

Chapter 14

Role and Importance of Nature-Based Health Tourism in the Himalayan Region: With Special Reference to Different Natural Health Techniques

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ABSTRACT

Himalayas are a multifaceted site of subjective, global, and metaphysical importance that are responsible in maintaining a form of tourism that satisfies the person's main motive for maintaining and strengthening the physical, spiritual, emotional, and psychological health. There are numerous opportunities that are availed in contrast with natural resources available in the Himalayan region that will help in boosting natural healing procedures and foster physical and psychic well-being of the tourists. In the circumstances of this fast-paced urbanisation, the Himalayas are the only option to get nature therapy and able to enjoy their close connection with it. Human-nature relationships have always been considered very important. So, theory of wellness in the Himalayas is supported by the research with the fact that nature has a great impact on different facets of person's physical, psychological, social, and spiritual life. This chapter seeks to shed light on the region's potential as a global wellness destination.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Nature

Secrets of being healthy are hidden in the lap of nature. "Nature" can refer to the phenomena of the physical world, and also to life in general. Human health and well-being depend on the natural environ-

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3693-0823-3.ch014

ment, which is the source of clean air, water, healthy soils and food. In ancient times, human beings lived close to nature and its resources and took advantages of nature's bounty. To create a balance between physical and mental health of a person, there is a need to improve one's own lifestyle and daily routine. For which nature is the ultimate source of improving a lifestyle that helps us in moving according to the laws of nature. Nature offers us not only the physical benefits of fresh air, exercise, and nourishing food but also serves as a sanctuary for our mental and emotional well-being. In the embrace of nature's beauty, stress subsides, and a sense of peace envelops the soul. The soothing rustle of leaves, the scent of blooming flowers, and the tranquil vistas of mountains or seascapes provide respite from the frenetic pace of modern life. Recent decades have also shown that how man's increasing alienation from his natural environment can have a diametric effect on health and well being. These high peaked majestic mountains that stands erect, gushing waterfalls, snow capped areas, blooming flowers, and lavishing greenery on the earth has created an ecosystem that sustains everyone's life around themselves. No one can live without their merciness.

1.2 Health

Health is the invaluable treasure of man, on which happiness, prosperity and activities of a man depends. According to W.H.O, "Health is defined as the state of Physical, Mental, Social and Spiritual well being of a person". Health is not a creative activity, it encourages and restores people. Health is a multifaceted concept that encompasses not only the absence of disease but also the physical, mental, and social well-being of an individual. It is a state of dynamic equilibrium where the body's systems function optimally, the mind is resilient and balanced, and social interactions contribute positively to one's overall quality of life. Achieving and maintaining good health is a lifelong journey that involves a combination of factors, including nutrition, exercise, rest, stress management, and access to healthcare. It is not merely the absence of illness but the presence of vitality, energy, and a sense of fulfillment in daily living. Health is a fundamental asset that empowers individuals to pursue their dreams, engage in meaningful activities, and enjoy the richness of life. It is a precious resource that deserves our attention, care, and investment, as it forms the foundation upon which we build our futures.

1.3 Nature and Health

"When we protect nature, we are protecting our lives. If there was never nature, there would never be life."

All life on earth is connected like a chain. The need for restoration through nature has a long history, originating from ancient Chinese healers and Greek philosophers, and the life belief that humans can improve their body and mind in natural environments repeatedly appears throughout human history. (Selhub E.M., Logan A.C. **Your Brain on Nature: The Science of Nature's Influence on your Health, Happiness and Vitality. John Wiley & Sons; Hoboken, NJ,USA:2012.p.12**). Researchers have identified from over the last 20 years that the benefits to human health and wellness that attributed them to re-connect with physical activity in natural environment. Health and Science experts have determined that deepening our connection to nature is extremely important for boosting our overall health, mood and mental clarity as it gives time to recharge, soak up some sun, and restore one's energy. Human body which comprises of five elements of earth i.e. Earth (Prithvi), Water (Jal), Fire (Agni), Air (Vayu), Ether(Aakash)and therefore, man can survive only by the association of the elements of nature. In fact,

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