GLIMMER Practitioner Companion

Supporting your client's independent positive affect practice

IS YOUR PATIENT OR CLIENT TAKING GLIMMER?

This companion summarizes what they are practicing each week, why it matters for recovery, and a few optional questions for your regular sessions. GLIMMER is entirely self-directed: there is nothing additional for you to teach, supervise, or prepare.

WIDENING THE LENS BEYOND THREAT

When people live with persistent symptoms, chronic stress, or anxiety, their attention can become increasingly focused on what's wrong. They monitor symptoms, anticipate setbacks, and scan for danger.

Many therapeutic approaches help people understand and respond differently to these threat patterns. **GLIMMER complements that work by systematically practicing something else: noticing and taking in positive experiences alongside difficulty.**

This matters from a predictive processing perspective. The brain doesn't simply respond to incoming information. It continually interprets what is happening based on past experiences, current sensory input, and expectations about what comes next.

When threat has dominated someone's experience, their expectations may become increasingly shaped by pain, uncertainty, and anticipated danger. Even when neutral, pleasant, or reassuring experiences occur, they may receive relatively little attention.

> **LEARNING FROM A WIDER DATASET**
>
> **GLIMMER helps widen the dataset the brain has available to learn from.**

A moment of relief. A small accomplishment. An interesting conversation. A sense of connection. An ordinary activity that felt okay.

These experiences don't erase pain or uncertainty. But when they are deliberately noticed and savored, they provide additional information that may help broaden learned expectations over time.

The threat information is still there. **The brain now has other experiences to draw from, too.**

HOW GLIMMER COMPLEMENTS YOUR WORK

YOUR WORK MAY ADDRESS	GLIMMER ADDS INDEPENDENT PRACTICE IN
Fear and symptom monitoring	Noticing neutral, pleasant, and reassuring experiences alongside discomfort
Avoidance and diminished confidence	Recognizing strengths, capacity, and small accomplishments
Rumination and hypervigilance	Flexibly directing attention beyond automatic threat scanning
Threatening interpretations and self-criticism	Exploring more balanced meanings and recognizing available support
Isolation and inward-focused attention	Creating opportunities for connection, kindness, and contribution

The goal isn't to replace threat-focused attention with forced positivity. It's to help the brain receive a fuller picture of all the small moments that make a day.

WHY POSITIVE AFFECT MATTERS

Positive affect is not positive thinking or the deliberate suppression of uncomfortable emotions. It refers to genuine experiences such as interest, enjoyment, relief, warmth, curiosity, connection, and appreciation.

Positive emotions can broaden attention and support the development of psychological and behavioral resources. Research on positive affect skills training, including the LARKSPUR trial in adults with fibromyalgia, also provides promising evidence for improvements in emotional responses to positive events and reductions in pain and fatigue.

GLIMMER builds on this research with structured, everyday practices that help participants notice, savor, and reflect on positive experiences.

RESEARCH INFORMING GLIMMER

Fredrickson BL. The Role of Positive Emotions in Positive Psychology: The Broaden-and-Build Theory of Positive Emotions. *American Psychologist.* 2001;56(3):218-226. doi:10.1037/0003-066X.56.3.218

Ong et al. *Journal of Medical Internet Research.* 2024;26:e54678. doi:10.2196/54678

HOW GLIMMER WORKS

GLIMMER is a self-paced, five-week positive affect training program.

Each week introduces a new skill. Participants receive a short morning prompt that guides their attention throughout the day. In the evening, they spend approximately 10 minutes reflecting on their experiences and completing a brief somatic integration practice.

The course supplies the teaching, daily invitations, journaling prompts, and guided audios. Participants can adapt the practice to their available capacity.

Noticing and savoring remain foundational throughout all five weeks, with each week introducing a different lens through which to experience everyday life.

The five weeks are designed as foundational attention training, not a one-time exercise. Participants have lifetime access and are encouraged to repeat the full five-week sequence or revisit individual weeks as often as they find helpful. Repetition gives them ongoing opportunities to strengthen these skills and integrate them into everyday life.

