



Wonder Series

The Science of Awe



Jazzy January and Fab February

Welcome back to the Wonder Series! As a reminder, we are exploring “awe.” Awe is the feeling we get when something leaves us breathless, inspired, or mystified. There are many ways to help facilitate the feeling of awe. It can help us feel happier, healthier, and more connected!

Seeking Out New Experiences

January and February are the most “wintery” of months. By this time of year the cold weather and ice have settled in. While being cozy and hunkering down during these cold months offers its own sort of joy, sometimes it leads to some serious cabin fever! A great way to beat cabin fever and promote awe is to seek out new experiences. New experiences can expose people to new passions and moments of wonder. The sky is the limit on what these experiences can be and YOU get to choose! So check out the list of ideas below and maybe jot down a few of your own ideas you would like to add to the list. Then get started on your new adventures and awe experiences!



Check out this Winter Activity Book from University of Illinois Extension full of fun activities including an outdoor scavenger hunt: <https://bit.ly/4hbwOBg>

Ideas For New Experiences:

- Try ice skating or other outdoor winter activities like skiing or tubing
- Join Illinois Extension at the Winter Wellness Family Event, Sat Feb 8 from 10 am - 1pm at Watch Tower Lodge, Black Hawk Park, Rock Island.
- Visit a museum, cultural center, or community festival that you have never attended before
- See a new concert or play
- Host a game night with friends and family where everyone brings a game and you can try out new ones
- Read a new book-try a new genre
- Go on a nature hike or winter scavenger hunt
- Try a new food, recipe, or visit a restaurant that is new to you
- Go bird watching and learn how to identify birds and their calls (you can even use an app to help you, such as the Merlin Bird ID app)

**New experiences you want to try?
Jot them down below:**

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References: Allen, S. (2018, September 26). *Eight Reasons Why Awe Makes Your Life Better*. Greater Good Science Center. https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/eight_reasons_why_awe_makes_your_life_better.

Keltner, D., & Haidt, J. (2003). Approaching awe, a moral, spiritual, and aesthetic emotion. *Cognition and Emotion*, 17(2), 297-314. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02699930302297>