



Savouring Glimmers & Gratitude

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Simple Practices to Support Healing, Resilience, and Well-Being

Life can be demanding. When we're navigating stress, loss, uncertainty, or the pressures of everyday life, it's natural for our attention to be drawn toward problems, worries, and what feels difficult or unfinished.

Our brains are wired this way. This habit, known as the **negativity bias**, helped our ancestors survive by staying alert to potential threats. While this instinct still serves a purpose, it can sometimes leave us feeling overwhelmed, depleted, or disconnected from the moments of goodness and connection that are also present in our lives.

The good news is that our brains can adapt throughout our lives. Through a process called **neuroplasticity**, we can strengthen pathways associated with emotional well-being, resilience, and gratitude.

One helpful way to support this process is to intentionally notice and savour **glimmers**.

What Are Glimmers?

Glimmers are small moments of safety, connection, calm, joy, wonder, gratitude, or hope. They are often simple, ordinary experiences that remind our nervous system of the sweetness of life, or that we are okay in this moment.

Glimmers might include:

- The warmth of sunlight on your face
- A kind smile from a stranger
- A comforting warm cup of coffee, tea, or cocoa
- Hearing a favourite song
- A laugh shared with a friend
- The beauty of a flower, tree, or sunset
- A quiet moment after a busy day
- The comfort of your pet resting beside you or on your lap





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Noticing glimmers is not about ignoring pain or pretending everything is okay. Rather, glimmers broaden our awareness, helping us recognize moments of goodness alongside life's challenges.

Why Savouring Matters

Many positive experiences pass through our awareness without leaving much of a trace. We notice them briefly and quickly move on to the next task, worry, or responsibility.

When we slow down and intentionally savour positive experiences, we allow our brains to absorb them more fully. Research suggests this can strengthen neural pathways associated with positive emotions, resilience, and well-being.

Over time, these small moments can become valuable inner resources that support us during difficult times and help us reconnect with feelings of joy, safety, connection, and hope.

The HEAL Framework Practice

Neuropsychologist Rick Hanson developed the **HEAL Framework** as a simple way to help positive experiences become lasting inner strengths.

H — Have a Positive Experience

Begin by noticing or creating a positive experience, however small.

Ask yourself:

- What feels pleasant or comforting right now?
- What am I appreciating in this moment?
- What is going well, even in a small way?

The experience does not need to be intense or extraordinary. Often, the smallest moments are the most accessible, simple, and meaningful.



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E — Enrich It

Pause and stay with the experience for 10–30 seconds.

Allow yourself to become curious about it.

You might notice:

- What emotions are present
- How the experience feels in your body
- What makes this moment meaningful
- What you appreciate about it

Ask yourself:

- What does this feel like in my body?
- What about this moment matters to me?

Even subtle experiences can have a powerful impact when we give them our full attention.

A — Absorb It

Allow the experience to sink in. Imagine receiving the goodness of the moment rather than rushing past it.

Ask yourself:

- Can I stay with this for a few more breaths?
- How can I let myself fully receive this experience?

This step helps the brain register and store the experience, supporting positive neuroplasticity.

L — Link (Optional)



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When it feels appropriate and emotionally safe, gently hold a positive experience alongside a difficult one.

For example:

- Feeling supported while also acknowledging loneliness
- Remembering a strength while facing self-doubt
- Noticing gratitude while moving through grief

The aim is not to eliminate difficult emotions, but to develop the capacity to hold space for both challenging experiences and new possibilities.

Practical Ways to Strengthen Positive Neuroplasticity

Keep a Glimmer Journal

At the end of the day, take a few moments to reflect on:

- Three glimmers you noticed
- How they made you feel
- What you appreciated about them

There is no need to search for extraordinary moments. Small and genuine is enough.

Practice "Three Good Things"

Before going to bed, reflect on:

- What went well today?
- Why did it happen?
- What part did I play?





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This simple practice can help strengthen gratitude, optimism, and emotional well-being over time.

Share Glimmers with Others

Positive experiences grow when they are shared.

Consider telling someone about:

- A moment of gratitude
- A meaningful interaction
- Something beautiful you noticed during your day

Connection increases enjoyment and helps positive experiences linger and deepen.

Notice Everyday Moments

Many of the experiences that nourish us are easy to overlook because they are so familiar.

Pause occasionally and ask yourself:

- What do I appreciate right now?
- What feels nourishing in this moment?
- Where do I notice comfort, safety, ease, or connection?

These small moments of sweetness, nourishment, and safety matter more than we often realize when we intentionally notice them.



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A Gentle Reminder

Healing is not about focusing only on the positive or pushing away difficult emotions. It is about developing the capacity to hold both the challenges and the gifts of life with greater awareness and compassion.

As you move through your days, notice the glimmers that are already present. Pause. Savour them. Let them linger for a few moments longer than usual.

Over time, these small acts of attention can help cultivate the inner resources that enrich life and support resilience, healing, and well-being.

Reflection

What glimmer is present for you right now?

Take a breath.

Pause for a moment.

See if you can allow yourself to receive it fully.