

Rediscovering Wonder

Cultivating Awe for Health, Happiness, and Connection

JONAH PAQUETTE

What do you feel when you gaze up at the Milky Way, listen to an incredible piece of music, or witness an act of great courage? This feeling, often complete with goosebumps, is awe—and researchers have discovered that cultivating it can create positive, lasting changes in physical and mental health. With a therapist’s help, clients can tap into awe as a powerful personal resource to promote hope, inspiration, and well-being. In this workshop, you’ll explore:

- Why we experience awe, and the psychological impact of this universal human emotion
- How clients who seek out awe can not only improve emotional, physical, and brain health, but increase compassion, curiosity, and creativity
- Why some people are more disposed to awe than others and how to help all clients cultivate it in ways that help strengthen their connections with self and others
- Practical strategies for building an “awe menu” that’s unique to each client

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Learning Objectives:

1. Assess the psychological impact of the experience of awe as it relates to clinical practice.
2. Demonstrate practical strategies for increasing awe in daily life that can reduce client symptoms.
3. Differentiate between clients who are more disposed or less disposed to awe to inform choice of intervention.
4. Perform strategies for identifying awe-inducing experiences to improve client level of functioning.
5. Apply specific strategies to help clients tap into awe as a powerful personal resource to promote hope, inspiration, and well-being.

Outline:

1. Summarize the psychological impact of the experience of awe as it relates to clinical practice.
 - Describe how awe increases positive emotions while decreasing stress and anxiety
 - How clients can meaningfully increase experiences of awe to reduce psychological symptoms
2. Illustrate practical strategies for increasing awe in daily life that can reduce client symptoms.
 - Review 10 pathways to awe, including nature, inspiration, the arts, and more
 - Discuss how clients can make lifestyle changes to enhance awe in daily life
3. Discriminate between clients who are more disposed or less disposed to awe to inform choice of intervention.
 - Review the literature on how personality and character traits play a role in one's susceptibility to awe
 - Discuss cultural factors that impact awe-related experiences
4. Model strategies for identifying awe-inducing experiences to improve client level of functioning.
 - How to help clients develop strategies to infuse their lives with greater awe
 - Discuss how to bring awe into the therapy room as a valuable tool for change

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