



Healing Spaces: The Science of Place and Well-Being

By 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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Healing Spaces: The Science of Place and Well-Being By Esther M. Sternberg Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Even the ancients understood that some places had healing powers. But in the late 20th century, scientists began to study how space affects both mental and physical health for good and ill. NIH researcher Sternberg (*The Balance Within*) thoroughly chronicles research on the neural pathways that connect our sensory perception of our environment with our ability to heal. Why, for instance, do hospital patients whose window looks out on a grove of trees require less pain medication than patients looking out on a brick wall?

Sternberg also examines how incorporating light and nature into our cities and buildings can promote health and reduce stress, and how this concept is influencing urban design and the layout of hospitals. Finally, Sternberg counsels individuals to find that place in the world that invites and promotes healing and reduces stress (for her, it is a garden of her youth). The conclusions—e.g., that noise induces stress, which can impede healing—seem intuitive and well known, but readers interested in neuroscience will learn much about the research on why this is the case. (*May*)

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Review

Most of us explain what other people do in terms of their individual abilities, motives, and personality traits, even when their behavior is due primarily to situational forces. This important and beautifully written book shows that contemporary medicine has made the same fundamental error about healing, and shows how powerful situations and spaces can be in moving people from illness to health. (John Cacioppo, author of *Loneliness: Human Nature and the Need for Social Connection*)

This engaging book?conversational in tone, informative in content?is full of insight on collective healing and well-being. Esther Sternberg reveals the power of both natural places and architecture to elevate and enrich human experience and health. Enjoy it, and benefit from reading it! (Norman L. Koonce, former CEO, American Institute of Architects)

A vividly written book about a humanly important issue: the ways in which the spaces we literally inhabit?whether they be hospital rooms or spacious outdoor vistas?are not just backdrops to our dramas of health and illness, but actually have an impact on the outcomes of those dramas. Mixing accessible science with elegant 'you are there' journeys of exploration, Sternberg has written a book that pushes the boundary of mind-body science in ways that patients and their caregivers alike will appreciate. (Anne Harrington, author of *The Cure Within: A History of Mind-Body Medicine*)

Esther Sternberg is a rare writer?a physician who healed herself by going back to ancient truths known by the Greeks, and proving them. With her scientific expertise and crystal clear prose, she illuminates how intimately the brain and the immune system talk to each other, and how we can use place and space, sunlight and music, to reboot our brains and move from illness to health. (Gail Sheehy, author of *Passages*)

Even the ancients understood that some places had healing powers. But in the late 20th century, scientists began to study how space affects both mental and physical health for good and ill. NIH researcher Sternberg thoroughly chronicles research on the neural pathways that connect our sensory perception of our environment with our ability to heal... The conclusions?e.g., that noise induces stress, which can impede healing?seem intuitive and well known, but readers interested in neuroscience will learn much about the research on why this is the case. (*Publishers Weekly* 2009-03-16)

What Sternberg does so skillfully is to stitch together an explanation as to how so many of the things we intuitively find relaxing, like yoga, or sitting by the sea, or in a bright airy room, affect how quickly we heal. She provides the science to back it up and explains it so engagingly that it's hard to resist sharing her conviction. (Linda Geddes *New Scientist* 2009-05-09)

Healing Spaces [is] an exploration of environmental influences over the brain, the body and the course of mental and physical disease... Anyone who has ever felt peace descend in lovely surroundings will find a few seeds of explanation in her book. (Abigail Zuger, M.D. *New York Times* 2009-06-30)

In this fascinating book, physician Esther M. Sternberg explores the intersection of architecture and medicine; the studies and conferences (primarily through the Academy of Neuroscience for Architecture) and vast body of literature that reveals the extent to which our external environment plays a role in healing... Sternberg's findings are fascinating, some strange, some pure common sense?thought-provoking for both individuals and institutions. (Susan Salter Reynolds *Los Angeles Times* 2009-06-28)

After this fascinating, engaging, and challenging read I'll think about the health consequences of where I am in a different way. (Richard Mitchell *The Lancet* 2009-07-04)

Sternberg offers a fascinating study of the complex relationships between health and 'healing places.' ...She makes the work of many pioneers in brain and behavioral research accessible to laypersons even as they rub elbows with such figures as Walt Disney, Frank Gehry, and the Dalai Lama... This is a fine, thoughtful volume. (J. Quinan *Choice* 2010-01-01)

About the Author

Esther M. Sternberg, M.D., author of *The Balance Within: The Science Connecting Health and Emotions*, has done extensive research on brain-immune interactions and the effects of the brain's stress response on health. She is Research Director of the Arizona Center for Integrative Medicine at the University of Arizona, Tucson.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Thomas Murray:

This *Healing Spaces: The Science of Place and Well-Being* book is simply not ordinary book, you have after that it the world is in your hands. The benefit you will get by reading this book is definitely information inside this guide incredible fresh, you will get details which is getting deeper you read a lot of information you will get. This specific *Healing Spaces: The Science of Place and Well-Being* without we recognize teach the one who reading through it become critical in contemplating and analyzing. Don't end up being worry *Healing Spaces: The Science of Place and Well-Being* can bring if you are and not make your case space or bookshelves' grow to be full because you can have it inside your lovely laptop even mobile phone. This *Healing Spaces: The Science of Place and Well-Being* having very good arrangement in word and also layout, so you will not truly feel uninterested in reading.

Douglas Stevens:

As people who live in the particular modest era should be change about what going on or details even knowledge to make these keep up with the era which can be always change and move forward. Some of you

maybe may update themselves by reading through books. It is a good choice for you personally but the problems coming to a person is you don't know which you should start with. This Healing Spaces: The Science of Place and Well-Being is our recommendation to cause you to keep up with the world. Why, because book serves what you want and need in this era.

Laura Lee:

Now a day people who Living in the era everywhere everything reachable by interact with the internet and the resources inside can be true or not demand people to be aware of each details they get. How individuals to be smart in getting any information nowadays? Of course the solution is reading a book. Reading through a book can help people out of this uncertainty Information especially this Healing Spaces: The Science of Place and Well-Being book since this book offers you rich facts and knowledge. Of course the details in this book hundred % guarantees there is no doubt in it you probably know this.

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