

Sustainability & Health impact: Current Lifestyle or Future Goal?

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Photo by Mrs. Dana Matache



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Recently, I had the opportunity to immerse myself in Scandinavian culture and brought back two profound concepts that offer valuable lessons for a more sustainable and fulfilling life: **hygge** from Denmark and **lagom** from Sweden. These philosophies inspire a way of living that prioritizes balance, simplicity, and a genuine appreciation for the present moment, ultimately enhancing our overall well-being.

The Nordic countries are renowned not only for their breathtaking natural landscapes but also for a lifestyle that reflects the harmony and serenity of their surroundings. One of the most captivating aspects of this region is its approach to daily life, which is centered on moderation and a deep connection with nature.

The Danish concept of **hygge** embodies warmth and comfort, evoking a sense of well-being when we are in a cozy space, especially in the company of loved ones.

It is a reminder to slow down, appreciate life's small joys, and create moments of genuine connection with ourselves and others. By embracing hygge, we cultivate an environment of peace and relaxation, where happiness is found in the simple, everyday moments.

Equally essential to Nordic culture is **lagom**, a Swedish principle that promotes balance and moderation in all aspects of life, including our habits, approach to work and relationships. It encourages finding "just the right amount".

This mindset is particularly evident in Swedish work culture, where efficiency is valued without compromising personal time. Rather than glorifying overwork, there is a strong emphasis on maintaining a healthy balance between professional and private life.

Beyond the workplace, lagom also translates into a conscious approach to consumption. Swedes prioritize quality over quantity, by ensuring that what they do have is meaningful and long-lasting. This mentality extends to sustainability, as the principle naturally encourages reducing waste, making responsible choices, and respecting the environment.

Integrating these Nordic philosophies into daily life means to have a guide toward a life of balance, mindfulness, and sustainability, reminding us that true fulfillment lies not in excess but in appreciating the beauty of simplicity.



The theme of sustainability, as explored through *hygge* and *lagom*, extends beyond environmental consciousness to include self-care and well-being—an aspect that aligns closely with one of the key discussions at the World Economic Forum 2025.

In fact, a central topic at this year's WEF was the pursuit of a healthier balance in healthcare, with a particular focus on advancing research into women's health. Recent findings highlight that improving care for key health conditions could not only transform millions of lives but also unlock significant economic potential.

