

Being in awe can expand time and enhance well-being

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whether it's the breathtaking scope of the Grand Canyon, the ethereal beauty of the Aurora Borealis, or the exhilarating view from the top of the Eiffel Tower – at some point in our lives we've all had the feeling of being in a complete and overwhelming sense of awe.

Awe seems to be a universal emotion, but it has been largely neglected by scientists—until now.

Psychological scientists Melanie Rudd and Jennifer Aaker of Stanford University Graduate School of Business and Kathleen Vohs of the University of Minnesota Carlson School of Management devised a way to study this feeling of awe in the laboratory. Across three different experiments, they found that jaw-dropping moments made participants feel like they had more time available and made them more patient, less materialistic, and more willing to volunteer time to help others.

The researchers found that the effects that awe has on decision-making and well-being can be explained by awe's ability to actually change our subjective experience of time by slowing it down. Experiences of awe help to bring us into the present moment which, in turn, adjusts our perception of time, influences our decisions, and makes life feel more satisfying than it would otherwise.

Now that's awesome.

More information: the study, "Awe Expands People's Perception of

"Time, Alters Decision Making, and Enhances Well-Being," will be published in *Psychological Science*, a journal of the Association for Psychological Science.

Provided by Association for Psychological Science

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