



A Collective Tragedy

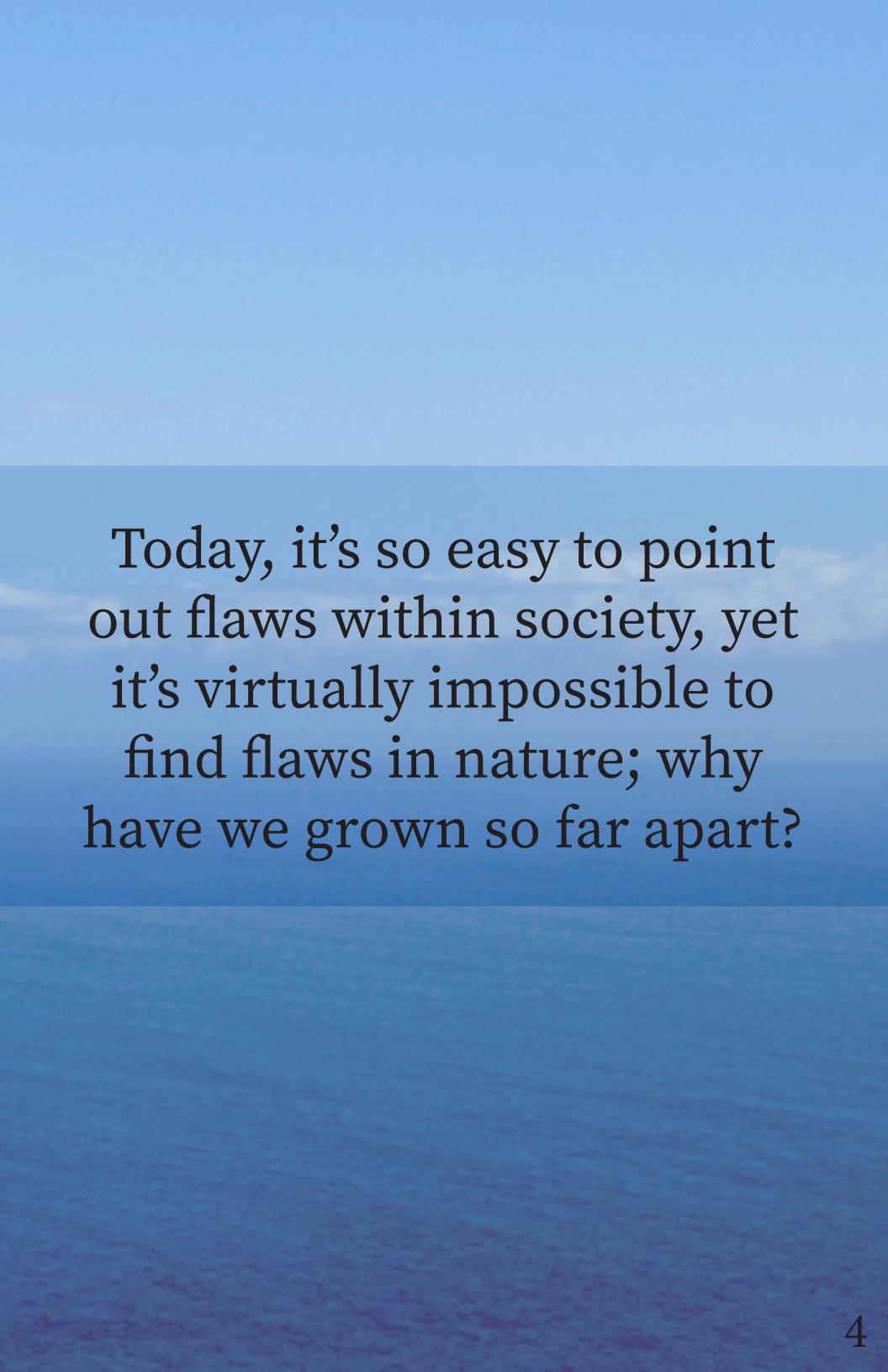
A Collective Tragedy

Blair Potter

We all had the death
of a beloved goldfish;
a collective tragedy.

