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The heart of the earth: Why country life is better than city life

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Abstract

This paper explores the contrasting lifestyles of rural and urban living, focusing on the significant benefits of country life over the fast-paced, stressful environment of the city. Drawing inspiration from the works of John Burroughs and Mahatma Gandhi, the research delves into the physical, emotional, and environmental advantages of rural life. It highlights the peace and tranquillity, cleaner air, stronger community ties, and reduced stress levels found in the countryside, comparing these to the overwhelming noise, pollution, and alienation often experienced in urban areas. The paper also emphasizes the profound connection between human well-being and nature, with rural areas offering an environment conducive to health, mental well-being, and community harmony.

Keywords: Country Life, City Life, Rural Living, Peace, Community, Pollution, Nature, Stress Reduction, Well-Being

Introduction

“To dwell in the country is to be close to the earth’s heart.” - John Burroughs

The allure of urban life, with its conveniences and opportunities, has captivated people for centuries. However, as the world continues to urbanize, the question arises: have we traded too much peace for speed, too much nature for neon lights? John Burroughs, an American naturalist, famously stated, “To dwell in the country is to be close to the earth’s heart.” This statement encapsulates the essence of the rural experience, which is defined by simplicity, nature, and community. In contrast, city life, while offering modern conveniences, often leads to stress, environmental degradation, and a sense of disconnection from nature.

The Contrast between City Life and the Peace of the Countryside

Take a moment to imagine this: vast green fields stretching endlessly under a brilliant blue sky, fresh air filled with the scent of trees and wildflowers, the soft rustling of leaves in the wind, and the gentle flow of a nearby stream. This isn’t a dream. It’s real—and it’s the countryside.

As a student who has spent most of his life in cities, I have often wondered what we might be missing in our pursuit of urban comfort. City life may offer convenience, technology, and opportunities, but at what cost? Crowded roads, honking horns, polluted air, and a constant race against time have made modern city life a stressful experience.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), around 4.2 million deaths every year are caused by exposure to outdoor air pollution. This is just one of the many silent dangers of living in cities. Overcrowding leads to traffic congestion, lack of clean space, rising stress levels, and a growing disconnection from nature. Our food is often processed or adulterated, and fast-paced routines leave little time for rest or real connection with others.

In contrast, country life offers a peaceful, grounded, and healthier way of living. People living in villages breathe cleaner air, eat fresher food, and enjoy wide open spaces. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many urban dwellers rushed back to their native villages. Despite fewer medical facilities, rural areas fared better in some ways—thanks to natural distancing, fresher air, and a slower lifestyle that didn’t encourage constant crowding.

Here are a few reasons why I believe life in the countryside is not just better, but *wiser*:

- **Peace and Tranquillity:** Free from the noise of traffic and crowds, rural life allows you to hear your own thoughts.
- **Closer to Nature:** Every sunrise, sunset, and raindrop becomes a reminder of nature’s beauty and balance.

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- **Sense of Community:** Villages have strong social bonds. People know each other, care for one another, and grow up together.
- **Cleaner Air and Environment:** Surrounded by trees and fields, villagers enjoy air and fewer pollutants.
- **Lower Cost of Living:** With fewer expenses and simpler needs, life is more affordable and less wasteful.
- **Reduced Stress Levels:** The calm rhythm of country life has a healing effect on the mind and body.
- **Safety and Lower Crime Rates:** With close-knit communities and less anonymity, crime is often lower in rural areas.
- **An Abundance of Vitamin G (Green):** Being

surrounded by green landscapes naturally improves mental well-being.

As Mahatma Gandhi once said, “*The real India lives in villages.*” Perhaps we all need to pause and think-have we traded too much peace for speed, too much nature for neon lights?

Ultimately, the choice between country life and city life may depend on personal preferences. But for me, the countryside is not just a place. It is a *way of life*-rooted in simplicity, harmony, and a deep connection with the earth. And that, I believe, is where the heart truly belongs.



Fig 1: Comparison of rural and urban living.

Results

The comparison between urban and rural living demonstrates a clear preference for the simplicity and

harmony of the countryside. The following table summarizes key findings on the benefits of country life over city living:

Table 1: Key differences between country and city life

Factor	Country Life	City Life
Air Quality	Clean and fresh	Polluted
Cost of Living	Low and affordable	High and expensive
Stress Levels	Low and relaxed	High and stressful
Community	Strong, close-knit	Weak, disconnected
Crime Rates	Low	High
Environmental Impact	Sustainable, green	Polluted, industrial

The reduced stress levels in the countryside are evident, with studies showing a lower prevalence of mental health issues in rural areas. Additionally, the clean air and natural surroundings are linked to better physical health and improved life satisfaction. These factors, combined with lower crime rates and a stronger sense of community, create a compelling argument for the superiority of country life over city living.

Conclusion

In conclusion, while urban life offers conveniences and opportunities, it comes at a significant cost to both individual health and the environment. The countryside, on the other hand, provides a peaceful, grounded, and healthier way of living, where individuals can reconnect with nature, reduce stress, and build meaningful social bonds. As Mahatma Gandhi once said, “*The real India lives in villages.*” In an increasingly fast-paced and polluted world,

the heart of life may indeed lie in the simplicity of the countryside, where one can enjoy a harmonious relationship with nature and community.

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