YOUR ROLE AS A PRACTITIONER

You don't need to teach GLIMMER, assign exercises, monitor progress, or review journal entries.

Your client completes GLIMMER independently. Your existing work continues as usual.

You might occasionally acknowledge what they're practicing, ask what they're noticing, or help them recognize how their experiences connect to the recovery work you're already doing together.

The following pages provide a quick overview of each week's focus, its relevance to recovery, and a few optional questions you can naturally incorporate into an existing session.

THE FIVE-WEEK PRACTICE ARC

1	**Noticing & Savoring**	Registering small neutral-to-pleasant moments
2	**Strengths & Progress**	Recognizing capacity and meaningful action
3	**Mindfulness**	Practicing flexible attention
4	**Reappraisal & Gratitude**	Broadening interpretations and recognizing support
5	**Acts of Kindness**	Creating connection and contribution

WEEK 1

Noticing & Savoring

Widening attention beyond threat

WHAT YOUR CLIENT IS PRACTICING

Participants learn to recognize small neutral-to-pleasant experiences as they happen and savor them by staying with the experience a little longer.

They explore sensory pleasure, moments of relief, beauty, curiosity, connection, and personal meaning.

The emphasis is on allowing genuine experiences to register rather than immediately moving past them.

WHY IT MATTERS FOR RECOVERY

When attention is repeatedly drawn toward symptoms and perceived danger, other experiences can fade into the background.

From a predictive processing perspective, this may leave threat-related expectations relatively unchallenged by ordinary experiences of comfort, steadiness, or ease.

Noticing and savoring provide opportunities to register information beyond threat, potentially broadening the experiences that inform future expectations.

IN-SESSION CHECK-IN | QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR CLIENT

- "Have you noticed any moments this week that you might previously have overlooked?"
- "What has it been like to stay with a pleasant or reassuring moment a little longer?"
- "Has anything surprised you about what you're noticing?"

HELPFUL REMINDER

The moment doesn't need to feel wonderful. Neutral, okay, or slightly pleasant is enough.

WEEK 2

Strengths & Progress

Building agency and updating expectations about capacity

WHAT YOUR CLIENT IS PRACTICING

Participants identify strengths they already possess and recognize how those strengths appear in ordinary life.

They also practice choosing small, achievable actions that align with what matters to them, while staying within their available capacity.

The emphasis is on recognizing what is possible, not pushing limits or proving endurance.

WHY IT MATTERS FOR RECOVERY

Persistent symptoms can shape expectations about personal capacity. Someone may begin to anticipate difficulty, failure, or negative consequences even when considering manageable activities.

Recognizing strengths and following through on appropriately sized actions provides concrete experiences that may broaden these expectations.

Rather than focusing exclusively on what symptoms prevent, participants begin collecting experiences of capability, choice, and meaningful engagement.

IN-SESSION CHECK-IN | QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR CLIENT

- "Which strengths have you noticed yourself using this week?"
- "Was there a small action that reminded you of something you're capable of?"
- "What helped make that action possible?"

HELPFUL REMINDER

Agency isn't about doing more. Choosing to rest, adapt an activity, ask for help, or remove a barrier can also reflect strength and self-trust.

WEEK 3

Mindfulness

Practicing flexible attention

WHAT YOUR CLIENT IS PRACTICING

This week introduces brief mindfulness exercises using the breath, senses, neutral bodily sensations, everyday routines, movement, and moments of stress.

Participants practice directing attention intentionally, noticing when it wanders, and gently returning without criticism or urgency.

The aim is attentional flexibility, not perfect focus or constant calm.

WHY IT MATTERS FOR RECOVERY

Repeated symptom monitoring and anticipation of danger can make attention feel increasingly automatic and difficult to redirect.

Mindfulness creates opportunities to notice this pattern and practice attending to other aspects of present experience.

Rather than continually reinforcing the most urgent or threatening signal, participants explore their ability to shift attention toward information that is neutral, steady, or simply relevant to the present moment.

