



EPISODE NO. 362

# How to Find Your Glimmers

Every day, there are tiny micro-moments that can bring us joy, peace, calm, contentment, and calm down our nervous system. These little micro-moments are called glimmers, and that is what we are searching for on today's episode. So let's dive in.

Welcome to the School of Self-Image, where personal development meets style. Here's your hostess, master life coach, Tonya Leigh.

Hello, dear friends. I just discovered a really important life lesson that I feel I should share with you. Are you ready? I'm telling you, it's life-changing. When you are recording something and you're using a mic, it really helps if you actually turn the switch on so that it picks up your sound.

I kid you not, I started recording and I wasn't paying attention to my screen, so I couldn't see that it was a flat line. And I was just talking away, and I happened to look down and realize there's no sound. So I'm starting over. But you know what I tell my clients all the time? I'm like, "Every moment is a chance to start again, to start over." And life is always teaching me that. So here we go.

I am recording this from New Orleans. I arrived two days ago and we were able to spend Halloween here last night. And what amazing people-watching. The costumes were ridiculous, so fun. And today, I've just been in my creative cave getting ready for SOSI South, which starts tomorrow. In fact, I heard through the grapevine that there

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are women already arriving, and I cannot wait to see them. We have an extraordinary three days planned.

The entire event is around your charmed life. That is the topic that I chose because we are in the South and the South is very charming. But I had a few people actually reach out to me when I announced this event and they said, "You know what? I just don't really jive with this topic. It seems so superficial."

And I thought that was so interesting because when I think of a charmed life, I think of a life that is magical. I think of a life where it appears as if you are existing in a different realm, even though you are of this world. And it is the secret to rising above the fray and protecting your peace and showing up as the most expansive version of you. And I think it's one of the best gifts that you can give, not only your family, but your community and the world at large.

Probably like many of you, I've been thinking a lot about the state of the world and trying to understand my role, trying to dive into who I want to be in the world that we live in today. And more than ever, you all, I want to tap into my love. I want to tap into my strength, and I want to tap into joy because we have to balance things out.

Nature is all about contrast. We have soft and hard, we have dark and light, we have happy and sad. One cannot exist without the other. And as humans, we're going to experience all of the contrast if we allow ourselves to. But when there feels as if there's so much of darkness, so much heaviness, I feel like for me it is my duty to myself and to the people that I love to do everything that I can to protect my own peace so that I can add to the opposite of that equation. Are you all with me?

And so I've been thinking a lot about how to do that because trust me, I may not get on social media and talk about things and share my point of views, because I'm trying to see this from all of humanity and I'm trying to process it for myself. But there's a lot of sadness there, probably for everybody. I sometimes am just so flabbergasted as to how humans can be so cruel to one another.

And one of the things that I've learned through travel and being in different countries around different ethnicities and different religions is that the majority of people all want the same thing. We want to be able to take care of our families and protect them. We want to be happy and healthy. We want to have our freedom.

And so, in saying all of that, for me, I've just been thinking about what I want more of in my life, and it's really what I want more of in the world. And it is those things, the joy, the love, the belonging, the connectedness, the freedom.

So a lot of the work that I've been doing for myself personally, recently, is parasympathetic training, training my parasympathetic system to rule the show

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instead of my sympathetic nervous system. The sympathetic nervous system is the part of us that is fight or flight. It is in a state of panic most of the time.

And what I know for myself, and probably for a lot of you, is if you plug into a world that feeds off of our fear, if you plug into the worst stories that are happening every single day, you will end up in a state of panic, sadness, deep grief. And we can only sustain that for so long on an emotional level and a physical level. Biochemically, we begin to shut our own bodies down. We can make ourselves sick.

And so I share all of this with you because we often talk about, especially in personal development world and therapy, we talk about triggers. What triggers you to overeat? What triggers you to lose your cool? What triggers you to shop? What triggers you to take part in behaviors that you know don't serve you? So we talk about that a lot.

But last year, someone in the School of Self-Image community shared a really interesting concept that I loved, and I discovered that it's from a book called *The Polyvagal Theory in Therapy: Engaging the Rhythm of Regulation* by Deb Dana. And just that title alone will tell you that this term is meant to do what I've been on a quest of doing for myself and helping my clients do, which is regulate your nervous system.

