

# Awe Experience Scale

Psychology researchers have also given us factors to measure the capacity for wonder revealed as awe emotion and both qualitative and quantitative data collection tools.

In the fall of 2019, I had the pleasure of seeing Psychologist Scott Barry Kaufman on a panel at the NeuroLeadership Institute Summit in New York City. His engaging personality and enthusiasm around the topic of “bridging the gap between thinking and doing” was extraordinary.

Dr. Kaufman, along with his psychologist colleague, David Yaden, have developed a scale to measure the factors within the complex emotion of awe (<https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2018-35661-001>).

Of those six factors of awe listed on the next page, you will note the first two are those we've already covered:

- **Perception of greatness (or vastness)**
- **Need for accommodation**

The other four create a more well-rounded scale of measuring awe in the human life.

This scale is another tool that can be used to measure the emotion within an event experience. Should planners truly intend to create transformational events, awe must be included – and measured.

# Self-Check For Level of Awe

The first step in the scale is to complete the following sentence.

**I experienced awe when I was** \_\_\_\_\_.

Now that you have chosen a single experience of intense awe, please describe your experience in about a paragraph below. While you are writing, please focus as much as possible on the experience itself, rather than what led up to it, what happened afterwards, or your interpretation of the experience. Try to be as descriptive and specific as possible.

A description of my awe experience: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

With the memory of that single experience that you just wrote about in mind, please answer the following questions about how you felt. While you may have had other experiences that are relevant to the following questions, please answer only about the SINGLE experience that you just described in writing.

*(Reprinted here with the permission of Dr. Kaufman. Highly recommend going online to take the free and confidential assessment as it then gives a break down in factors such as vastness, time dilation, self-diminishment, etc. <https://scottbarrykaufman.com/awe-experience-scale>)*

# Six Factors of Awe

## Perception of vastness

- This can either refer to physical vastness, like the Grand Canyon, or perceptual vastness, like the age of the universe.

## Need for accommodation

- This is the feeling that you just can't process it or take it all in — it's too much for your eyes to fully appreciate or for your brain to handle.

## Alterations in time

- This is the sensation that time is slowing, expanding, or standing still, like you could sit in this moment forever.

## Self-diminishment

- It makes you feel smaller, both physically and metaphorically. You feel as though your own concerns and desires don't mean as much in the presence of this much greatness.

## Connectedness

- This is the feeling that everything is one, like you're connected to the world and to every person in it.

## Physical sensations

- Many people freeze in place, get goosebumps and chills, or just stare with their jaws agape.

Understanding the six factors at play, how about a quick self-check into your level of awe experiences?

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Awe Experience Scale	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Moderately Disagree	3 Somewhat Disagree	4 Neutral	5 Somewhat Agree	6 Moderately Agree	7 Strongly Agree
I sensed things momentarily slow down	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I experienced a reduced sense of self	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I had chills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I experienced a sense of oneness with all things	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I felt that I was in the presence of something grand	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I felt that my sense of self was diminished.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I noticed time slowing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I had the sense of being connected to everything	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I felt small compared to everything else	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I perceived vastness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Add up your numbers here for this page and total it here:

# Awe Experience Scale

	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Moderately Disagree	3 Somewhat Disagree	4 Neutral	5 Somewhat Agree	6 Moderately Agree	7 Strongly Agree
I felt challenged to understand the experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I felt my sense of self shrink	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I felt closely connected to humanity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I gasped	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I felt my sense of self become somehow smaller	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I had a sense of complete connectedness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I struggled to take in all that I was experiencing at once	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I felt my eyes widen	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I experienced something greater than myself	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I found it hard to comprehend the experience in full	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Add up your numbers here for this page and total it here:

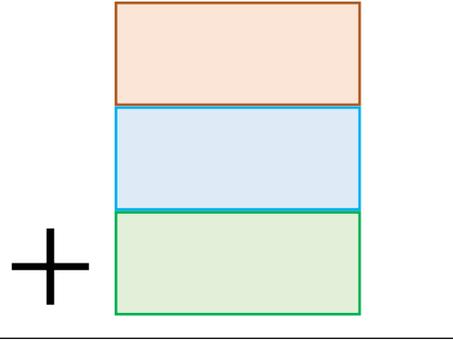
Awe Experience Scale	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Moderately Disagree	3 Somewhat Disagree	4 Neutral	5 Somewhat Agree	6 Moderately Agree	7 Strongly Agree
I perceived something that was much larger than me	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I felt my sense of time change	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I felt my jaw drop	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I felt challenged to mentally process what I was experiencing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I had the sense that moment was lasting longer than usual	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I felt in the presence of greatness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I felt a sense of communion with all living things	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I had goosebumps	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I experienced the passage of time differently	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I tried to understand the magnitude of what I was experiencing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Add up your numbers here for this page and total it here:

# Awe Experience Scale

What was your total score?

