

Joy of Nature

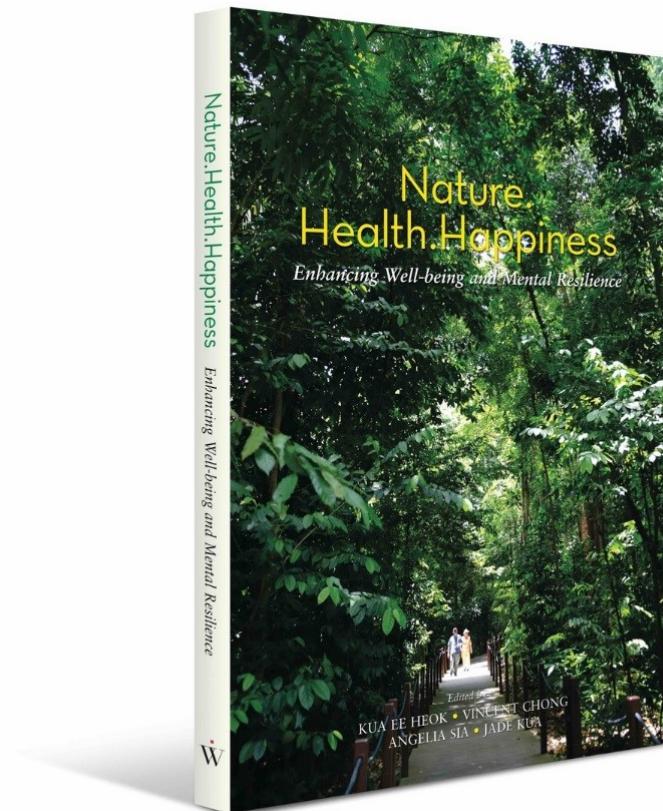
Description

By Kua Ee Heok

“What on earth have we done to our planet?” I often wonder.

The earth’s vital signs are not healthy. The existential threat of deforestation is a factor of global warming, and it also threatens biodiversity. A study to explore how the rainforest enhances our physical, mental and social health was conducted in September 2019. The Nature and Mindful Awareness Study or NaMAS is part of the Age Well Everyday (AWE) programme of the NUS Mind Science Centre. The AWE programme is the translational endeavour of the Jurong Ageing Study, which is the first dementia and depression prevention project in Asia.

NaMAS is a natural progression of our initial research on horticultural therapy, which started 3 years ago. After that research, the National Parks collaborated with NUS Mind Science Centre to initiate the first Therapeutic Garden at HortPark. The hidden agenda of NaMAS was to stir up a sense of concern about the green environment, climate change and the endangered planet. We harbour no grandiosity that NaMAS would change the world, but it could be a small step to impact the lives of many people for a better future.



“This book will change your mind.”

Emeritus Professor Scott Henderson, Australian National University, Canberra

Singapore is one of 2 cities in the world with a rainforest in the city. Mindful walking in the rainforest will engender an interest not just about the green environment, but also the myriad of birds and insects. The sound and scent of the rainforest with fresh air and sunlight filtering through the leaves, ease our tension, restore our energy and enhance our well-being – there’s a profound sense of joy. We fervently hope the NaMAS programme can be introduced to more groups in Singapore and will help us understand, love and treasure the rainforest. It is a truism about our obligation – we never actually own the rainforest, we merely look after it for the next generation.

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