

habits
routines
rituals
rhythms

“Live in each season as it passes.
Breathe the air, drink the drink,
taste the fruit, and resign yourself
to the influence of each”.
-Henry David Thoreau

“We are what we repeatedly do”

Will Durant

My first few weeks of motherhood were overwhelming but sweet, I was taken care of and loved on, but I was also given a lot of ‘advice’ and information on baby schedules. When I should feed her, play with her, have her sleep, when I needed to pump, when I should sleep and eat and oh yes change her diaper! There was an app for everything and everyone swore by their schedule for “successful” mothering. None of them worked, ever. And its not because it was poor advice but it was because it wasn’t unique to my daughter and I, we had different temperaments and needs then other mothers and babies. And that is exactly how you are and your child, different from mine. The last thing I want to do is teach you my self care needs, because those exact things might make you feel annoyed or guilty. **Self care habits, routines and rituals are as unique to you as your own child’s sleep rhythm and feeding pattern.** And that is why we are working on creating your own self-nurturing toolbox, so that it is sustainable and personal to you. I don’t believe in strict schedules, but I do believe in rhythms. And within a rhythm we have our own personal habits, routines and rituals that we implement so that we can thrive and feel fulfilled as mothers.

creating

habits

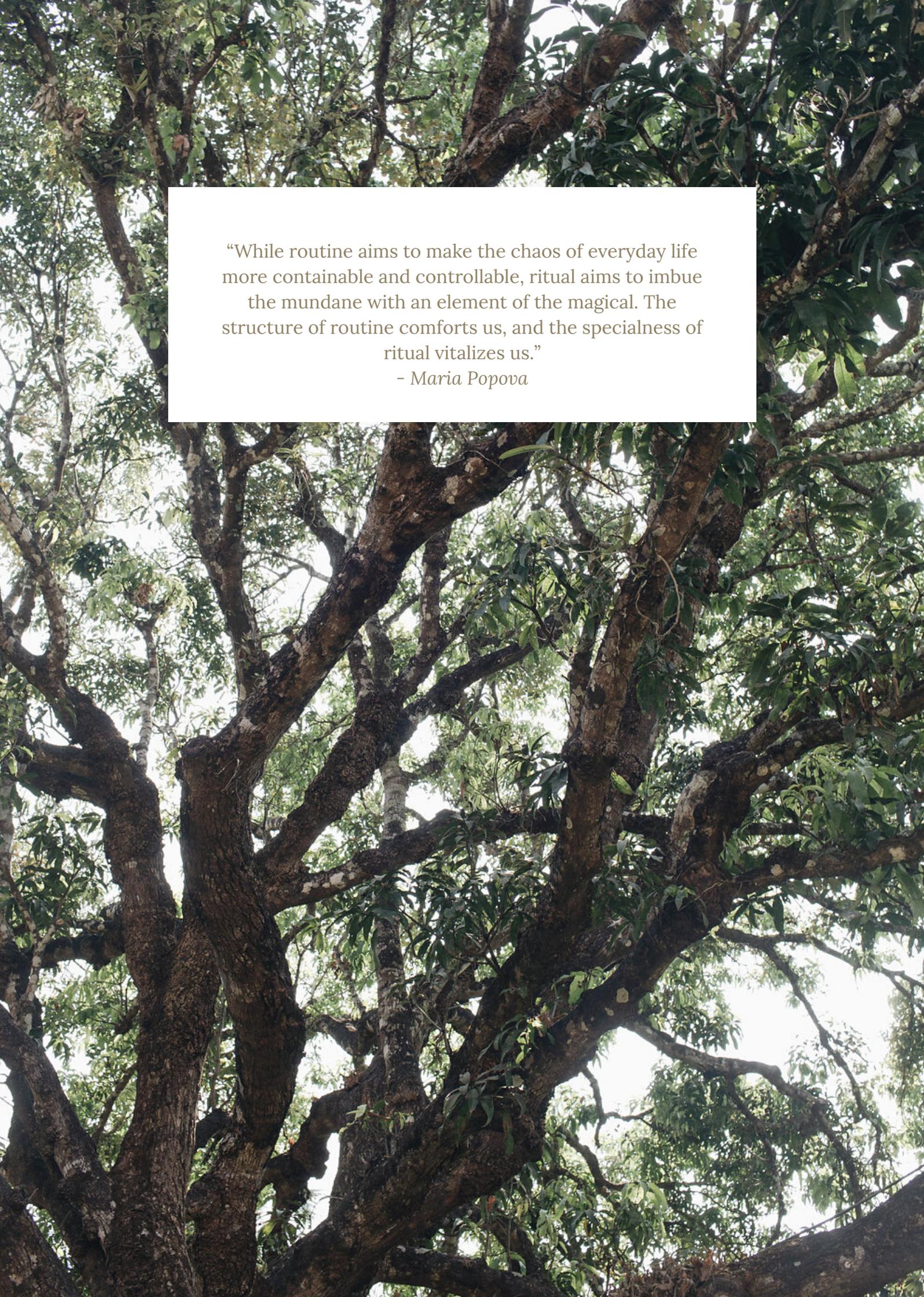
A habit is a singular action that can help us drive towards a particular goal. It is regular and repeated with little or no conscious effort or thought. According to research, up to **40% of our daily actions are powered by habits**. Think, brushing our teeth, locking our doors, changing a diaper, making our breakfast. All of it is done with relatively little thought.

