

Experience Awe

Research suggests that regularly feeling awe can have a range of benefits for our physical and mental wellbeing as well as increasing our compassion, generosity and critical thinking ability. Awe experiences are linked with a decrease in markers from chronic inflammation and reduced rumination associated with depression.

Take a short walk in your immediate neighbourhood and observe details you wouldn't normally notice.

Plants pushing through concrete or fences, the textures of a wooden bench, the structural patterns of high-rise buildings. Awe can be found by noticing beautiful details that we might normally miss or not consider.

Awe is often associated with experiences in nature. Mountains, sunsets, dramatic landscapes, interactions with wildlife are awe inspiring experiences, but finding awe in nature doesn't just mean experiencing the dramatic.

A 2020 study showed that participants taking weekly 15-minute awe walks for eight weeks reported less stress and increased emotions like compassion and gratitude.

Other ways to experience awe in nature:



Look at the clouds and try to find patterns.



Observe the night sky. Don't try to identify stars, just fill your senses with the stars overhead. Take time in the month to notice and observe the full moon.



Spend time with the trees.



Watch a starling murmuration at a local wildlife reserve.



Take time to examine a seed and contemplate how such a tiny structure can bring forth a plant with all the complexity of roots, leaves and flowers. If possible, plant some seeds and observe the life cycle.



Notice when the first swallows arrive and contemplate their journey.