

**Review: Reconnecting With Nature:  
A Restoration of the Missing Link in Western Thinking**

By Michael J. Cohen

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Cohen, Michael J. *Reconnecting With Nature: A Restoration of the Missing Link in Western Thinking*. Friday Harbor, WA: Project Nature Connect, 1995. 220 p. US \$19.75. P.O. Box 1605, Friday Harbor, WA 98250. TEL: 360-378-6313.

This 220 page spiral bound work addresses the "disconnection" of humans from nature and offers both insights and practices to "reconnect". Author Michael Cohen's work is a therapeutic manual offered by a practitioner of 30 years. Dr. Cohen argues that our disconnection from nature has led not only to many of our social and environmental problems, but is also a major element in our own unhappiness.

He argues that we are born with 53 senses and we generally favor only 3 of them: sight, language, and reason. He claims if we were to use the other 50 ways of "knowing" we would reconnect with nature, and thus be closer to the "full knowledge" that has accumulated over thousands of years of evolutionary change. Says Cohen: "At birth, every natural born human being is born as nature itself. Like nature itself, an infant is born out of love, not fear. Fear of people and nature is absent in the newborn. Nor does nature teach an infant to destroy natural areas or to create garbage, war and insanity. These learnings are not part of the human soul. Our civilization, our process of becoming civilized, teaches us these things." (5-1)

Many of our senses involve biological needs or sensations such as thirst, hunger, senses of temperature, time, stress, etc, etc. Dr. Cohen admonishes us for overlooking and undervaluing these senses. Using them, he asserts, would connect us to the natural world we are a part of and thus, guide us, as other species are guided by their natural senses.

To make his case, Cohen provides anecdotes and relates many first-hand experiences from the workshops he's conducted for nearly 30 years. He also offers positive comments from people who have successfully

adapted his philosophies to their lives.

I approached this book with healthy skepticism. Can one simply revert back to nature and be healed? Also, the author is not the most gifted writer, which is distracting throughout the text. However, he has managed to craft an essay that does a good job of explaining why we must all bring our natural senses to "the consciousness screen." His optimism and fervent belief in this message permeates every paragraph. The final 30 pages offer the reader an invitation to bring those under-utilized senses back to the consciousness screen using 16 activities designed by the author and used successfully in many workshops. While I can't confess to being healed, I will admit to being sensitized to a message worth sharing.

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