honouring

routines

A routine is a regular and repeated action, just like a habit but it requires deliberate practice and more conscious awareness and effort. With practice and time, a routine becomes a habit. We all have routines, whether we are aware of them or not, and most of us are obsessed with knowing about someone we admire or look up to and their routine. But just because someone's routine includes running in the morning doesn't mean that would be optimal to you! What becomes optimal to you as a mother and setting up a routine is your own body's natural ebb and flow and when you get to schedule your sacred time for yourself.

A routine should feel grounding and supportive.



“While routine aims to make the chaos of everyday life more containable and controllable, ritual aims to imbue the mundane with an element of the magical. The structure of routine comforts us, and the specialness of ritual vitalizes us.”

- Maria Popova

practicing

rituals

Rituals are symbolic, done at key moments; they have meaning and can have a real sense of purpose. Just like a routine, rituals are repeated behaviors, however they have a deeper meaning beyond a sequence of actions. They are deeply personal to you and your family.

Routines can make sense to the outside world, but your own personal ritual may be so unique to you that no one else understands the meaning behind it. We invest a considerable amount of time, thought and emotion into creating a ritual. A daily routine of showering can be turned into a ritual where it's a moment to self-care; your first cup of tea can be a treat after your child's first nap. Rituals happen all year round; you can make a regular occurrence of breakfast in bed for mother's day, or pancakes on Sundays! Rituals are not defined by the activity but by the emotional investment we bring to it. **As mothers, we become ritual makers for our family**, we take ordinary moments in our day and we give our children the gift of paying attention. And in doing so we teach ourselves the art of paying attention to our own needs. We begin to weave anchor points throughout the day that bring us closer to our natural self.

finding

rhythm

We live in a rhythmic world, with yearly seasons, monthly cycles, moon phases, the rhythm of a day and sometimes most importantly but easily forgotten our own menstrual cycles as women. And although it's the ideas of routines and habits that can take over in a world obsessed with structure and control, it's the rhythm that we as women and mothers must become familiar and comfortable with. It's the ebb and flow of the day and what we fill it with that matters, not what time something should be done by or how many reps we did of each.

So how do we live in a more rhythmic way but still create positive habits and intentional rituals while living in a modern world? We create a Rhythm Map.

action step

Set some time aside to create your own Rhythm Map. I do not go by the clock here (babies can't be scheduled! I go by her wake windows, that way I don't ever get "behind schedule" if a nap doesn't happen or goes on too long) and I adapt it in each season so just like David Thoreau, I drink and breath each season. Bring out the markers or crayons and have fun, think of ways you can include your children in the more 'routine' tasks or chores around the house and remember to always schedule in time for yourself, self nurturing is key to living a rhythmic life.

Tasks that need to be done in a week: (An example)

- Home tending
 - Cooking
 - Nature
 - Playing
 - Self care
- Seasonal activity
- Connection (for our social nervous system)
 - Appointments
 - Morning routine/ritual
 - Evening routine/ritual
 - Afternoon routine/ritual

Check in on Instagram to see an example!

