

Waterscaping for Psychological Health

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INTRODUCTION

About 70% of the total surface of Earth is covered with water and it is one of the basic necessities of life. Apart from being one of the most important fundamentals of life, it is also closely related with other aspects such as the relaxation of mind through its bubbling and rumbling sound. It is well established that mental health of human beings is greatly influenced by the environment that they are surrounded with and water is said to have a positive effect on minds of human beings as it helps in calming down the minds. This is where waterscaping comes into view.

Waterscape

A waterscape highlights the presence of water in an area or a space. It can be in any form whether it is in the form of ponds, fountains, pools or natural riparian settings such as lakes, streams, waterfalls, wetlands or rivers. These abovementioned water bodies can be enhanced by adding various other features such as water plants, fish or water dials.



Figure 1: Waterscape Designs

Effect of waterscape on human health

Since water spaces help to break the monotony in landscape designs and are proven to be more attractive than areas without water, it has become popular among the landscape architects. Its effect can be described in two ways; a) promoting psychological health benefits through its aesthetic and healing components and b) promoting exercising in waterscape areas.

Therapists are of the beliefs that natural settings such as waterfalls, flowing streams and still ponds are of great supports in treatment of both psychological and physiological ailments in addition to their aesthetic values. Waterscape as a therapeutic landscape has been able to serve the society with more benefits for psychological and

physiological health through the cleansing and purifying abilities of water by enhancing physical fitness, helping in releasing stress and providing relaxing environment.

Relating to the Biophilia Hypothesis, Zhang *et al.*, (2021) gave that fish and birds watching can reduce the pulse rate and hence alleviate anxiety bringing about greater benefits for mental health. The sound of running water has the ability to promote psychological and mental health by reducing noise and enhancing urban soundscape. Noise reduction and enhancing urban soundscapes are two important ways in which nature's sounds promote psychological and mental health. Sound of running water with low decibels are more popular than that of high decibels running water.

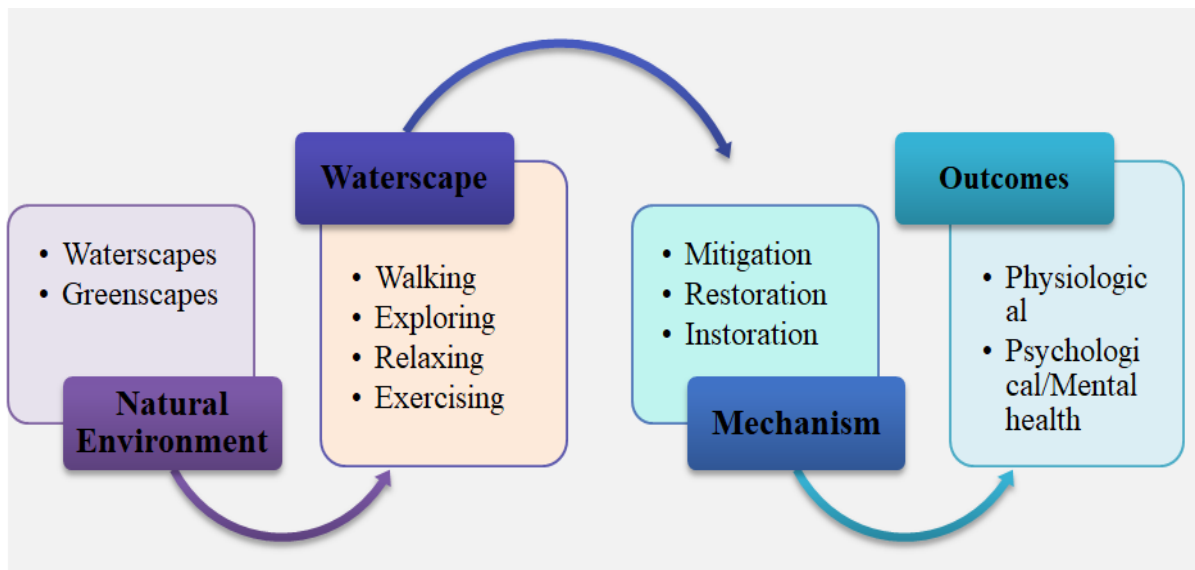


Figure 2: Framework of relationship of natural environment and psychological and mental benefits (Source: Zhang *et al.*, 2021)

CONCLUSION

With the pressure building on each individuals due to the rapid industrialization and urbanization, mental instability and anxiety disorder are becoming major constraints in human health. So, people are more focused on

providing therapeutic treatments through natural settings such green space and water scape. These therapeutic landscapes are important for providing psychological support for mental fitness and wellbeing.



Figure 3: Low rhythmic sound of running water is said to have good effect on human psychological health