

Berridge Programs

Find yourself in France.

30 Days of Wonder

Program Curriculum

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

30 Days of Wonder is an experience designed to cultivate awe, creativity, and personal growth. By blending mindfulness, philosophical exploration, and hands-on activities, the program invites participants to reconnect with the present moment, nurture gratitude, and express their unique creativity. The purpose is to inspire a deeper sense of wonder and fulfillment, while fostering meaningful connections with both oneself and the world around us. Through this journey, participants uncover what brings them joy and purpose, contributing to a shared experience of exploration and transformation.

DAILY SCHEDULE

8:30: Breakfast

9:30: Community Hour

11:00: Collective Explorations

12:30: Lunch

1:30: Personal Pathways

4:00: Clubs (Culture, Outdoors or Cooking)

6:00: Dinner

8:00: Contemplative Practice or Evening Activity (Optional)

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

MORNINGS

Community Hour: Contributing and Connecting

Community Hour offers you the chance to engage with the heart of our household, actively contributing to the vibrancy of our shared space. Whether you're chopping vegetables in the kitchen, tending to the garden or organizing the program library, you'll participate in meaningful tasks that support daily life. Choose from a variety of roles that spark your interest, building new skills while fostering connection and collaboration with others. Every job is hands-on, fun, and designed to enrich the community experience.

Collective Explorations: Cultivating Wonder and Living an Awe-Filled Life

Mornings invite you to journey inward and outward, discovering the awe and beauty in both the world around you and within yourself. Through a blend of mindfulness practices, philosophical discussions, creative workshops, and nature immersion, you'll explore what it means to live a life filled with wonder. From understanding the science of Flourishing to exploring meditative practice to engaging in hands-on creative activities, these sessions encourage you to reconnect with the present moment, nurture gratitude, and express your unique perspective. Whether in quiet contemplation or vibrant collaboration, you'll find new ways to experience the extraordinary in the everyday.

Samples of Collective Explorations include:

The Foundations of a Flourishing Life

Dive into the principles of Positive Psychology and discover how cultivating joy, meaning, and engagement can lead to a life filled with wonder. Insights from Martin Seligman and Barbara Fredrickson guide our journey.

The Wisdom of Mindful Living

Engage with Buddhist philosophy and mindfulness practices through Joseph Goldstein's *The Wise Heart* and Jon Kabat-Zinn's teachings on cultivating presence, awakening to the richness of life.

Awakening to the Moment

Start a meditation practice that nurtures awareness and embraces the wonder of each present moment. Guided by Thich Nhat Hanh and Pema Chödrön, this session is about experiencing life with a deeper sense of connection.

Uncovering Your Unique Strengths

Explore the Clifton StrengthsFinder to uncover and celebrate your talents. Reflect on how understanding your strengths can bring clarity and a sense of purpose to your journey of wonder.

Wonder-Filled Nature

Reconnect with the natural world through hiking and camping. Guided by *Planetwalker* by

John Francis, we'll reflect on how the beauty and power of nature spark awe and invite us to live more fully.

The Poetry of Presence

Explore the wonder of Mary Oliver's poetry, diving into her reflections on the beauty of the present moment and how gratitude amplifies our connection to the world around us.

The Practice of Gratitude

Transform your experience of wonder by cultivating gratitude. In this session, explore how gratitude deepens your appreciation for life, using *The Gifts of Imperfection* by Brené Brown and *Gratitude Works!* by Robert Emmons as guides.

Collective Explorations also includes creative activities such as:

Kite Making and Flying

Channel your creativity into a collaborative kite-making workshop, then watch your creations take flight against the stunning backdrop of Normandy's coastline. Experience the awe of seeing your ideas soar in the open sky.

Exquisite Corpse: Collective Imagination

Engage in the playful art and writing game of *Exquisite Corpse*, where collective imagination and unexpected connections spark new creativity. Work together to build a shared masterpiece, leaving room for surprise and wonder.

Connecting Through Story

Delve into the power of storytelling to create connection and inspire awe. Learn techniques for crafting compelling narratives, from personal stories to imaginative tales, that resonate with the heart of the listener.

On the Spot Doc: Capturing Everyday Wonder

Learn how to capture the beauty of the everyday through documentary storytelling. Film and edit spontaneous narratives inspired by your surroundings, creating compelling visual stories that celebrate life's small wonders.

AFTERNOONS

Personal Pathways: A Journey of Passion and Purpose

As a cornerstone of our daily schedule, Personal Pathways offers a sacred space for you to explore your passions, chart your own course, and engage with what truly ignites your joy and inspiration. This time is dedicated to pursuits that feel meaningful and fulfilling—whether creative, physical, or intuitive.

Immerse yourself in creative expression with options like writing, photography, painting, or filmmaking. Mentorship is available in a range of disciplines from resident artists and local experts. Alternatively, connect with nature through outdoor activities like gardening, hiking, or simply spending quiet time in the natural world to replenish your spirit.

For those eager to contribute to the community, internship opportunities allow hands-on involvement in the kitchen, garden, or the daily operations of our 18th-century château. Whether tending to the land, preparing meals, or engaging with others, there are countless ways to immerse yourself in the rhythm of the place.

Personal Pathways culminates in a capstone project, where you'll share your unique journey with the group in any form you choose—whether through a gallery, anthology, slideshow, or any creative expression that feels right. Through this process, you'll uncover what fulfills you, nurturing your personal growth while adding to the shared experience of our vibrant community.

LATE AFTERNOONS

Culture Club

Dive into the essence of France and explore the language, history, and vibrant artistic spirit that make this country so inspiring. From French language basics to the bold expressions of contemporary street artists, this weekly club celebrates France's rich cultural tapestry. Together, we uncover the stories, traditions, and creativity that continue to shape its unique identity.

Outdoor Explorers

Embrace the beauty of the great outdoors and swim, bike, hike, and roam free as we discover the stunning landscapes of Normandy. From beaches to forests, learn to fish, explore hidden trails, and immerse yourself in the natural wonders that make this region unforgettable.

Cooking Club

Step into the kitchen, prepare delicious meals and share the joy of cooking. Learn essential knife skills, master the art of French cuisine, and create everything from freshly baked bread to classic French dishes. Whether you're helping with the evening meal or exploring new culinary techniques, this is a hands-on journey into the flavors and traditions that make French cooking so beloved.

EVENINGS

Contemplative Practice

Explore the foundations of Buddhist philosophy and practice through meditation, mindfulness, and the study of teachings from ancient wisdom to modern interpretations. Integrate mindful movement, light yoga, and nature-based practices to connect deeply with yourself and the world around you.