

# Change it up | Christin Smith Myers

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We are creatures of habit. I may be worse than most. As someone with a continual emphasis on productivity, I am a proponent of creating checklists and procedures, identifying the best order in which to do things, and following routines. I drive the same route to work even when another one might make more sense. I choose the same restaurants and I eat the same things at those restaurants.

Yet as I read in Gretchen Rubin's fabulous Better Than Before, "Often we're happier, we feel more energetic, more productive, more creative when we try something new, when we challenge ourselves a little bit, when we kind of go out of that comfort zone. That atmosphere of growth can really boost our happiness."

I know she's right.

My daughter's school vocal ensemble was selected to sing the national anthem at a minor league hockey game. The day of the game, both my kids were a bit anxious. Not about the performance, per se, but rather about what was going to happen after the performance. Hockey? What is that? What's going to happen? Do I have to go? Do we have to stay after the anthem? Can I take a book? (I rolled my eyes a lot that day. As a pretty avid sports lover, I do now and again doubt they are actually my children, even though I distinctly remember giving birth to them.)

We had so much fun - and not just because of the home team's victory, the puck flying into the crowd, or the fight near the end of the game. It was because it was something totally out of our norm. It's been a while since we've done anything interesting on a Saturday night. We were at a place we've never been watching a sport we've never watched as a family. Lily got to sing the anthem, so of course that added a lot of excitement, both sets of grandparents were there, and both of my children had also friends in the crowd they could spend some time with. When we first got to the stadium, we were a bit overwhelmed by the crowd and the atmosphere and the logistics, but when we got in the car a few hours later, we were all pretty jazzed about the experience. We went outside our comfort zone. And it made us happier.

I've been in a pretty deep rut lately, and a friend who knows this sent me a lovely package. All the items in the box of sunshine were delightful, but what touched me the most was her advice: "When I'm feeling blue, a new adventure helps perk me up. It doesn't have to be a physical adventure even. sometimes a mental or sensory adventure can do the trick. Watch a funny movie, read something just for fun. Touch, taste or listen to something new."

I think it's time for a new adventure. Who's ready to change it up with me?

