

# Shiah BaSadeh: A Pioneering Nature-Based Community Therapy Model to Foster Resilience, Sustainability, and Body–Mind Wellbeing

Maayan Green | Nature-Based Emotional Therapy and Educational Program Developer. January 2025

## Abstract

This article provides an initial literature review on the therapeutic and social benefits of natural environments, in the context of developing the 'Shiah BaSadeh' initiative – an innovative community-based model that emerged in Israel in response to the rising need for personal and societal resilience following the events of October 7, 2023. Drawing inspiration from international Forest Therapy models, this localized approach integrates therapeutic practices with environmental and community values tailored to Israeli society.

## Implementation: 'Shiah BaSadeh' as a Community Forest Therapy Model in Israel

'Shiah BaSadeh' emerged from a place of rupture and hope — a call for human, land, and communal reconnection grounded in reverence for creation. The initiative seeks to restore an open field and transform it into a therapeutic-educational space, guided by sustainability, emotional resilience, and belonging.

## Nature as a Resource for Physical and Mental Health

Numerous studies confirm that exposure to nature improves both physiological and psychological metrics. Qing Li (2018) reported reduced cortisol levels, better blood pressure, and immune function after forest bathing. Park et al. (2010) found enhanced parasympathetic activity after mindful forest exposure. Benfield et al. (2014) showed that even recorded nature sounds improve mood and cognitive restoration.

## Community Resilience, Belonging, and Green Social Ties

Kaplan & Kaplan (1989) found that access to green spaces fosters solidarity, trust, and reduced alienation. Even small green areas can decrease psychological gaps and enhance community cohesion. 'Shiah BaSadeh' aims to build a resident-led therapeutic center independent of public funding.

## Education, Healing, and Intergenerational Community

Louv (2005) warns against increasing disconnection between children and nature. His research shows that children with nature access develop better emotional regulation, empathy, and social value. 'Shiah BaSadeh' includes intergenerational activities and partnerships with schools for emotional-environmental education.

## Conclusion

The 'Shiah BaSadeh' model offers a novel therapeutic direction, grounded in nature as a field of healing, growth, and connection. It bridges humans with the environment, individuals with their community, and pain with healing. Such models should be considered for integration into urban planning and community welfare frameworks due to their potential for wide-reaching psychological and ecological impact.

## References

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