



THE CONVENIENCE PARADOX - WHEN PROGRESS DISTANCES US FROM THE ENVIRONMENT WE DEPEND ON

- Eshita Joseph

USEM, Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University

There was once a time when life truly felt like life, it moved with ease, with no rush whatsoever, and it did not constantly rush from one notification to the next. It was not yet transformed into the mechanical routine we now see, where human beings, almost unconsciously, function like extensions of their own screens, continuously working, scrolling, and reacting within the endless flow of the internet. I often think about the stories my grandmother used to narrate, describing her days as a young farm girl surrounded by animals, fresh homegrown vegetables, open skies, and an environment that demanded physical presence rather than digital attention. Back then, nature was not something people had to plan for or pay to experience; it was simply woven into daily living, which has brought me to another observation of mine, that people in that era were immune to high amount of stress and pressure, whereas in today's generation, stress has become one of the major concerning issues of human life.

What is striking, however, is how dramatically

this reality has shifted. In the present era, many individuals willingly spend significant amounts of money just to briefly recreate what earlier generations lived every single day without effort, having to visit, clean air retreats, farm stays, nature vacations, and wellness escapes have quietly turned into premium experiences. This growing distance between human lifestyles and the natural environment has not only altered our routines but has also begun to reflect in our overall wellbeing. Several health concerns, particularly those linked to chronic stress, mental fatigue, sleep disruption, and declining motivation, are increasingly visible yet often ignored casually dismissed.

I realised the depth of this shift only when I visited my grandmother's hometown in the mountains. Almost unexpectedly, I felt lighter there, calmer, more focused, and strangely more willing to complete even small everyday tasks. The constant mental resistance I had been experiencing in the city seemed to soften on its own. That sense of relaxation was, in many ways, earth-shattering for me, because

until then I had quietly assumed that the problem was personal, However, being in that natural environment made me question a lot of things, It was not merely about individual willpower, but my surroundings played a major role in shaping my energy, my mood, and my willingness all along. Among the many quiet shifts modern living has introduced, this gradual loss of willingness, along with strange mental heaviness that makes even simple tasks feel exhausting, is perhaps the most overlooked. Too often, we blame workload, routine, or personal discipline. Rarely do we consider that our growing distance from healthy natural environments may also be silently contributing. The human body and mind did not evolve under artificial lights or within sealed concrete spaces, they evolved under open skies, in fresh air, and in rhythm with the natural world. Therefore, when life becomes overwhelmingly indoor, screen-bound, and environmentally deprived, it is only natural that our inner systems begin to respond.

This disconnection has not appeared suddenly, nor is it entirely accidental. It has come alongside rising pollution, shrinking green cover, and lifestyles increasingly insulated from nature itself. Step by step, often without noticing, we have drifted away from the ecological surroundings that once helped regulate our stress, restore our focus, and stabilise our energy. The uncomfortable truth, therefore, is that the fatigue and mental strain many individuals experience today may not be purely personal struggles, but quiet reflections of the environments we have collectively altered.

This is by no means or way an argument against technological progress. Rather, it highlights a widening imbalance that is being overlooked. On one side exists the life supported by clean air, natural light, and living greenery, on the other stands a reality dominated by constant digital engagement and declining environmental quality. When this balance tilts too far, the human system, still biologically tuned to nature, inevitably begins to feel the strain.

This is by no means or way an argument against technological progress. Rather, it highlights a widening imbalance that is being overlooked. On one side exists the life supported by clean air, natural light, and living greenery, on the other stands a reality dominated by constant digital engagement and declining environmental quality. When this balance tilts too far, the human system, still biologically tuned to nature, inevitably begins to feel the strain.