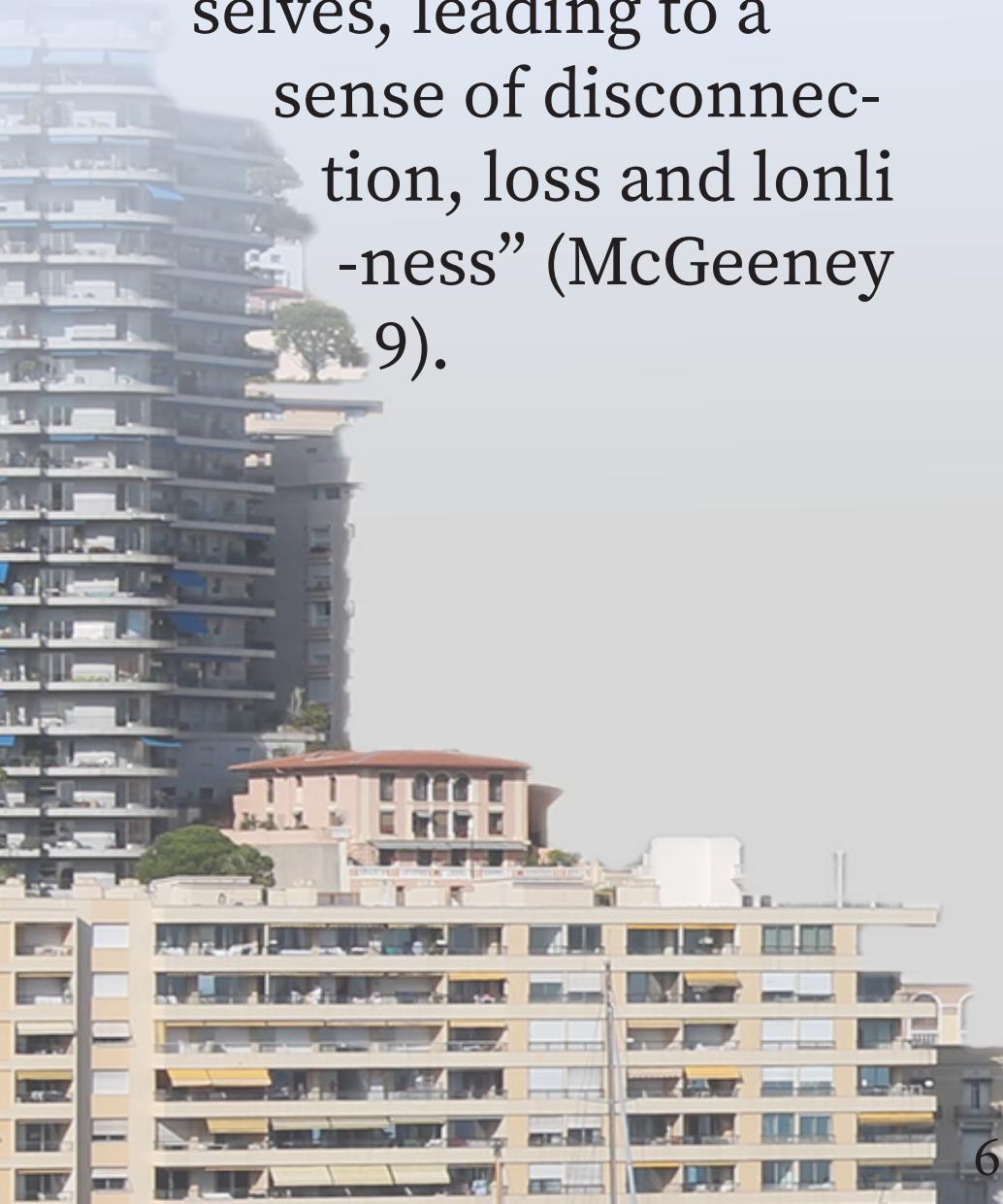


In Western culture and developed countries, we have been victimized by industrialization and technology; a collective tragedy. A collective tragedy because we have been growing increasingly disconnected from a euphoric environment that can be the medicine to almost all discomfort, if you choose to take it.



Today, it's so easy to point out flaws within society, yet it's virtually impossible to find flaws in nature; why have we grown so far apart?

Technological advancements like the steel plow, water-pumping windmills, and the telegraph allowed people to settle. To immerse themselves within the environment that surrounded them. To farm the land and to defend the land because of advances in gun design. However, further advances encouraged people to abandon the farmland for urban life, where they would buy meat from a grocery store (Richardson et al. 605).



“Our separation from nature is no less than a separation from ourselves, leading to a sense of disconnection, loss and loneliness” (McGeeney 9).



E.O. Wilson’s biophilia hypothesis (1984) states how people need nature; we possess an inherent, genetically-based bond with other living organisms, as a result of our evolutionary history; a history where humans viewed themselves in connection to nature and not dominant over it.

The human brain developed in a biocentric world—a world where approaching each living being with awe and humility made life more meaningful (DesJardins). The human brain has learned to adapt overtime. Today, society expects the human brain to continuously adapt to this machine-driven world, yet is anyone taking a moment to consider that the human brain and body may only be able to adapt that much more?

Is anyone acknowledging that increased rates of stress, depression, and obesity are signs that the human brain and body is struggling to continue adapting?

Through our five senses, the essence of nature permeates the soul, oxygenates the body, and revitalizes the human body. This has always been the case, but the twin forces of industrialization and urbanization have clogged this flow; “we are currently witnessing human manufactured change at a pace unprecedented in the history of the human species” (Gullone 294). By allowing these two forces to continue flourishing, we could deprive humankind of an important source of authentic fulfillment and happiness (Joye and De Block 190).





In a study conducted by Eric Windhorst and Allison William to unveil which natural environments different individuals find mental health promoting, all participants noted that one significant reason their natural place was beneficial to their mental health was because of its physical separation from the various stressors in daily life (244-45).

Has the norm of “daily life” evolved to be the separation from natural environments?

Photographs

Taken by Blair Potter

Cover- Moosehead Lake, Maine

Page 2- Aspen, Colorado

Page 4- La Palma, Canary Islands

Page 6- Monte Carlo, Monaco

Page 7- Aspen, CO

Pages 8 and 9- Mount Pico, Pico Island (of the Azores)

Page 11- Aspen, Colorado

Pages 12 and 13- Aspen, Colorado

Page 14- Atlantic Ocean



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