

Feeling Small in the Face of Nature Makes People More Generous

August 13, 2015

Smithsonian:

From the majestic towers of Monument Valley to the stars painted on the ceiling of Grand Central Station, awe-inspiring wonders are all around. Sometimes taking a moment to stop and appreciate something like the Grand Canyon or a clear, starry night can make you feel like a tiny part of a massive universe swirling around. And that sensation of being a small speck might actually make you a kinder, more generous person.

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“Our investigation indicates that awe, although often fleeting and hard to describe, serves a vital social function,” said Paul Piff, an assistant professor of psychology and social behavior at UC Irvine, in a statement. “By diminishing the emphasis on the individual self, awe may encourage people to forgo strict self-interest to improve the welfare of others.”

Read the whole story: [Smithsonian](#)