

Nature, Humanity, and the Good Life: A Philosophical Inquiry into Lifestyle, Ethics, and Ecological Responsibility

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Abstract

The contemporary environmental crisis has brought the relationship between humanity and nature to the centre of philosophical and ethical inquiry. Ecological degradation, driven by industrialization, technological expansion, consumerism, and the unlimited multiplication of human desires, reflects not merely a crisis of natural systems but also a crisis of human values, lifestyles, and conceptions of progress and the good life. This paper examines the human–nature relationship through a philosophical inquiry into humanity’s place within nature, lifestyle, ethics, and ecological responsibility. It explores four major models of this relationship; mastery over nature, stewardship of nature, partnership with nature, and participation in nature and critically analyses the anthropocentric and instrumental worldview that has contributed to the alienation of human beings from the natural world. The paper argues that lifestyle functions as a crucial mediator between humanity and nature, as patterns of consumption, material desire, and everyday practices directly shape ecological conditions. In contrast, simplicity, moderation, self-restraint, and responsible consumption offer important possibilities for ecological sustainability. The paper further examines the ethical significance of stewardship, pluralistic values, intergenerational responsibility, and respect for both human and non-human life. Drawing upon the insights of thinkers such as Francis Bacon, René Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Lynn White Jr., John Passmore, Moltmann, Duane Elgin, Rabindranath Tagore, and Mahatma Gandhi, the study argues that the environmental crisis cannot be resolved through technological solutions alone. A fundamental transformation in human attitudes, values, desires, and ways of living is necessary. Ultimately, the paper contends that the good life should be reimagined not as unlimited consumption and mastery over nature, but as a life of moderation, ethical responsibility, interdependence, and harmonious coexistence with the natural world.

Keywords: Human–Nature Relationship; Good Life; Ecological Ethics; Sustainable Lifestyle; Environmental Responsibility; Human–Nature Harmony.

Introduction:

The contemporary environmental crisis has transformed the relationship between human beings and nature into one of the most urgent philosophical and ethical questions of our time. Climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution, resource depletion, and the rapid destruction of ecological systems reveal the profound consequences of the modern human tendency to treat nature as an object of domination, exploitation, and unlimited consumption. However, the environmental crisis is not merely a crisis of natural resources or technological management; it is also a crisis of human values, lifestyles, attitudes, and conceptions of

progress and well-being. It therefore raises a fundamental philosophical question: What does it mean to live a good life in relation to nature?

This paper examines the human–nature relationship through the interconnected themes of humanity’s place within nature, lifestyle, ethics, and ecological responsibility. It explores the different philosophical models through which human beings have understood nature, including mastery, stewardship, partnership, and participation. The paper critically examines the anthropocentric and instrumental conception of nature associated with modern scientific and technological civilization, while also considering alternative perspectives that emphasize interdependence, harmony, reciprocity, and ecological interconnectedness. The insights of thinkers such as Francis Bacon, René Descartes, Leibniz, Spinoza, Lynn White Jr., John Passmore, Moltmann, and Duane Elgin provide important philosophical foundations for understanding the historical development of the modern human–nature relationship and its contemporary consequences. The paper further argues that lifestyle functions as a crucial mediator between human beings and nature. Patterns of consumption, material desire, technological dependence, and everyday behaviour directly shape ecological conditions. In contrast, simplicity, moderation, self-restraint, and responsible consumption offer possibilities for developing a more sustainable relationship with the natural world. The ethical dimension of this relationship is also examined through the ideas of stewardship, pluralistic value, intergenerational responsibility, and respect for both human and non-human life.

Particular attention is given to the philosophical contributions of Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi, whose ideas offer significant alternatives to the dominant model of modern civilization. Tagore’s emphasis on harmony with nature, simplicity, community, reciprocity, and the ethical use of technology, together with Gandhi’s principles of non-violence, self-restraint, voluntary limitation of wants, and simple living, provides important resources for rethinking ecological responsibility. Ultimately, this paper argues that the good life cannot be defined by unlimited possession, consumption, or mastery over nature. A genuinely good life must be understood through moderation, ethical responsibility, interdependence, and harmonious coexistence with the natural world.

Rethinking Humanity’s Place in Nature:

The conception of the human–nature relationship remains incomplete without examining the different ways in which human beings have historically understood and positioned themselves in relation to the natural world. From a philosophical perspective, the human–nature relationship may broadly be understood through four major models: mastery over nature, stewardship of nature, partnership with nature, and participation in nature. These models reflect not merely different attitudes toward the natural world but also fundamentally different philosophical assumptions about human identity, human responsibility, and the place of humanity within the larger ecological order.

