

Finding awe

What is Awe?

Awe is the emotional response we have when encountering something so vast, mysterious, or powerful that it challenges our existing understanding of the world. It is more than just liking something; it is a sense of transcendence.

The Impact on Perspective

Research shows that experiencing awe can quiet our inner critic, reduce symptoms of depression, and decrease feelings of isolation. By shifting our focus from our internal distress to the vastness around us, we foster a deeper sense of connection and resilience.

Before completing this worksheet, rate your current sense of connection to the world around you:

Disconnected

Grounded and connected

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

Sources of Awe

Use the checklists below to identify moments of vastness you have encountered recently or could seek out today.

1 Finding Awe in Nature

Nature is one of the most accessible ways to experience physical vastness. What are some ways you can experience the awe of nature?

- The expansive view of a horizon or mountain range
- The intricate, microscopic patterns on a leaf or insect wing
- The rhythmic power of crashing waves or a thunderstorm
- The silence and scale of a forest
- The immense distance of a starry night sky.

Other personal sources: _____

2 Finding Awe in the Arts

Human creativity can evoke a sense of "transcendence" through skill and expression.

- Music:** A crescendo in a symphony or a lyric that perfectly captures an emotion
- Dance:** The physical grace, strength, and synchronized movement of performers
- Film & Acting:** A powerful performance or a visual scene that leaves you breathless
- Visual Art:** Standing before a large-scale painting or a complex sculpture

Other personal sources: _____

3 Finding Awe in People

"Moral Beauty" occurs when we witness extraordinary human character.

- Witnessing an act of profound, selfless kindness toward a stranger
- Observing someone's mastery of a difficult craft or hobby
- Learning about an individual's courage in the face of great adversity
- Seeing a community come together to support one another

Other examples you've witnessed with friends or family: _____

Reflection

Choose one item you checked above and answer the following:

1. Describe the Moment:

What specifically about this experience felt "vast" or beyond your typical daily life?

2. The Shift:

As you focused on this source of awe, did you notice any change in the intensity of your own worries or internal thoughts?

Scientists also say that sharing joy often leads to feelings of happiness. Who are three people in your life you can share your experience of awe with?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

After reflecting on these sources of awe, rate your sense of connection again:

Disconnected

Grounded and connected

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100