



Using Glimmers to Help Regulate Your Nervous System

Glimmers are small, positive moments that help our nervous system feel safe and regulated. Introduced by Deb Dana in Polyvagal Theory, these everyday experiences—like enjoying warm coffee, hearing a favorite song, or seeing a cute puppy—actively shift us toward calm and presence.

What Are Glimmers?

- Simple Joyful Moments: Everyday experiences that make us feel happy, calm, or safe—like seeing a cute puppy, enjoying warm coffee, or hearing your favorite song.
- Personal and Unique: What feels like a glimmer for one person might not resonate with someone else. They're special because they're unique to each of us.
- Boost for Mental Health: Glimmers help our brain and body feel good, like tiny sparks of joy that light up our day.

Glimmers and the Nervous System

When we experience a glimmer, our nervous system feels safe and relaxed—a state called *ventral regulation*. This makes us feel okay and present in the moment. Noticing glimmers creates a positive cycle, helping us find more such moments and training our nervous system to look for safety alongside potential threats.

Glimmers vs. Triggers

Unlike triggers, which are negative and can make us feel anxious or sad, glimmers bring feelings of happiness and relaxation. They help us balance our emotions by recognizing that good and bad coexist, creating emotional equilibrium rather than ignoring difficult moments.

Therapeutic Value of Glimmers

For people going through tough times, glimmers can serve as beacons of hope, helping them feel more positive and grounded. *Paying attention to glimmers is a form of self-awareness that helps you understand what your system needs to feel regulated.*

Try This Week: Notice one glimmer each day. Write it down or mentally note it. What was it? Why did it feel good? How did your body respond?

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