corncakes, popcorn



Rhythm Resources:

Heaven on Earth- Sharifa Oppenheimer

Simplicity Parenting- Kim John Payne

Ebook: [Rhythm & Organization: How to Manage Your Time, Simplify Tasks, & Align with Your Family Values](#)”

Steiners Grain of Day thoughts ([Cedar ring circle blog](#))

Family Mission Statements- ([Simple mom blog](#))

Waldorf CD- songs [Come Follow Me](#)

[Naturally You Can Sing](#)

[PDF to Word](#)