The development of this classification was influenced by the work of several Anglo-American scholars who sought to move beyond the one-dimensional portrayal of Western civilization as inherently dominative toward nature, particularly the influential thesis of Lynn White Jr. In his seminal analysis, White argued that the historically embedded relationship between human beings and the natural world underwent a profound transformation with the emergence of agriculture, particularly the widespread use of the plough, and the growing influence of the Judeo-Christian worldview. According to White, human beings gradually ceased to perceive themselves as an integral part of nature and increasingly came to understand themselves as distinct from, and superior to, the natural world. Nature was consequently

interpreted as an object placed at humanity's disposal—something to be controlled, manipulated, and exploited for human purposes.

This conception of human supremacy is also reflected in John Passmore's *Man's Responsibility for Nature*, where he argues that certain strands of the Christian tradition encouraged the belief that human beings occupied a position of absolute mastery over nature and that the non-human world existed primarily for human purposes. Such a worldview contributed to the transformation of the human–nature relationship from one of belonging and interdependence to one increasingly characterized by domination, instrumentalization, and material exploitation. In this sense, the mastery model represents not only a particular philosophical understanding of nature but also one of the important intellectual foundations of the modern alienation of humanity from the natural world.ⁱ

The idea of mastery over nature is deeply rooted in a particular theological and philosophical conception of the human–nature relationship. According to this view, God created nature and other living beings for the benefit of humanity, while humanity itself was created to fulfil a divine purpose. Nature, therefore, came to be understood primarily as an instrument for human use and development. This anthropocentric orientation was further strengthened by the rise of modern scientific thought.

Francis Bacon expressed this vision of human domination over nature by arguing that nature should be subdued, its secrets uncovered, and its forces harnessed to serve human desires and purposes. For Bacon, human beings occupied a central position in the world, while the primary purpose of science was to expand human power over the natural environment. This idea was later echoed in the philosophy of René Descartes, who envisioned scientific knowledge as a means through which human beings could become the “masters and possessors of nature.” Descartes' mechanistic understanding of the natural world, particularly his view of animals as non-sentient mechanical beings, further reinforced the sharp distinction between human beings and the rest of nature. His philosophical dualism, which separated the immaterial mind or soul from the material body, also contributed to a hierarchical understanding of existence in which human consciousness appeared fundamentally distinct from the non-human world.

However, this conception of a radical separation between human beings and nature was challenged by other philosophical traditions. Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, for instance, emphasized the interconnectedness of different forms of existence and rejected a simplistic division between the living and the non-living. Baruch Spinoza, through his pantheistic vision, offered an even more integrated understanding of reality. For Spinoza, all beings and objects constituted temporary expressions or modes of a single, infinite substance. Nature and the divine were thus not entirely separate realities but interconnected dimensions of a unified existence. His philosophy consequently challenged the idea of humanity as an entity standing outside or above nature.

The idea of human beings as separate from and superior to nature is also challenged by several religious and philosophical traditions. Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, and Shinto generally do not draw an absolute distinction between humanity, nature, and the divine. Instead, they emphasize the principles of harmony, unity, interdependence, and interconnectedness. Particularly in Buddhism, the doctrine of dependent origination emphasizes that phenomena do not exist in complete isolation but arise through a complex network of relationships and conditions. Human existence, therefore, cannot be understood independently of the wider natural and ecological order.

The conception of stewardship of nature can also be found within Islamic and Judeo-Christian traditions, although it represents a significant departure from the idea of absolute human domination. In Islamic thought, humanity is entrusted with a special responsibility towards the Earth. The Qur'anic narrative of

the *amanah* or divine trust conveys the idea that human beings bear a responsibility for the world entrusted to them. Similarly, Jewish thought contains the idea that human beings have been entrusted with the care and cultivation of the Earth. The biblical injunction to “till the earth and keep it” has often been interpreted as suggesting that humanity is not the absolute owner of nature but rather its guardian and caretaker.

A related idea appears in the Talmudic tradition, according to which God, having created the world, left certain aspects of its development incomplete and entrusted human beings with a creative and responsible role in its continued flourishing. Humanity thus becomes not an absolute master of nature but a co-creator and custodian, responsible for preserving the Earth’s capacity for regeneration and renewal.