IN-SESSION CHECK-IN | QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR CLIENT

- "Have you become more aware of where your attention goes automatically?"
- "What happens when you notice that and gently choose where to place your attention?"
- "Was there a particular practice that felt accessible to you?"

HELPFUL REMINDER

Attention wandering is expected. Returning is the practice. The goal isn't to eliminate uncomfortable sensations or thoughts.

WEEK 4

Reappraisal & Gratitude

Broadening interpretations and recognizing support

WHAT YOUR CLIENT IS PRACTICING

Participants explore how their brains interpret situations, especially when stress or uncertainty leads to threatening, rigid, or self-critical conclusions.

They practice identifying alternative interpretations that are honest and believable, rather than simply reassuring themselves.

Gratitude practices complement this by helping them notice specific sources of support, comfort, help, and connection.

WHY IT MATTERS FOR RECOVERY

Expectations don't arise only from physical sensations. They are also shaped by the meaning assigned to events and experiences.

When an interpretation repeatedly predicts danger, helplessness, or failure, it may reinforce a narrow set of expectations.

Reappraisal invites consideration of other plausible meanings. Gratitude helps bring existing sources of support into awareness. Together, these practices may strengthen cognitive flexibility and help participants recognize that difficult experiences do not represent the entirety of their circumstances.

IN-SESSION CHECK-IN | QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR CLIENT

- "Have you noticed any situations where your first interpretation wasn't the only possible one?"
- "Were you able to find a different perspective that felt believable without minimizing what was hard?"
- "Have you noticed any sources of support that you might previously have overlooked?"

HELPFUL REMINDER

Reappraisal isn't denial, and gratitude isn't an obligation. The aim is a more complete, balanced interpretation, not a uniformly positive one.

WEEK 5

Acts of Kindness

Expanding experiences of connection and contribution

WHAT YOUR CLIENT IS PRACTICING

Participants explore small, manageable acts of kindness, including practical help, genuine appreciation, quiet gestures of care, and kindness toward their future selves.

They are encouraged to notice the experience of contributing, connecting, or making something easier for themselves or others.

The emphasis remains on authentic, sustainable actions without people-pleasing or overextending.

WHY IT MATTERS FOR RECOVERY

When symptoms and stress demand ongoing attention, people can understandably become absorbed in monitoring, managing, and protecting themselves.

Acts of kindness create opportunities to direct attention outward and experience connection, contribution, and positive social engagement.

These experiences may offer information beyond a threat-dominated perspective: evidence of meaningful relationships, personal influence, and continued participation in life.

IN-SESSION CHECK-IN | QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR CLIENT

- "Was there an act of kindness that felt particularly meaningful this week?"
- "What did you notice about your experience of contributing or connecting?"
- "Did anything surprise you about practicing kindness toward yourself?"

HELPFUL REMINDER

Kindness does not require self-sacrifice. Small, genuine actions within healthy boundaries are enough.

THE BIGGER PICTURE

Over five weeks, GLIMMER gives participants repeated opportunities to experience life through a wider lens.

They practice noticing what feels okay, recognizing what they can do, directing their attention, exploring alternative meanings, and creating moments of connection.

In predictive processing terms, the intention is to make a broader range of lived experiences available to inform learning and expectations.

The brain doesn't have to stop recognizing threat. The invitation is to become better at recognizing what else is true.

These five weeks lay the groundwork for an ongoing practice. With lifetime access, participants can return to the full course or individual skills whenever they wish, allowing repetition and new everyday experiences to continue shaping what they notice and learn from.

Your client practices these skills independently, while continuing whatever therapeutic or medical care is appropriate.

Your awareness, occasional curiosity, and encouragement can help them recognize the relevance of their practice without requiring you to change how you work.

GLIMMER is an evidence-informed educational program designed to complement existing care. Its proposed predictive-processing mechanisms have not been directly established in clinical trials of GLIMMER.

Learn more about GLIMMER, its structure, and the research informing it:
https://www.mindbodyjoy.org/glimmer-for-clinicians