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**Living by the sea makes us happier – 4th October, 2019**

## **Level 0**

People who live near the sea are happier than those who live inland. Researchers looked at the happiness and income of 26,000 people. People who lived within one kilometer of the coast were 22 per cent less likely to have mental health problems. People over 50 kilometers from the coast had more mental health problems.

A researcher said living near the coast helped to protect people from mental health problems. Living on the coast could help poor and rich people. Another researcher said we needed to use spaces in towns and cities better. He said the coast is for everyone. He said we should stop damaging "our fragile coastal environments".

## **Level 1**

Research says people who live near the sea are happier than those who live inland. The researchers looked at data on the happiness, lifestyle and income of 26,000 people. Those who live within one kilometer of the coast were 22 per cent less likely to have mental health problems. People over 50 kilometers from the coast had more mental health problems. Poorer people living within sight of the coast were 40 per cent less likely to have problems.

A researcher said: "People in poorer households living close to the coast experience fewer symptoms of mental health disorders." The coast seemed to protect people from mental health problems. Living on the coast could help poor and rich people. Another researcher said we needed to use spaces in towns and cities better. He said the coast should be for everyone, but we have to stop damaging "our fragile coastal environments".

## **Level 2**

Research says people who live close to the sea are happier than those who live inland. The researchers looked at data from surveys of 25,963 people on their happiness, lifestyle and income. They found that those who live within one kilometer of the coast are 22 per cent less likely to show signs of mental health problems. People who lived over 50 kilometers from the coast had more symptoms of mental health problems. Poorer people living within sight of the coast were 40 per cent less likely to have mental health symptoms than those who lived inland.

The lead researcher of the study said: "People in poorer households living close to the coast experience fewer symptoms of mental health disorders." She said the coast seemed to protect people from mental health problems. The doctor added that living on the coast could help people on high and low incomes. Another researcher said: "We need to help policy makers understand how to maximize the wellbeing benefits of 'blue' spaces in towns and cities. We need to ensure that access is fair and inclusive for everyone, while not damaging our fragile coastal environments."

## **Level 3**

New research suggests that people who live close to the ocean or sea are happier. Researchers from the University of Exeter in the UK say people who live in coastal areas have better mental health than people who live inland. This is for rich people and poor people. The researchers looked at data from surveys of 25,963 people. The surveys asked people questions about their happiness, lifestyle and income. They found that those who live within one kilometer of the coast are 22 per cent less likely to show any signs of mental health problems. People who lived more than 50 kilometers from the coast had more symptoms of mental health problems. The researchers found that poorer people living within sight of the coast were around 40 per cent less likely to have mental health symptoms than those who lived inland.

Lead researcher of the study, doctor Jo Garrett, said: "Our research suggests, for the first time, that people in poorer households living close to the coast experience fewer symptoms of mental health disorders." She said the area along coasts seemed to protect people from experiencing mental health problems. They seemed to improve people's health and wellbeing. Dr Garrett added: "When it comes to mental health, this protective zone could play a useful role in helping to level the playing field between those on high and low incomes." Another researcher, Dr Mathew White, said: "We need to help policy makers understand how to maximize the wellbeing benefits of 'blue' spaces in towns and cities. We need to ensure that access is fair and inclusive for everyone, while not damaging our fragile coastal environments."