And so the term is glimmers. Have you ever heard of it? It's so cool. It's like the opposite of a trigger. Glimmers can be described as sources of joy, connection, safety, meaning, or purpose in our lives. They are small moments that bring us lightness, joy, and inspiration. And glimmers can help you to go from a panicked fight or flight situation and literally crawl your way up the emotional regulatory ladder, we'll just call it, to a place where you feel calm, safe, and secure.

I love what Deb Dana says about glimmers. She calls them tiny micro moments of joy that allow us to feel calm, and they give us a sense of inner peace. And if you even look at the word glimmer and the definition, it's defined as a faint or wavering light, insinuating that these small bits of joy, these small micro moments of joy are hard to find, and you may miss them. Especially if you're so tuned into the triggers and what you think is going wrong and what's lacking in your life, you'll miss them.

But in reality, they're everywhere. In fact, if you look around you right now, you'll find glimmers everywhere. You just have to look for them. They are so tiny sometimes. So for example, right now, I just heard church bells in the distance, and it's a sound that I actually, now that I'm hearing it, I associate with when I was in Europe for the very first time. I would hear these big church bells, and I just remember just feeling so excited. I loved it. It was so new to me because where I grew up, we didn't have church bells. It was a beautiful sound and I just heard it.

Now, had I not been looking for it, I may have missed it, but when you start to seek out glimmers, you're going to start to notice them everywhere. These small little micro

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moments of joy, of contentment, of calm, of security, of warmth, of coziness, anything that surrounds you, that you notice that brings you comfort, that calms down that sympathetic nervous system is a glimmer.

It might be your favorite song playing in the grocery store. It might be the sound of your kid's laughter. It could be the smell of chocolate chip cookies. And while these moments may seem fleeting, when you begin to look at them and look for them, and they begin to add up and fuse together, they end up creating big piles of joy in your life. Now, one of the things that I've noticed with glimmers since I've been looking for them is that they're both predictable and unpredictable. I can place myself in certain environments where I'm almost guaranteed to find a glimmer, for example, out in nature. If I just go for a walk, I am guaranteed that I'm going to find a glimmer of some sort. And I'm usually delighted when it comes my way because there's so much in nature to be delighted by. So just by going for that walk, I'm opening myself up to some glimmers.

Now, sometimes they come out of nowhere, for example, hearing those church bells. I couldn't plan for that. It just happened. But what I know is that they're always happening. They're always around you. They're always available. When you start looking for them, you're going to start to notice that too, these little micro moments that just settle your nervous system and bring you that little spark of joy, that little feeling of coziness, contentment, and emotion that you're okay, that you're safe in this moment.

What I've also found with glimmers is that it's very similar to the compound effect because glimmers are different than joyful experiences. For me, a joyful experience that I'm always guaranteed to have is when I go to dinner with my friends. It's like an event it, and it's full of joy, it's full of excitement.

But glimmers are so tiny and so small that in the moment it may not seem like a lot, but when you tune into it, these little glimmers do add up. And the result, as I said earlier, is that you start to feel more expansiveness, more joy in your life because you are looking for these little moments that again, calm you down, that make you feel maybe gratitude, that make you feel connected, that make you feel safe.

And so don't get caught up in, "Oh, but Tonya, it's not that big of a deal. It was just a butterfly just flew past me. Yeah, for a moment, I thought it was really cool. But yeah, then I got back to my life." No, keep looking for these glimmers because the effect of them over time, as I just said, is compounding. It's like you are adding up little micro moments of joy that will begin to be more prevalent in your life because you're looking for them.

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Now, I want to be very clear that this isn't all about rainbows and toxic positivity, because a lot of times we can start to look for things like glimmers, you might be hearing this, you're like, "Okay, Tonya said let's look for glimmers so I can not feel bad, so that I can just ignore my negative emotions." No, you can have a negative emotion and experience a glimmer at the same time.

And the glimmer, I think is there to let you know that it's okay to have the negative emotion. Part of life is going to be difficult. Part of life is going to be sad, maybe a little heavy. Different seasons bring different emotions, but the glimmers are always there, in the good times and the bad times. The glimmers are always there, A, to remind you of what you have, of the amazingness around you in life, but also I think to offer you a source of motivation, a source of hope, a source of anchoring when things are hard.

So how does one find more glimmers in their life? Well, I think the first step is to first make it an intention. Decide that you want to discover glimmers in your every day. And we're all in different seasons of our lives, and for some of you listening to this, you may be in a really hard place in your life. And if that is you, I just want to let you know that I'm over here cheering you on.

