

International Conversation Cafe

Lifestyle Topic: Ceremonies and Rituals

Ceremonies and rituals are used to celebrate and signal a change or accomplishment. Rituals usually have to do with the prescribed order of a religious ceremony. "At the communion service, the bread was given before the wine."

Sometimes the word ritual is used in a general sense of something done in the same way each day. "My household chores have become a morning ritual."

Ceremonies are a formal act performed as prescribed by ritual or custom such as a wedding ceremony or a Japanese tea ceremony. Sometimes the word is used in a general sense as something that is commonly practiced, like handshake.

Discussion Thoughts

Are there rituals associated with birth? Describe them.

Are there rituals that mark a change from youth to adulthood?

What ceremonies are related to being in school or graduation?

How are they different in your home countries than what you have experienced here?

Describe a wedding ceremony in your country. Are there any rituals that happen upon engagement?

What are some of your favorite rituals? What rituals did you not like?

Tell about a time you skipped a ceremony. What happened?

Other quotes and thoughts...

A graduation ceremony is an event where the commencement speaker tells thousands of students dressed in identical caps and gowns that 'individuality' is the key to success. ~ Robert Orben

What do you like about graduation ceremonies? What do you dislike?

There are few hours in life more agreeable than the hour dedicated to the ceremony known as afternoon tea. ~Henry James

What are some ceremonies or rituals you participate in nearly every day? Why are they important to you?

Hearing Mass is the ceremony I most favor during my travels. Church is the only place where someone speaks to me and I do not have to answer back. ~ Charles de Gaul

What are some of your most favorite religious ceremonies? Why do you like them?

I learned enough Hebrew to stagger through a meaningless ceremony that I scarcely remember. ~ David Antin

Tell about meaningless ceremonies you participated in and why you did not like them.