



A REVIEW ON ELEVATING EXPERIENCES

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WHY A REVIEW OF ELEVATING EXPERIENCES?

- ✘ Moral elevation, awe, inspiration cohere on one factor
- ✘ Cross pollination-integrate literatures (moral elevation, awe, inspiration, peak experiences, aesthetic chills)
- ✘ Definitions, methodologies, correlates, consequences

WHY STUDY ELEVATING EXPERIENCES?

- ✘ Personal well-being
- ✘ Benefits beyond the self
- ✘ Transformative effects
- ✘ Differentiation of positive experiences

MORAL ELEVATION

✦ Conceptualization

- + response to witnessing others display virtuous behaviour
- + Affective (uplifted), motivational (prosocial), physiological component (e.g. warmth in chest, lump in throat)



AWE

× Conceptualization

- + Intense emotional response to perceptually vast stimuli that overwhelm current mental structures
- + Feelings of pleasure, fear, stimulus-focus, greatness outside the self, feeling small or insignificant, feelings of wonder



Keltner & Haidt, 2003;
Shiota, Keltner & Mossman, 2007

INSPIRATION

✘ Conceptualization

- + Breathing in or infusion of some idea or purpose
- + Evoked, transcendent & motivated
- + Feeling of connection, openness, clarity, energy, creativity



PEAK EXPERIENCES

✘ Conceptualization

- + The most wonderful experiences of a person's life
- + intense ecstasy, joy, wonder & awe, loss of self, time & space, interconnected
- + Transcend ordinary reality, transformed, greater awareness



AESTHETIC CHILLS

- ✘ transient emotional responses caused by a beautiful stimulus (e.g. music, art, nature)
- ✘ distinct from cold or fear (usually pleasant)
- ✘ common cross-cultural experience



Goldstein, 1980

METHODOLOGY

Moral Elevation	Self-report (Elevating experience scale, Haidt's Elevation Scale), video induction (e.g. virtuous behaviour), narratives, reminiscing on past event
Awe	Self-report (awe subscale, Elevating experience scale), video induction (e.g. outer space, Grand Canyon), exposure in real life
Inspiration	Self-report (Inspiration Scale, Elevating experience scale), video induction (e.g. performances), narratives/diary method
Peak Experiences	Qualitative reports (narratives, interviews), Peak Scale
Aesthetic Chills	Self-report (frequency) music induction, video induction (e.g. musical performances)

Algoe & Haidt, 2009, Aquino et al., 2011; Maslow, 1962; Nusbaum & Silvia, 2011, Piff et al., 2015, Shiota et al., 2007; Silvers & Haidt, 2008 ;Thrash & Elliot, 2003; Thrash et al., 2010

ELICITORS

Moral Elevation	Virtuous behaviour/moral acts
Awe	Art, nature, childbirth, supernatural, powerful people
Inspiration	Role models, nature, God, art/music, creativity
Peak Experiences	Wide range e.g. interpersonal (childbirth, family, sex), nature, aesthetics (art, intense music), supernatural, sports, external achievement, deep relaxation
Aesthetic Chills	Music, movies, inspiration

CORRELATES

Moral Elevation	Openness to experience, extraversion
Awe	Openness to experience, extraversion
Inspiration	Openness to experience, extraversion, absorption, creativity
Peak Experiences	Creativity, spirituality, social interest
Aesthetic Chills	Openness to experience, extraversion

Algoe & Haidt, 2009, Aquino et al., 2011; Goldstein, 1980; Hoffman, 1998; Piff et al., 2015; Silvers & Haidt, 2008 Thrash & Elliot, 2003; Thrash et al., 2010; Maslow, 1962

PHYSIOLOGY

Moral Elevation	Chills, warmth in chest, lump in throat, tears in eyes Increased heart rate, oxytocin (possibly)
Awe	Goosebumps Reduced heart rate, distinct facial expressions
Inspiration	Inhalation
Peak Experiences	Goosebumps, chills
Aesthetic Chills	Goosebumps, shivers, shudder, tingling, piloerection, tears, lump in throat

Algoe & Haidt, 2009, Aquino et al., 2011; Goldstein, 1980,; Hoffman, 1998; Piff et al., 2015; Silvers & Haidt, 2008 Thrash & Elliot, 2003; Thrash et al., 2010; Maslow, 1962

OUTCOMES

Moral Elevation	Prosocial behaviour, affiliation with others, become a better/moral person
Awe	Prosocial behaviour, creativity, cognitive changes, well-being
Inspiration	Creativity, well-being, productivity, motivation
Peak Experiences	Well-being (e.g. PA, meaning)
Aesthetic Chills	Mental awareness, less tension/anxiety

Algoe & Haidt, 2009, Aquino et al., 2011; Goldstein, 1980; Hoffman, 1998; Piff et al., 2015; Romani & Grappi, 2014; Shiota et al., 2007; Thrash & Elliot, 2003; Thrash et al., 2010; Maslow, 1962

COMMONALITIES ACROSS EXPERIENCES

× Feelings

- + Uplifted or transcendent
- + Profound/intense
- + Vitality/energy
- + Moved/touched

× Cognitions

- + Broader perspective
- + Enhanced awareness

× Existential

- × Connectedness (to others or something larger than the self)

DIFFERENCES

- ✘ Moral elevation: moral perception and motivation
- ✘ Awe: vastness, overwhelming stimuli
- ✘ Inspiration: trigger novel ideas, motivation
- ✘ Peak experiences: broad, personal/special
- ✘ Aesthetic Chills: piloerection

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- ✘ Cross-pollination among researchers
- ✘ Factor Analysis
- ✘ Physiology studies
- ✘ Negative effects
- ✘ Long-term effects, Broaden-and-build effects

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