Thus, the philosophical and religious traditions discussed above reveal a fundamental tension within the human–nature relationship. While the Baconian and Cartesian traditions emphasize human mastery, control, and the instrumental use of nature, other philosophical and religious perspectives emphasize interdependence, harmony, stewardship, and participation. This contrast forms the basis for understanding the different models of the human–nature relationship and provides an important philosophical foundation for rethinking humanity’s place within the natural world.ⁱⁱ

The Good Life and Sustainable Ways of Living:

Lifestyle may be understood as the pattern of behaviours, choices, values, and everyday practices through which individuals conduct their lives and influence the natural environment. It encompasses far more than consumption practices and includes work, leisure activities, travel, civic and religious participation, and social relationships with partners, family, friends, neighbours, and colleagues. In this sense, lifestyle is not merely a personal way of living but also a social and cultural expression of how human beings understand their relationship with nature.

The relationship between lifestyle and nature is significantly shaped by people’s attitudes and perceptions of the natural world. Whether nature is understood as a provider of resources, an object of consumption, a source of aesthetic enjoyment, or an integral part of human existence influences everyday behaviour. Lifestyle therefore functions as an important mediating force between human beings and nature, translating cultural and philosophical attitudes into concrete patterns of living.

The distinction between urban and rural lifestyles is often used to illustrate this relationship. People who primarily view nature as a provider of material resources may be more inclined towards urban, consumption-oriented lifestyles that create greater physical and psychological distance from natural processes. In contrast, those who perceive nature as an integral part of human life may develop more intimate and relational connections with the natural world. However, this distinction should not be treated as absolute, since both urban and rural communities may demonstrate environmentally responsible or harmful practices. Nevertheless, attitudes towards nature are significantly influenced by dominant urban ways of life and contemporary patterns of modernity (van den Born and Lenders 2006).

Reusswig (2003) identifies three broad aesthetic orientations towards nature—order, wilderness, and harmony; which are associated with different lifestyle groups. For example, “young materialists” and “educated nature friends” may both prefer wild nature over highly ordered landscapes, but their motivations differ. While educated nature friends may associate wilderness with ecological concern and conservation, young materialists may primarily view nature as a space for recreation and self-realisation. Similar aesthetic preferences, therefore, do not necessarily produce similar commitments to environmental protection.

However, such classifications should not be understood as rigid. People possess diverse and complex perceptions of nature, shaped by practical, cultural, emotional, aesthetic, spiritual, and ethical experiences (van den Born et al. 2001; Fisher and Young 2007). Thus, lifestyle functions as a complex interface through which human values and behaviours shape the human–nature relationship and influence the possibility of developing more sustainable and harmonious ways of living.ⁱⁱⁱ

A simple lifestyle is often regarded as an important foundation for environmentally responsible living because it encourages individuals to consume only what is necessary to satisfy their genuine needs. In *Voluntary Simplicity*, Duane Elgin emphasizes the significance of consciously choosing a simpler way of life as a means of reducing excessive consumption and strengthening the relationship between human beings and nature. Voluntary simplicity does not necessarily imply poverty or deprivation; rather, it involves a deliberate effort to distinguish between genuine needs and unnecessary wants.

Such a lifestyle can contribute to a more harmonious relationship with nature by reducing excessive consumption, waste, and dependence on material possessions. It may also promote a more peaceful, meaningful, and balanced way of life. In contrast, contemporary urban lifestyles are often characterized by increasing complexity, competition, consumerism, and the continuous multiplication of human wants. These expanding desires encourage unnecessary consumption of natural resources and contribute significantly to environmental degradation.

The idea of simple living also finds strong support in Indian philosophical traditions, which emphasize the interdependence of human beings and nature. From this perspective, the protection of nature requires not only technological or political solutions but also a transformation of human lifestyles and patterns of consumption. However, the relationship between simplicity and environmental responsibility should not be understood as automatic. As scholars have noted, the culturally established belief that “the simple life is a good life” and that “the environmentally sensitive life is desirable and good” may lead to the logical assumption that an environmentally responsible life must necessarily be simple. Nevertheless, a conscious reduction of unnecessary consumption remains an important pathway towards ecological sustainability and a more harmonious relationship with nature.^{iv}

In the face of the contemporary environmental crisis, the development of an environmentally responsible attitude has become an urgent global necessity. The recognition that human beings are fundamentally interconnected with nature requires a transformation of the dominant ways of living and consuming. An ecological lifestyle must therefore be founded on harmony, restraint, responsibility, and respect for the natural world. In this context, Mahatma Gandhi’s philosophy of simple living offers an important ethical and practical response to the environmental challenges of modern civilization.

