

Tsugumi Tsuda #21

Kokusai Communication Essay Type 1

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Nature is a Doctor; Natural Medicine and Remedies

These days, people stay at home all the time. COVID-19 (a new coronavirus) has been sweeping the world since 2019. To combat the infection, people were urged to wear masks, wash their hands frequently, stay away from people, and go out less. Stores, theaters, amusement parks, and schools were closed, and people disappeared from cities around the world. People's minds deteriorate due to prolonged confinement. However, the extent of this depends on five factors: the level of trust, policies, and behaviour of the government; the characteristics of the individual and the national character; the physical environment of the home and the state of the family; the state of the job and the workplace; and the local socioeconomic environment, among them, I focused on the "physical environment and the state of the family" at home. As result of COVID-19 people are stressed, they are in their house and alone or sad, But with gardening they can be healed with greenery and the sound of water to improve their psychology.

They say that the majority of previous studies have shown that many people living in isolation with COVID-19 have symptoms of mental distress and confusion. These include emotional disturbance, depression, stress, mood swings, irritability, insomnia, anger, emotional exhaustion, escapist behaviour and violence. When it comes to the family, children are often the most common victims of violence, and there are many cases of abuse. In addition to interpersonal violence, addiction to alcohol, tobacco, drugs, sweets and other substances is a cause for concern in many parts of the world. In the United States, in the third week of last month, sales of alcoholic beverages increased by 55%, especially gin, tequila and cocktail drinks, which have a high alcohol content, by 75% (Nielsen). Children have also been affected by the closure of parks, swimming pools and other facilities for play and exercise, as well as school closures, resulting in reduced physical and academic

fitness and fewer opportunities to communicate with people outside the family. This is why Yoshifumi Kawasaki suggests that parents and children use their own gardens to have fun together. (Niwa-arekore#15, YouTube) For example, tending the lawn, planting vegetables and fruits, having a barbecue, making a small pond, playing in the water with a pool and water guns. It is good for families to have fun together and for parents and children to spend time together. Listening to the sound of water and the greenery of plants in the garden can help to prevent and relieve symptoms of mental distress and confusion, and addictions to alcohol, cigarettes, drugs and sweets. The more time spent with children, the less likely they are to be abused, and the more chance they have of experiencing nature and relieving stress. Therefore, now is the time for people to get out into their own gardens, instead of being confined to their homes.

"Nature experience is important for children" Somehow, many people think so. So what exactly does a natural experience have on a child? First of all, it promotes mental health. There are many studies showing that spending time in nature relieves stress in adults. But what about children? According to a University of Colorado study, the school's premises are exposed to nature, such as trees and flowers, which alleviates children's stress and lack of concentration. There are also many studies showing that nature experiences improve depression and anxiety, which are said to be on the rise these days. Second, creativity is cultivated. According to a University of Utah study, subjects increased their creativity test scores by 50 percent when they spent four days in nature away from electronics. Third, it promotes physical health. Clear air relieves asthma in children, and looking at distant mountains and the horizon is said to prevent vision loss. According to a study by the University of Tennessee, children play more actively in playgrounds where natural materials such as logs are used and where they can come into contact with nature such as trees and flowers. In addition, Maiko Nagaoka says that children's lack of exercise has become a serious problem these days. Touching nature can also help solve the lack of exercise. There is also such a study by Coventry University in the United Kingdom. This is an experiment for 9-10 year olds. Have one group show a video of the forest landscape and the other group cycle indoors for 15 minutes without

visual stimulation. Then, it is said that the child who exercised while looking at the natural scenery showed a healthier exercise effect such as low blood pressure. Even just experiencing nature virtually is effective.

As a specific action to relieve the stress of gardening, weeding with bare hands is possible. Why do you feel calm when you mess with the soil? The reason is that there are so many bacteria in the soil. Research has shown that some Serotonin is known to motivate people and at the same time suppress anxiety. Gardeners can increase serotonin by digging up or touching the soil and inhaling the bacteria of these bacteria have the ability to increase serotonin, one of the neurotransmitters in the brain. Some bacteria in the soil are known to have anti-inflammatory, immunomodulatory, anti-stress, and antidepressant effects, and the closer you live to the soil, the less likely you are to become depressed. A wide variety of bacteria and fungi found in soil and dust from farm animals have been shown to be effective in reducing asthma. (Dr. KEKITANI, 2019) People with chronic respiratory illnesses, including asthma, and smokers are generally said to be susceptible to the virus. In particular, if you are infected with the COVID-19, there is a risk of serious illness. (Kaoru Kikuchi, 2016) Therefore, we should come into contact with the soil and nature to strengthen our immunity and counter the coronavirus. (Hajime Kurosawa, NHK for school, 2020)

In conclusion, gardening can be healed by the sounds of greenery and water, and can relieve people's stress and mental fatigue caused by COVID-19. In addition, the bacteria contained in the soil, plants, and water that we come into contact with when gardening have a positive effect not only on mental health but also on physical health. Exposing our bodies to bacteria and sunlight enhances our immunity and protects us from pathogens such as coronavirus. With this research I hope, people will be more interested in their unmaintained gardens or balconies, touch the soil and grow plants. I believe that the more people are physically and mentally healthy, the sooner COVID-19 will end.

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