

Awe Walk Instructions

Awe is a feeling we have when we are in the presence of vast things that surprise us and that we don't immediately understand. Awe often shifts your attention away from yourself and helps you to appreciate the wonders of the world around you. Awe can be found almost anywhere, but it is most likely to occur in places where you are around something vast, and that feels new and unexpected. These places could include natural settings, like a trail lined with tall trees or a garden with intricately patterned ferns, or urban settings, like a city street lined with skyscrapers. However, the features of where you actually end up experiencing awe may vary. No matter where you choose to take your walk, these general guidelines should increase your opportunities to find awe-inspiring moments.

Go for a walk outside that is at least 15 minutes long. Try to maintain a fairly light to moderate pace, and limit phone usage. During your walk...

1. Tap into your childlike sense of wonder. Young children are in an almost constant state of awe since everything is so new to them. During your walk, try to approach what you see with fresh eyes, imagining that you're seeing it for the first time. Take a moment in each walk to take in the vastness of things, for example in looking at a panoramic view or up close at the detail of a leaf or flower.

2. Go somewhere new. Try to choose a new location. You're more likely to feel awe in a novel environment where the sights and sounds are unexpected and unfamiliar to you. That said, some places never seem to get old, so there's nothing wrong with revisiting your favorite spots if you find that they consistently fill you with awe. The key is to recognize new features of the same old place.

Here are some specific ideas for where to take an awe-inspiring walk.

Natural settings:

- A mountain with panoramic views
- A trail lined with tall trees
- The shore of an ocean, lake, river, or waterfall
- A clear night when you can see the stars
- A place where you can watch a sunset or sunrise

Urban settings:

- The top of a skyscraper... or look up in an area dense with tall buildings
- A historic monument
- A part of your city that you've never explored before
- Botanical gardens or a zoo to see new plant and animal species
- Walk around with no destination in mind and see where it takes you