And I know it's not easy, and sometimes when you're in a hard place, it may feel hopeless and you may feel like, "I can't find anything." What if you just made it an intention to find one glimmer a day? Just one. Sometimes all we need is a tiny little shift that begins to open us up, gives us hope, gets our energy moving in a little bit of a different direction.

I also recommend that you keep a journal of your favorite glimmers so you can go back and you can read about them when you need that encouragement in your life.

Another thing that I started doing that has been really fun, especially for me to go back and look at, is taking pictures of my glimmers and keeping it in a folder on my phone.

So maybe I see the cute little dog in the neighborhood, I would just snap a picture. Maybe it is the flowers that I bought and are on my kitchen table. And so it becomes this visual collection of the things that bring me delight, those little micro moments that when I pay attention to, shift my state of being, calm down my nervous system.

Another way to find your glimmers is to place yourself in your favorite environments, whether that's your favorite park, your favorite restaurant, maybe it's your favorite trail, but go to the places where you know enjoy being. And chances are you're going to find glimmers there, little delights, little micro moments that bring you joy, safety, connection, calm.

I have been keeping a list of my glimmers, and so I thought it would be helpful for me to share some of mine so that you can understand what these little moments are like so that you can begin looking for yours. And maybe we share some of the same

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glimmers. What may be a glimmer for me though, may not be for you. It's important for you to notice when your body has a positive response, even if it's a fleeting one. And chances are, if it's a glimmer, it's going to be a fleeting little jolt of joy that may not stick around forever, but it's a sign. It's a moment that needs to be treasured.

So for me, whenever I laugh like belly laugh with someone, that is a glimmer. When it's really, really cold outside and I have my Barefoot Dreams blanket that I love, and I get on the sofa and I wrap up in that and I turn on the fireplace, that is a glimmer. When I receive an unexpected text from a friend saying something like, "I love you," or, "I miss you," that is such a glimmer. Any animal doing funny animal things makes me so happy. It is a glimmer in my day.

I've noticed that glimmers reside for me in temperatures. So let me give you an example. When we were in Mexico last month, we were so cold, believe it or not. I've never been so cold than at a resort in Mexico, because all of the rooms were freezing. We could not get warm. And so it was that moment when you step out of a room into the heat, it was such a glimmer, delightful. And the opposite is true. If I'm ever in a cold environment outside and it's cold, and then I step into a warm environment, a hot bath, oh my gosh, such a glimmer.

When my favorite song comes on and I'm in the kitchen and I just start dancing, that is definitely a glimmer. Aromas can be glimmers. So for me, it's certain scents. I love amber. I also love the smell of fresh baked goods. It reminds me of my grandmother. And so whenever I smell those types of scents, it's a glimmer.

I had a really special glimmer last week, and it's one of those glimmers that happen, it happens once a year, and it's that first day where you put on a sweater. You all know what I'm talking about. It's officially sweater weather. And you put on that sweater that's been sitting in your closet for a year, and you finally get to wear it again. If you weren't mindful, you would miss that moment, but because I'm very intentional now on finding glimmers, I notice how incredible that felt.

And the same thing goes when the seasons change and I put on that sundress, and I walk out into the sun and realize we are in a new season, and I put my sweaters away and I embrace my summer clothing. These are little moments that a lot of people take for granted, I know I have. But when you are committed to regulating your nervous system and making glimmers a priority, you will begin to notice these little things that are always available, always happening. Don't miss them.

Maybe you're someone who understands your triggers and maybe you even spend a lot of time avoiding them, but you probably know what they are, maybe you talk about them a lot and you have an understanding of them, which is a beautiful thing. Don't

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get me wrong. And what if you spent time seeking out your glimmers, looking for them and understanding them?

When you understand them and you know what glimmers feel like to you and where they most likely are hanging out, you can intentionally begin to place yourself in environments and around people where glimmers are more prevalent. And as you do that, what you're going to notice is that your nervous system starts to calm down. And again, those little glimmers will begin to pile up into huge, huge mounds of joy. Go find your glimmers, my friend, and I will see you on next week's episode. Cheers.

Hey, have you grabbed your free copy of the School of Self-Image Manifesto? If not, what in the world? Head over to [schoolofselfimage.com/manifesto](http://schoolofselfimage.com/manifesto) and get a copy that teaches you how to think and show up in the areas of mindset, style, and surroundings so that you can transform your self-image.