

STUCK IN A RUT?

There may be periods in your life when you feel frustrated, exhausted and unmotivated to do the things that you once enjoyed. During these periods, your self-esteem is at an all-time low.

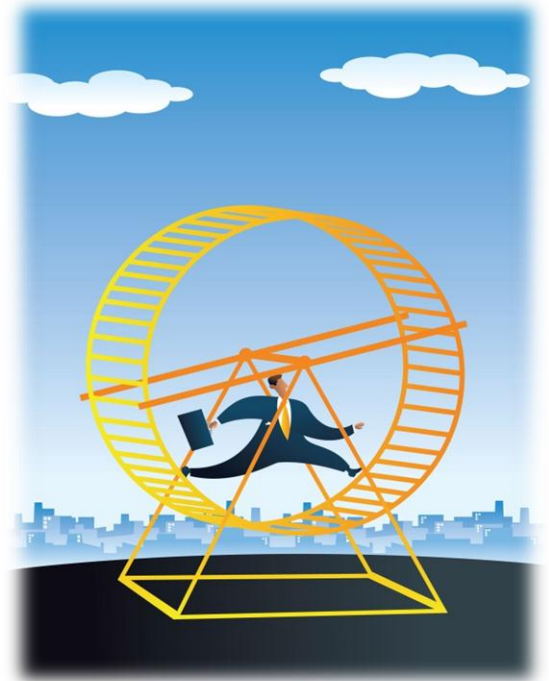
You can fall into a rut by being overwhelmed by your love life, your career, your family or life in general. You are more likely to be stuck in a rut when you are sensitive in nature, a perfectionist, or are easily hurt by others.

Often people will find themselves in a rut after suffering a loss- whether it's the loss of a family member, a friend or loved one, the loss of a job, or the loss of a relationship. It can leave you feeling heavy and sullen, experiencing waves of irritability and anger.

Another reason for feeling cornered is the accumulation of stress, including the stress of a deadline, mounting debts, or the stress of competing demands from family or spouses. All of these reasons can leave you with the feeling:

I can't do it anymore.

While you feel like you will never get out of this rut, there *are* things that you can do to help yourself get back on your feet. It's important to remember to take it one day at a time, and consider using outlets such as walking or swimming to help reduce tension.



Take your time when making life-altering decisions.

Allow time to pass, and yourself to breathe before considering heavy decisions such as a separation or divorce, a move, a job change, or anything that would make a major impact on your life.

Learn to accept your feelings.

Self-statements such as "I am angry" or "I'm sad today, and that's okay" take away the need to hide emotions. It doesn't make you angrier or more depressed to admit your feelings, instead providing a sense of relief to acknowledge how you are *actually* feeling.

Identify your stressors and take responsibility for dealing with them.

If you aren't getting along with a work colleague, think about who's going to be the first to step forward and release the tension. If you are given unrealistic deadlines, think about who is going to say something.

Make a plan to tackle these stressors.

Set goals and schedules for your time. Deal with feeling overwhelmed by setting out a work plan and acknowledging your progress for each step.

Make a list of positive affirmations.

Focus on particulars, not generalizations - don't say "my husband is nice"; instead, pinpoint a specific aspect or thing that you admire about him.

Review your options.

Make a list of the things you are able to change, and the things that you cannot. Don't get trapped in negative thinking; there is usually a creative third option that is often overlooked.

Review what events mean to you.

When you miss out on a promotion, does that *really* mean failure? If your spouse is being less affectionate, does that *really* mean your marriage is over? Be aware of your language when describing these life events—watch out for generalizations or black and white thinking.

Seek out others to listen and support you.

More often than not we can feel alone, going through life with tunnel vision. We need to learn reassurance and how to get the perspective of others.



If you feel like you are in over your head and nothing is working, call your EFAP.

Your logo here

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Brown Crawshaw 1.800.668.2055
www.browncrawshaw.com