Gandhi’s principle of “*simple living and high thinking*” challenges the culture of excessive consumption and unlimited material desire. He believed that human beings should satisfy their genuine needs without allowing their wants to become limitless. His famous observation that the Earth has enough to satisfy everyone’s needs, but not everyone’s greed, captures the central ecological significance of his philosophy. A simple lifestyle based on moderation, self-restraint, non-possession, and responsible consumption can reduce pressure on natural resources and help prevent environmental degradation.

Harmony with nature is also essential for human well-being. A healthy relationship with the environment contributes to physical and psychological well-being, social productivity, and overall quality of life. However, such harmony requires more than environmental awareness alone. It demands the development of an ecological worldview, ecological thinking, environmental consciousness, and a culture of responsibility.

Gandhian simplicity therefore provides a valuable foundation for developing such an ecological lifestyle. By reducing unnecessary consumption, limiting material excess, and encouraging a more responsible relationship with nature, simple living can help restore the balance between human needs and ecological limits. Thus, Gandhi's philosophy demonstrates that the solution to the environmental crisis may not lie solely in technological advancement but also in a fundamental transformation of human desires, values, and ways of life.^v

From Human-Centred Ethics to Ecological Responsibility:

The ethical dimension of the human–nature relationship is essential to any serious discussion of environmental responsibility because the availability of natural resources for future generations depends largely on how present generations use and manage them. Environmental ethics therefore requires human beings to recognize a moral responsibility towards those who are yet to be born. The central ethical challenge lies in establishing a balance between present needs and the legitimate needs of future generations. Although future generations cannot directly participate in present decisions, the commitment to their well-being is increasingly understood as sufficiently strong to require certain sacrifices from the present generation for the sake of those who will follow.

The ethical dimension of the human–nature relationship is reflected in almost every aspect of everyday human activity, particularly in patterns of production, consumption, and the use of natural resources. The manner in which resources are extracted and consumed can either intensify ecological degradation or contribute to responsible environmental stewardship. Stewardship, therefore, represents an important ethical model for understanding human responsibility towards nature.

Worrell and Appleby define stewardship as “the responsible use (including conservation) of natural resources in a way that takes full and balanced account of the interests of society, future generations, and other species as well as of private needs, and accepts significant answerability to society” (p. 269). This conception extends environmental responsibility beyond immediate human interests by recognizing the claims of future generations, society as a whole, and non-human species. Thus, an ethical relationship with nature requires not only the responsible use of resources but also accountability, conservation, moderation, and a commitment to intergenerational justice.^{vi}

The ethical relationship between human beings and nature can best be understood through the idea of responsible and pluralistic stewardship. Nature should not be regarded merely as a disposable collection of resources whose value is determined exclusively by its economic usefulness or capacity to satisfy human needs. Rather, the natural world possesses multiple forms of significance, including aesthetic, spiritual, cultural, scientific, historical, and ecological value. Although these values may not always constitute moral values in themselves, their preservation and promotion become matters of moral importance because they contribute significantly to human identity, collective memory, cultural meaning, emotional well-being, and the quality of human life.

An ethical engagement with nature therefore requires recognition of the fact that individuals and communities relate to the natural world in diverse ways. A forest, river, mountain, or species may simultaneously possess economic, ecological, aesthetic, cultural, spiritual, and scientific significance. These values are often interconnected and cannot always be reduced to a single measure of utility. Consequently, environmental decision-making should avoid both the complete rejection of human interests and the reduction of nature to a mere instrument for human purposes.

In fulfilling their role as environmental stewards, human beings must therefore develop an equitable and responsible approach that takes into account both instrumental and non-instrumental values. Such stewardship requires balancing legitimate human needs with the protection of ecological systems, non-human species, and the interests of future generations. It also demands restraint, accountability, conservation, and sensitivity to the diverse ways in which nature is valued.

