

**Jones, L. (2020). *Losing Eden: Why Our Minds Need the Wild*. United Kingdom: Allen Lane/Penguin Press. ISBN: 9780141992617. 272 pp.**

Reviewed by Tanya Goyal, Jawaharlal Nehru University, India, [tgoyal7820@gmail.com](mailto:tgoyal7820@gmail.com)  
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With the recent global COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown, there has been a rigorous shift in focus from physical problems to increasing mental health problems, possibly due to environmental degradation—Lucy Jones' book *Losing Eden: Why Our Minds Need the Wild* addresses such a stance. Today, many of us lead "indoor" lifestyles, estranged from the environment more than before. Despite this, nature profoundly influences human language, culture, and conscience. So, 'what happens when we lose our connection to nature?' wonders renowned journalist Lucy Jones in this book. 'Does it mean we are losing a piece of who we are as humans?'

The book is a captivating journey, exploring how modern alienation from the natural world and capitalist profit-based economic structures are causing a global mental health crisis and how we can reintroduce nature into our lives to combat it. From East London's Forest schools to the Svalbard Global Seed Vault via Poland's ages-old woody areas, Californian labs, and the couches of eco-therapists, Jones transports us to the forefront of human biology, neuroscience, psychology, sociology of public health, and ecology to uncover novel perspectives on our deteriorating relationship with the natural world.

The book is urgent in its message while being inspirational, indicating that we should preserve ourselves and the living planet from an ecologically calamitous future. It has simple language with poetic quotes and interdisciplinary, evidence-based, thoroughly researched statements of various scientists and academicians embedded to capture the attention of a wide range of audiences- from a 20-year-old environmental activist hungry for knowledge to a 41-year-old sociologist researching the collective awareness of environmental issues, and anyone for whom Planet Earth and its ecology are dearest of homes.

Jones has divided the book into six parts, each named after a part of the tree's life span—from just a sown seed to maturation and eventually decay. For instance, the first part is named "seedling," and the last is called "snag." The most basic idea found is that the lack of engagement and connection with nature has triggered a global mental health crisis. This is a vicious loop that exacerbates mental health issues arising from a world that is far more desolate.

Jones notes that we are genetically predisposed to connect with the natural world. She cites biologist E.O. Wilson's biophilia hypothesis, which states that it is also coded in human DNA. Furthermore, bonding with nature during early life is essential for physical and mental growth. Jones asks readers to think about this: in the UK, three out of four children spend less time outside than prisoners now, who, oddly, are mandated by the UN to exercise for at least an hour daily (Jones, 2020).

She found that nature's multi-sensory stimulation restores our mind, nervous system, and immune system by increasing the number of natural killer cells. This lowers the risks of depression, anxiety, and even cancer and can be a supplementary treatment for severe mental illnesses like psychosis and schizophrenia. Moreover, we can see such instances in many cultures, such as the Japanese practice of *shinrin-yoku* (forest bathing). Thus, for her, people in modern societies need a connection with the natural world to flourish.

Jones further argues that time spent in nature often falls on socioeconomic lines, too; people from low socioeconomic backgrounds and racial and ethnic minority groups have less

access to natural areas. Vulnerable populations are more exposed to pollution and toxic chemicals. She cites Professor Rich Mitchell of Glasgow University here, who proposes the "epigenesis" theory, which holds that greener areas could close the health disparity between the rich and the poor and promote social equality. According to her, this is a societal shift toward economic redistribution and community-oriented design to address wealth inequality and restore the human-nature relationship, as current democratic support and public funding for such endeavors must be improved.

Because humans are committing acts of ecological destruction, the Earth is now experiencing a sixth mass extinction, with the global wildlife population falling by more than two-thirds as of 2020. This "biological annihilation," as Stanford University biologists worded in a 2017 study, "will have negative cascading consequences on ecosystem functioning and services vital to sustaining civilization," as Jones cites in her book. She extends our language also and limits our ability to appreciate nature's wonders. Our vocabulary for the natural world implies a relationship between the owner and property. A better way of thinking, writing, and talking about nature can reorient us towards our natural biophilia. Further, new perspectives can offer more nuance to how we think about nature; fortunately, this shift is beginning to happen through public demonstrations and activism.

Lastly, Jones notes that we need to modify how we plan our urban cities, pass laws, and consider our health if we want to see genuine, long-lasting progress. In the words of scientists, there is little time left. Therefore, we must regard ourselves as a component of the greater ecology more significant ecology component than its conquerors.

Overall, the book ultimately asks- is nature good for humankind? This is not surprising, especially in the era of hot debates over global warming. It might seem that the book is an unusual mixture of daydreaming with broad-brushed scientific evidence (leaving out neo-ecological paradigms relevant to social inquiry), making it an ambitious project whose disparate tones may only sometimes gel.

Nevertheless, Jones writes movingly about her recovery from addiction through nature as a part. This autobiographical and poetic narrative carries readers along her path, offering jaw-dropping facts. Eden is still alive; the concrete mixtures are still standing by.

Jones' thesis realizes that human ignorance or antagonism to nature is on its way back. It describes how nation-states are moving away from investing in public health. The entire system that looks at diseases and disorders as a profitable market is being undermined indirectly in the book; the conditions of the Anthropocene are proved to be causing significant distress brought on not just through disconnection with nature but also through low awareness of the current environmental chaos. Jones does not profess that nature is a 'cure of all' but instead explains how it has the obligation (if it remains preserved) to make us and the planet live sustainably. Looking to the future, she offers many ideas for how societies and individuals can change their attitudes and behaviors, leaving the readers motivated.