



Savoring

The practice of savoring helps us make the most of a moment, or a micro-moment, of safety and regulation. Savoring is about seeing and celebrating the little things in everyday life. We savor when we recognize an experience in the moment, when we remember a moment and reminisce, and when we anticipate an upcoming experience. When we bring these moments into awareness and spend just a short amount of time actively engaged in attending to them, the benefits are both immediate, as we feel anchored in ventral safety, and longer term, with gains in physical and emotional well-being. Our immune systems are strengthened, we feel more creative, identify more life satisfaction, are more resilient, and have a reduced risk of depression. Rather than singular moments, micro-moments of savoring accumulate. With a savoring practice, they add up and shape our systems toward connection.

Attend, Appreciate, Amplify

Our autonomic nervous systems inherently know the way back home to safety and regulation, and we each develop our own ways to deepen that experience. One of the ways we can connect to our ventral state and anchor there is through the process of savoring. When we savor, we attend, appreciate, and amplify a ventral experience. Savoring is a brief three- step twenty- to thirty-second practice that easily fits into the flow of a day:

1. First, attend. Bring a ventral vagal moment into awareness and stop to notice it.
2. Next, appreciate the moment. Stay with your awareness.

3. Finally, amplify. Hold the moment in focused awareness for twenty to thirty seconds. Feel the fullness of the moment.

Savoring is a practice of twenty to thirty seconds at the most, making it possible to do many times during the course of the day. Experiment with this. Think of a moment, or even a micro-moment, when you felt connected to the energy of your ventral vagal system. Simply be with that experience. Feel the ways your body brings you the ventral vagal energy and the ways the experience comes to life. Spend about twenty seconds there and then come back to the present moment.

You may find it easy to savor your experience for twenty seconds, and in that case, you could extend your appreciation to thirty seconds. Or you may find it challenging and feel a move from amplifying into what's called a dampening experience that happens when thoughts interrupt the process and stop the savoring. We may find ourselves thinking we don't deserve to feel this, it's dangerous to feel good, or something bad will happen if we stop and appreciate the moment. This is not an uncommon experience when we begin to explore ways to attend and appreciate. When this happens, start slowly with five or ten seconds and build toward twenty or thirty. Find the amount of time that supports your ability to attend, appreciate, and amplify. Whenever the practice moves from an experience of deepening to one of dampening, stop. Be gentle, be patient, be persistent. Over time you'll find your capacity to savor will increase.

Share and Deepen

We savor again when we add language to the experience in order to share it with someone. Remember, our nervous system longs for connection, and sharing our savoring story with someone deepens the experience. Find someone who will meet you with an open heart and a readiness to listen. Your savoring comes alive in the retelling, and the person you are sharing with often feels as if they are joining you in the ventral vagal-inspired moment.