

Healing Spaces: The Science of Place and Well-Being

Esther M. Sternberg



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Does the world make you sick? If the distractions and distortions around you, the jarring colors and sounds, could shake up the healing chemistry of your mind, might your surroundings also have the power to heal you? This is the question **Esther Sternberg** explores in *Healing Spaces*, a look at the marvelously rich nexus of mind and body, perception and place.

Sternberg immerses us in the discoveries that have revealed a complicated working relationship between the senses, the emotions, and the immune system. First among these is the story of the researcher who, in the 1980s, found that hospital patients with a view of nature healed faster than those without. How could a pleasant view speed healing? The author pursues this question through a series of places and situations that explore the neurobiology of the senses. The book shows how a Disney theme park or a Frank Gehry concert hall, a labyrinth or a garden can trigger or reduce stress, induce anxiety, or instill peace.

If our senses can lead us to a "place of healing," it is no surprise that our place in nature is of critical importance in Sternberg's account. The health of the environment is closely linked to personal health. The discoveries this book describes point to possibilities for designing hospitals, communities, and neighborhoods that promote healing and health for all.



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