This approach may be understood as a form of pragmatic moral pluralism. It does not depend upon a single theory of value or a rigid moral framework; rather, it acknowledges that the ethical significance of nature emerges from multiple and overlapping sources of value. The preservation of nature, therefore, is justified not only by the benefits it provides to human beings but also by respect for the complex, diverse, and irreducible forms of value embodied in the natural world. Responsible stewardship thus represents a more balanced and ethically comprehensive model of the human–nature relationship.^{vii}

Modernity, Environmental Crisis, and Human Responsibility:

Modern civilization has created an ecological condition that increasingly threatens the long-term survival of humanity. The Earth is experiencing a profound imbalance as a consequence of the industrial model of development, which has placed unprecedented pressure on natural systems. If humanity continues to follow a path dominated by uncontrolled technological expansion, industrial growth, and the pursuit of unlimited material progress, the consequences may ultimately threaten the integrity of the entire ecological system.

The relationship between human society and the natural world is mediated by the technologies through which human beings obtain food, energy, and other resources from nature and return waste to the environment. This exchange is a natural and continuous process, comparable to breathing in and out. However, since the beginning of industrialization, human beings have increasingly attempted to control, manipulate, and separate this process from the regenerative cycles of nature. The modern “throw-away society” reflects this dangerous illusion. It assumes that whatever is discarded is somehow “gone.” Yet nothing simply disappears from the Earth. Every form of waste remains within the ecological system in one form or another and may eventually return to affect human beings and other forms of life. As Moltmann observes, the belief that discarded things disappear represents a profoundly dangerous misunderstanding of nature (Moltmann, 1991).

Modern technology, particularly when driven by unlimited consumption and the pursuit of economic growth, has therefore contributed to what may be described as the “death of nature.” This does not necessarily mean the complete disappearance of nature but rather the destruction of the living, relational, and meaningful connection between human beings and the natural world. The resulting crisis is consequently more than a mere ecological crisis. It is also a crisis of values, attitudes, lifestyles, and conceptions of life itself. Technological development alone cannot resolve such a crisis. Nor would simply abandoning modern technology provide an adequate solution. What is required is a fundamental transformation in human attitudes, values, desires, and ways of living.

In this context, modern civilization appears to have lost an important spiritual and ethical dimension. The unlimited pursuit of power, control, economic expansion, and material prosperity reflects a form of human self-assertion in which humanity increasingly attempts to place itself in the position of an absolute creator and controller. The result is a kind of modern “God-complex,” in which human beings seek unlimited mastery over nature while forgetting their own dependence upon it.

Modern civilization is often considered superior to premodern cultures because of its scientific knowledge, technological advancement, and economic development. However, such a comparison reveals a fundamental imbalance. Many premodern societies were organized around complex systems of equilibrium—between human beings and nature, among members of society, and between humanity and the divine. They were not simply primitive or underdeveloped cultures; rather, their social and cultural systems were often structured around the principles of balance, restraint, reciprocity, and continuity.

By contrast, modern civilization has become increasingly oriented towards development, growth, expansion, competition, and the accumulation of power. The pursuit of economic progress and individual happiness has become central to modern institutions and aspirations. In elevating growth and control above balance and restraint, modern civilization has created a profound ecological and moral crisis. The fundamental question, therefore, is not simply why technology has become destructive, but why human beings have allowed power, consumption, and unlimited growth to become the dominant measures of progress.^{viii}

Rabindranath Tagore identified greed as one of the central forces shaping modern human life and as a major cause of the growing crisis in the human–nature relationship. He argued that when greed becomes the governing principle of human existence, individuals begin to violate social and moral limits and seek to accumulate natural wealth without considering the needs of others or the ecological consequences of their actions. Such unlimited accumulation inevitably leads to the overexploitation of nature and undermines the harmony between human beings and the natural world.

Tagore recognized that modern machines had significantly increased human productive power, but he also warned that this increased power could intensify human greed and create an imbalance between individual interests and the moral values of society. The problem, therefore, was not progress or technological development in itself, but the uncontrolled and selfish use of technology. Technology becomes destructive when it is governed by greed rather than by ethical responsibility and social reciprocity.