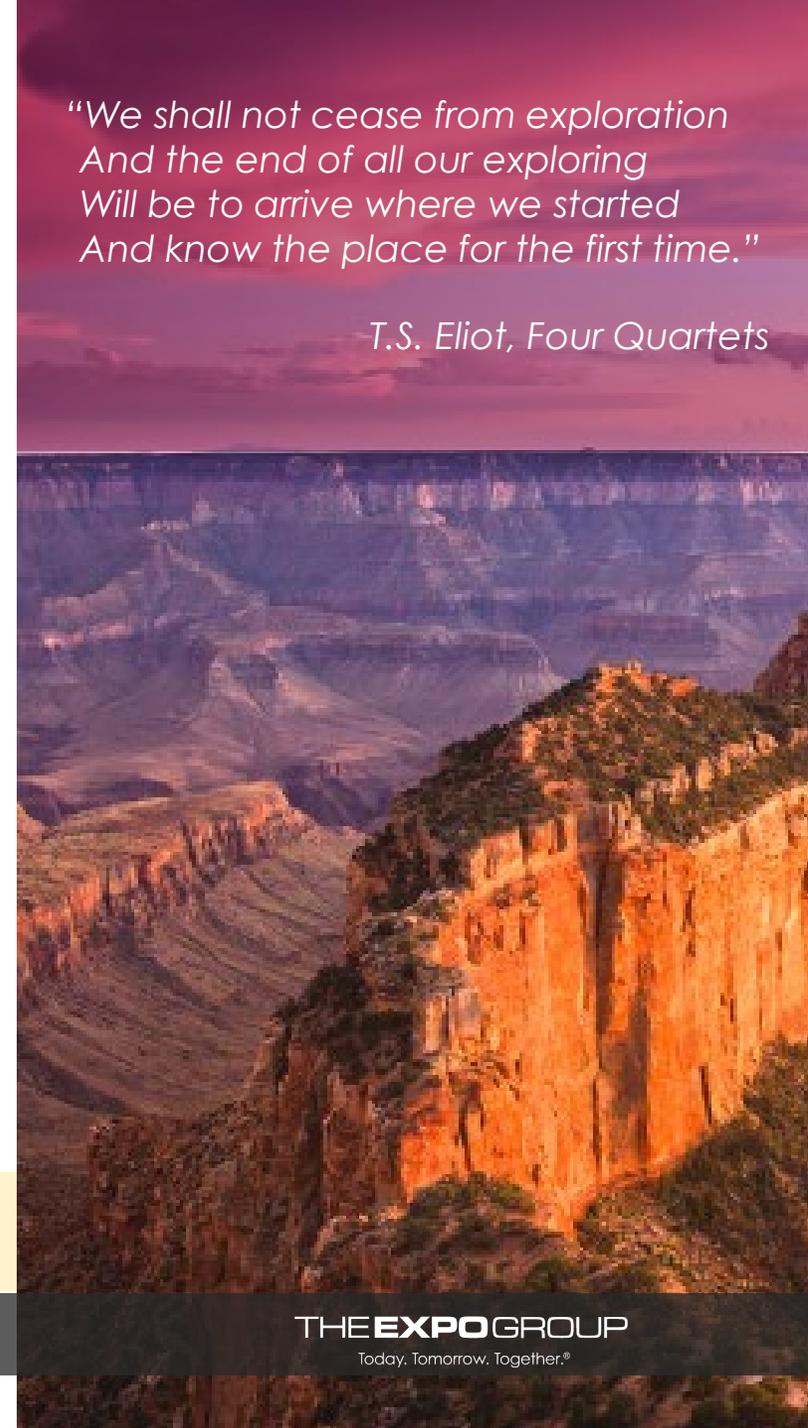
The higher the number, the more awe inspiring that experience was.



This is another tool that can be used to measure the emotion within an event experience. Should planners truly intend to create transformational events, awe must be included -- and measured.

*"We shall not cease from exploration  
And the end of all our exploring  
Will be to arrive where we started  
And know the place for the first time."*

*T.S. Eliot, Four Quartets*



Discover more about the transformative power of awe at [theexpogroup.com/wiredforwonder](https://theexpogroup.com/wiredforwonder)