



# WELL-BEING WEEK IN LAW

## ACTIVITY PLANNING GUIDE

# WELL-BEING WEEK IN LAW



**STAY STRONG**  
Physical Well-Being



**ALIGN**  
Spiritual Well-Being



**ENGAGE & GROW**  
Career & Intellectual Well-Being



**CONNECT**  
Social Well-Being



**FEEL WELL**  
Emotional Well-Being

<b>Activity Title:</b>	Awe Walk
<b>Well-Being Dimension:</b>	Spiritual Well-Being
<b>Authors:</b>	Natt Gant, Professor and Associate Dean, Co-Director of Center for Ethical Formation at Regent University School of Law

**Activity Objective:**

To engage professionals in learning how to intentionally foster the experience of awe while walking in nature as a way to enhance spiritual well-being.

**Well-Being Connection (How/Why Does this Work?)**

[Research](#) reflects that during awe-inspiring experiences, we feel not only awe, wonder, and amazement, but also gratitude, love, optimism, compassion, and a stronger connection with others. Such experiences are associated with a host of benefits, including generosity, greater exploration of the physical world, humility, reduced inflammation, and better overall well-being.

### Procedure

#### Spiritual Well-Being Is Part of Holistic Health

The [Report](#) of the National Task Force on Lawyer Well-Being describes spiritual well-being as “[d]eveloping a sense of meaningfulness and purpose in all aspects of life” (p. 9). The experience of meaning and purpose can flow from everyday activities that align with our values and connect us with others or from connecting with the eternal and transcendent.

#### Fostering Spiritual Well-Being Through Awe

Awe-inspiring experiences can connect us to the transcendent. When we experience awe, we feel a sense of [vastness](#)—which is anything experienced as being much larger than ourselves or outside of our ordinary level of experience. We often feel challenged to fully comprehend the experience.

Awe is felt in a wide-variety of circumstances, including, for example, when experiencing natural beauty, observing exceptional ability or talent, witnessing displays of virtue or strength, and perceiving that God or a supernatural entity has become manifest.

### Procedure

In the recent book [Awestruck](#), psychologist Jonah Paquette surveys scientific findings about awe. When we experience awe, such as from a stunning sunset or vast city skyline, we often feel small in comparison. The sense of our ego becomes smaller. Our needs, hopes, and purpose become more integrated with the people and environment surrounding us. Awe blurs the line between our sense of self and the world (Pattabhirama, 2021).

Awe can enhance our well-being by reminding us of our interconnectedness, the eternal splendor in our world, and larger purposes. This process can be particularly impactful for legal professionals whose work often requires intense focus on details and a task-oriented approach to daily life. These work habits may contribute to a loss of a sense of larger purposes and of the eternal and transcendent beauty that surrounds us.

### Experiencing Awe in Nature: Take An Awe Walk

People often feel a sense of awe while being absorbed in natural beauty. An awe walk is a good way to cultivate this experience. Keep in mind that an awe walk is more than simply walking outside to get a “breath of fresh air.” It’s an intentional experience in which you’ll seek to recognize, focus on, and experience the vastness and novelty of the world.

- **Get Ready:** Carve out at least 15 minutes to take an uninterrupted walk. Try to leave your phone behind.
- **Get Walking—In Nature, if Possible:** Awe is easier to experience in nature than in non-natural settings—so walk in nature if you can. But awe also can be experienced in urban settings. For instance, a walk through Midtown Manhattan can trigger awe due to the physical vastness of skyscrapers and architectural features.
- **Look For What’s New:** Awe is best experienced where novelty is joined with physical vastness. So, if possible, walk in a new setting. If you’re on a familiar path, take extra care to notice some new, inspiring details that you may previously have overlooked.
- **Open Your Attention:** During the walk, explore and be open to what inspires awe for you. It may be a beautiful landscape or a pattern of light and shadow. Allow your attention to move from the vast to the small.
- **Reflect:** To make the most of your experience, take time after the walk to reflect on the emotions you felt and what places or things stirred a connection to the eternal. Also consider journaling about your experience. Reflecting on your appreciation of awe can remind you of your connection to your larger purposes and enhance your well-being.

*The description above of the awe walk practice draws from a recent article by [Teja Pattabhiraman](#).*

# WELL-BEING WEEK IN LAW

## ACTIVITY PLANNING GUIDE

3

### Resources

- [Awe Walk](#), Greater Good in Action
- Teja Pattabhiraman (2021). [Six Ways to Incorporate Awe Into Your Daily Life](#). Greater Good Magazine.
- Jonah Paquette (2020). [Awestruck: How Embracing Wonder Can Make You Happier, Healthier, and More Connected](#).
- [Walking Prayer – a Nature Walk with God](#) (September 9, 2018).
- Major Lauren Hodgson, [Take a Prayer Walk To Be with God](#).
- Video: Jane Park (2020). [Finding Awe In The Ordinary](#). Greater Good Magazine.
- Greater Good Magazine (2021). [Scheduling Time To Feel Awe](#) (interview of comedian Chris Duffy who experimented with an Awe Swim rather than a Awe Walk).