



What is one moment from the last week that stands out to you as being memorable?

What is savoring?

Savoring is defined as the use of thoughts and behaviors to increase the intensity, duration, and appreciation of positive experiences and emotions. Through this process, we can more conscientiously internalize meaningful experiences and expand the emotional valence of any associated positive feelings, such as joy, gratitude, hope, awe or love. In order to do so, we must first allow ourselves to feel and recognize these moments as they arise; and by bringing our attention to these moments we can sustain and augment the positive affect. Interestingly, humans are not necessarily practiced in anticipating what will make us happy. We tend to think that big life events will bring us the most joy, but more often, we find joy in many of life’s daily pleasures. Savoring is about appreciating the things in life we may not otherwise take the time to reflect or appreciate – noticing the things that give us meaning as they occur.

There are many different ways to savor. We can savor at different points in time - past, present or future - through reminiscing (reflecting back to rekindle positive feelings), presence (intensifying and prolonging enjoyment in the current moment) and anticipation (looking forward to positive events). The practice of savoring can occur through cognitive processes (thinking and framing positive moments) and experiential processes (internalizing an experience through one’s senses). The subject (what we focus our attention on) can be introspective (our internal experience) or externalized (the world and people surrounding us). These are summarized in the table below.

	Internal Self	External World
Cognitive Reflection	<p>Basking (pride) Being receptive to praise and congratulations</p> <p>Ex. Enjoying the afterglow of winning a soccer game; skillfully performing a surgical procedure</p>	<p>Thanksgiving (gratitude) Experiencing and expressing gratitude</p> <p>Ex. Spending time with a loved one and expressing gratitude for the relationship; appreciating a patient’s progress</p>
Experiential Absorption	<p>Luxuriating (pleasure) Engaging the senses fully</p> <p>Ex. Enjoying a relaxing bath; slowly tasting a piece of chocolate; sipping a glass of fine wine</p>	<p>Marveling (awe) Losing yourself in the wonder of experience</p> <p>Ex. Waking up early to watch the sun rise; exploring the woods and appreciating creatures and plants</p>

Things to Think About

- What emotions are present in your day to day? How are these emotions serving you?
- Do any forms of savoring resonate with you more than others? What types of savoring comes most naturally to you?
- How does it feel to allow yourself to experience positive feelings during periods of hardship or high stress?
- What makes it difficult to savor during this time? In your personal life? Work life?
- In what ways are you already savoring?

Looking forward

What emotions are present? How can you integrate the process of savoring into your daily life? At work? In life beyond?

Exercise

Set up a specific savoring experience for yourself, thinking about the different types and ways of savoring. If it's helpful, use the SMART goal construct to design. After savoring the experience, write a brief reflection noticing your subjective experience while savoring and any other insights you had through the exercise.

Make it SMART	Specific	<i>Add details. Identify who, what, where, how?</i>
	Measurable	<i>How will you quantify whether you're achieving your goal and compare it to baseline?</i>
	Achievable	<i>Set yourself up for success. Is your goal practical and achievable?</i>
	Relevant	<i>How does this fit with your greater goals?</i>
	Time-Specific	<i>Is the timing well-defined?</i>

10 Strategies to Enhance Savoring (Bryant & Veroff, 2007)

1. Share good things with others.
2. Actively build memories and take "mental photographs."
3. Be proud of yourself! Take a moment to congratulate yourself.
4. Use comparison, including downward comparison (remind yourself that things could be worse).
5. Sharpen your sensory perceptions. Slow down in a moment and notice your senses.
6. Be absorbed in the moment and quiet mental chatter.
7. Use your body! Laugh, jump for joy, etc. Shout it from the rooftops. 😊
8. Remind yourself to enjoy the moments – they are fleeting.
9. Count your blessings & acknowledge gratitude.
10. Avoid kill-joy thinking (don't focus on the negative).