

## RISK FACTORS IN USING A CHECKLIST

While the efficacy of the checklist has been proven time and again, using it seems to go against a myth about how successful people function: the truly great are daring; they improvise, they do not need protocols and checklists. ‘Maybe our idea of heroism needs updating’ concedes Gawande (2011, p.173). Checklists impose restrictions: they require personal initiative, discipline and humility. On the upside, lists allow for autonomy and a sense of security in complex situations. In ritualizing, the list lets people focus on the experience. *Use the checklist. A checklist only works if it is used.*

## PLANNING PHASE



## QUESTIONNAIRE ON RITUAL IDENTITY



This short questionnaire is designed to help you determine your ritual identity and strategy. Tick off a maximum of ten statements that correspond to your situation: six to eight statements associated with the bold symbols (★, ●, ■, ◆) and two to four of the other symbols (△, □).

- ★ I am an active member of a religious institution.
- I am an inactive member of a religious institution.
- I am a member of a humanist organization.
- ◆ I belong to a holistic or esoteric group.
- △ I belong to a religious/secular or humanist group that has no official status.
- I consider myself traditional but not religious.
- ★ I attend religious worship services at least once a month.
- I attend religious worship services no more than once or twice a year.
- I consider myself spiritual but not religious.
- ◆ I belong to a group that celebrates nature or the cosmos.
- △ I do not feel the need in my life for any religious, civil or philosophical institution or group.
- I can live ethically and fulfil my life based on reason and humanity.

- ◆ It is important to me to have my wedding/funeral/child's ceremony in a natural setting, if possible in a forest.
- I believe humankind must treat the environment and the planet respectfully.
- ★ I cannot imagine having my wedding/funeral/child's ceremony in a non-religious setting.
- I would love to have my wedding/funeral/child's ceremony in a religious setting but without a priest/pastor/rabbi/other religious leader.
- It would be nice to have my wedding/funeral/child's ceremony in a religious setting but without any religious references in the ceremony.
- ◆ It is important to me to have my wedding/funeral/child's ceremony in a natural setting, far from any man-made structures.
- I would like to have my wedding/funeral/child's ceremony in a setting that is not religious.
- △ I cannot imagine having my wedding/funeral/child's ceremony in a religious setting.
- ★ I cannot imagine my wedding/funeral/child's ceremony without a priest/pastor/rabbi/other religious leader.
- It does not matter to me whether my wedding/child's ceremony is held in a religious setting, but I cannot imagine a funeral without religious rites.
- ◆ The planet and its future is in our (human) hands.
- ★ I want religious texts at my wedding/funeral/child's ceremony.
- I want my wedding/funeral/child's ceremony to be performed by a humanist celebrant or at least someone with humanist values.
- ◆ A lifecycle ceremony with a shaman would suit me quite well.
- △ I do not need help from any institution (religious, civil or philosophical) to celebrate a lifecycle transition.
- My family/friends expect me to organize a religious wedding/funeral/child's ceremony.
- I do not need god or any supernatural being in order to live and die well.

- I would organize a religious wedding/funeral/child's ceremony not for myself so much as to please/keep peace with my family/friends.
- My friends/family would find a religious or institutional wedding/funeral/child's ceremony insistent with my personal values.
- The religious holidays I celebrate have no significance beyond the fact that they are cultural or social occasions.
- △ I do not need an official leader of any kind to preside over my lifecycle passages, birthdays/wedding, child's ceremony/funeral.

Add up how many times you have ticked each of these six symbols ★, ●, ■, ◆, □, △. Now turn to the key on page 90 to discover your ritual identity. The key to the questionnaire is found at the end of the chapter.

- ★ \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_
- △ \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



## FIVE TECHNIQUES FOR FEELING SAFE

We have inherited non-pharmaceutical remedies that can transform our daily lives and help us feel safe. These five exercises represent low-tech corporeal technology that requires no particular conditions, skill or accessories. They can be performed almost anywhere and any time by nearly everyone. In fact, two of the exercises I learned from my son. He was no more than two years old when he started climbing into our bed in the mornings asking for a 'sandwich hug'. Once he had got what he needed, he pushed us apart saying 'go away' and toddled off giggling.



## KEY TO QUESTIONNAIRE ON RITUAL IDENTITY

- ★ (5\*) *Institutional*. If this symbol ★ represents the majority of your answers, your religious practice is regular and satisfying. Religious ceremony is important and coherent with your values and view of life. You marked these symbols Δ, □ no more than three times.
- (5) *Distanced*. If you ticked a majority of this symbol ● you feel distant ties with a religious institution; you practise occasionally. Ceremonies held in this setting may or may not satisfy your need to mark a transition. You may have also marked the symbol ★ once or twice but these symbols Δ, □ no more than three times.
- (6) *Secular/Humanist*. A majority of this symbol ■ indicates that you are indifferent or against religion. You do not identify yourself with traditional religious circles. You need tailor-made ceremonies to mark life events. You may be a member of a humanist or secular group. You marked these symbols Δ, □ a number of times.
- ◆ (5) *Alternative*. If you marked this symbol at least three times you probably find yourself most comfortable with a holistic approach to life and may be a member of an esoteric group. Bespoke ceremonies suit you well; you may not feel the need for a celebrant or any kind of authority figure to ritualize.
- Δ (5) *Unaffiliated*. You do not associate yourself with any institution and are likely to be critical of institutions in general. You may belong to groups with little official status and feel uncomfortable in institutional settings. It is important you feel free to craft the kind of rituals that are right for you.
- (7) *Traditional*. Traditional cultural or social activities are important to your sense of identity. You will want traditional words and gestures in your bespoke ceremony.

Note: \* = maximum number.