As a solution to the environmental crisis, Tagore emphasized the importance of a simple life rooted in harmony with nature, community, self-reliance, reciprocity, and humility. His admiration for the forest-based educational and social ideals of the Vedic hermitage reflected his belief in a more balanced relationship between human beings and the natural world. Nevertheless, Tagore was not opposed to science or technology. His decision to send his son, Rathindranath Tagore, to the University of Illinois to study agricultural technology demonstrates this clearly. His criticism was directed not at technology itself but at its misuse under the influence of human greed. For Tagore, a simple and cooperative life amidst nature could serve as a foundation for a more sustainable and independent society. Thus, his philosophy offers an important ethical alternative to the consumerist and exploitative model of modern civilization.^{ix}

Gandhi's philosophy offers a powerful ethical response to the environmental and moral challenges created by modern civilization. Although he accepted several modern ideals, such as freedom, equality, and justice, he strongly rejected the modern conception of instrumental rationality, particularly the belief that nature should be treated merely as a means to satisfy unlimited human desires. As Bhikhu Parekh observes, Gandhi's preferred metaphor was not that of a hierarchical pyramid with human beings at the apex, but of "a series of ever-widening circles." This vision rejects human domination over nature and emphasizes interdependence, mutual respect, and the interconnectedness of all forms of life.

Gandhi believed that modern technological civilization had intensified human desires and weakened the capacity for self-restraint. His principles of non-violence, simplicity, self-control, and voluntary limitation of wants therefore provide an important alternative to the culture of unlimited consumption. This

philosophy resonates with the Upanishadic teaching, *tena tyaktena bhuñjīthā, mā gṛdhaḥ kasya svid dhanam*—enjoy the world through renunciation and do not covet what belongs to others. The principle does not demand the complete rejection of material life; rather, it calls for moderation, restraint, and the recognition that human consumption must remain within ethical and ecological limits.

In contemporary society, advertising, social media, and consumer culture continuously generate new desires and encourage the pursuit of greater possessions and comforts. Gandhi's philosophy challenges this endless multiplication of wants by emphasizing that genuine freedom requires freedom from excessive desire. Thus, Gandhian simplicity, non-violence, and self-restraint offer a practical ethical foundation for confronting consumerism, ecological degradation, and the unsustainable demands of modern technological civilization.^x

Conclusion:

The relationship between humanity and nature is not merely an ecological or scientific concern; it is fundamentally a philosophical and ethical question concerning the meaning of human existence and the nature of the good life. Human beings are not separate from or superior to nature but are deeply embedded within the complex web of life. Yet the dominant model of modern civilization, driven by unlimited economic growth, technological control, consumerism, and the multiplication of human desires, has increasingly weakened this fundamental relationship. The resulting environmental crisis is therefore not simply a crisis of natural resources or ecological systems; it is also a crisis of values, lifestyles, and human attitudes towards nature.

This paper has argued that lifestyle functions as an important mediator between human beings and the natural world. The ways in which people consume, work, travel, pursue leisure, and organize their everyday lives directly influence the environment. The pursuit of a good life, therefore, cannot be reduced to the accumulation of material possessions or the expansion of comfort and consumption. A genuinely good life must be understood in relation to moderation, harmony, responsibility, and the recognition of human dependence upon nature. In this context, simple living emerges not as a rejection of progress but as a conscious rejection of unnecessary consumption and unlimited desire.

The ethical dimension of the human–nature relationship further demonstrates that present generations possess responsibilities towards future generations, other species, and the wider ecological community. The idea of responsible and pluralistic stewardship provides an important framework for recognizing the diverse instrumental and non-instrumental values of nature. Nature is not merely a resource for human use but also possesses aesthetic, cultural, spiritual, scientific, historical, and ecological significance. Ethical responsibility therefore requires a balance between legitimate human needs and the preservation of the natural world.

The philosophical insights of Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi provide valuable alternatives to the dominant logic of modern civilization. Tagore's emphasis on simplicity, harmony with nature, community, reciprocity, humility, and the ethical use of technology challenge the greed-driven exploitation of nature. Gandhi's principles of non-violence, self-restraint, voluntary limitation of wants, and simple living similarly challenge the culture of endless consumption and human domination. Both thinkers demonstrate that the environmental crisis cannot be solved through technology alone. What is required is a transformation of human consciousness, values, and ways of life.

Ultimately, the good life is not a life of unlimited possession and control but one of meaningful coexistence. The future of humanity depends upon our ability to move beyond the illusion of human

separation from nature and to recognize ourselves as participants within a larger ecological community. A sustainable future therefore requires not only scientific innovation and environmental policies but also a philosophical transformation in the way human beings understand progress, happiness, freedom, and responsibility. To live well, in the deepest sense, is to live responsibly—with nature, with others, and with future generations. Thus, nature, humanity, and the good life are not separate concerns; they are inseparably connected dimensions of a single ethical and ecological vision of human existence.

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