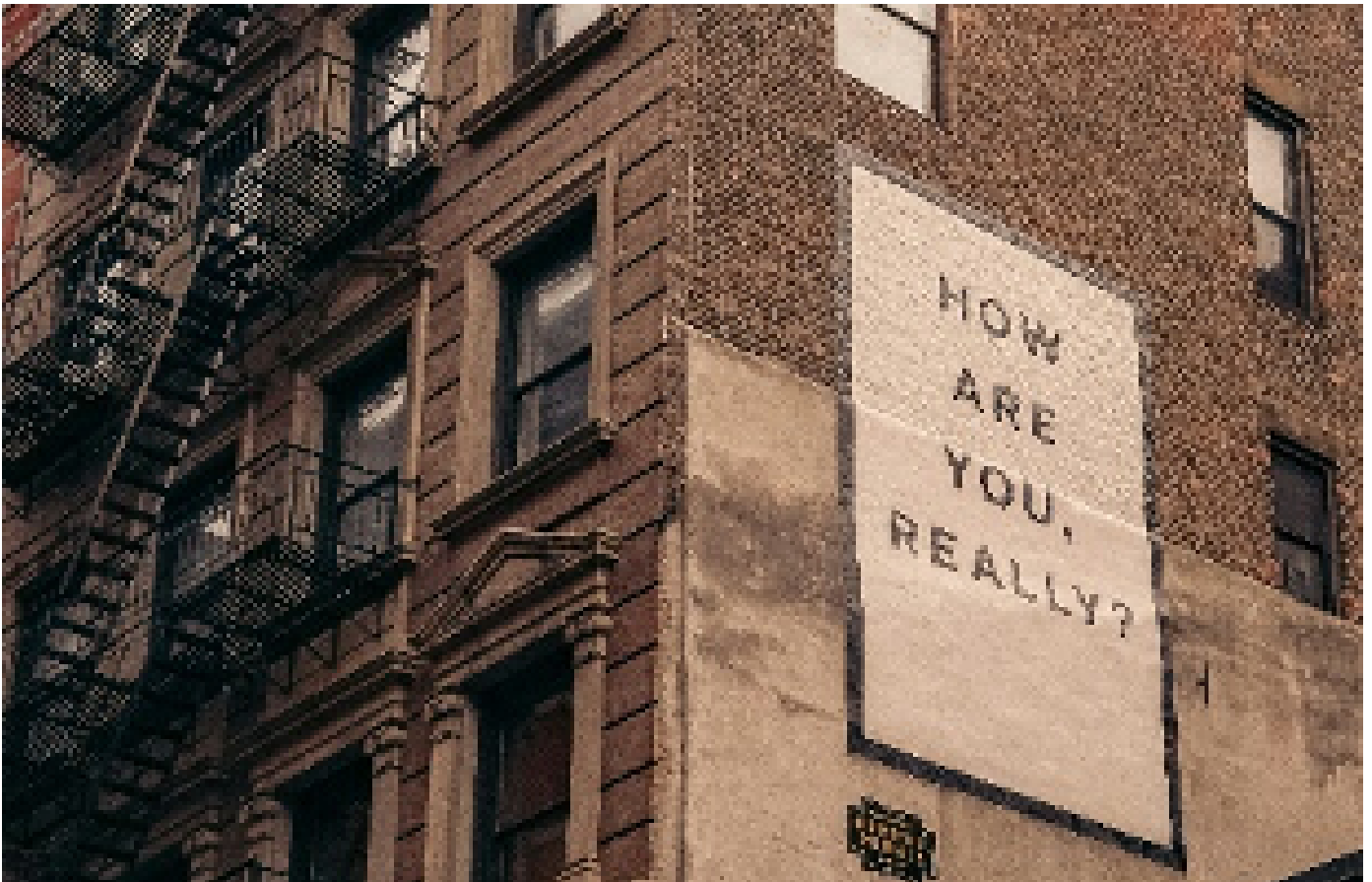
According to a new report from the World Economic Forum called *Blueprint to Close the Women's Health Gap: How to Improve Lives and Economies for All*, developed in collaboration with the McKinsey Health Institute (MHI), women spend 25% more of their lives in poor health compared to men. Moreover, addressing nine critical health conditions for women could generate an additional \$400 billion in global GDP per year by 2040, emphasizing the profound impact of investing in women's health.

Targeted action on these nine conditions could reduce the global burden of disease by 27 million disability-adjusted life years, and therefore add the equivalent of 2.5 healthy days per woman per year. These conditions are categorized into lifespan conditions, which affect overall longevity, and healthspan conditions, which determine the quality of those years.

As part of this initiative, the Forum, in partnership with MHI, has launched the Women's Health Impact Tracking (WHIT), a publicly accessible tool designed to measure and address global health gaps while promoting scalable and equitable healthcare solutions.

Anita Zaidi, co-chair of the board of directors of the Global Alliance for Women's Health and chair of Gender Equality at the Gates Foundation, underscores the urgency of this issue, stating that healthier women are the foundation of stronger families, more productive workplaces, and more resilient economies. However, she also highlights the persistent gender gaps in scientific research and innovation that continue to deprive women of essential treatments and services. To bridge this gap, she stresses the critical need for comprehensive data that fully captures the complexity of women's lives, ensuring that interventions are both effective and impactful.

On this note, during another important conference called "The importance of gender and precision medicine", recently held in Zurich after WEF by the HSG Alumni Women's Club, the renowned medical doctor Dr. Antonella Santucciono Chadha also underlined the importance of this topic. In fact, the scientist, together with other famous colleagues, strengthened the urge to immediately act against the underrepresentation of women in medical research, in order to finally enable more accurate and customized treatments for them.



Going back to our previous essential concepts called *hygge* and *lagom*, we see through their lens how sustainability is not just an environmental or economic concern - it is also deeply intertwined with well-being, balance, and the pragmatic application of essential health equity on a global scale, which should be indeed an essential and not a luxury.

At the end of the day, we feel the highest sense of safety and harmony only when we are guaranteed with the **real essentials** needed, don't we?

About the Author

Lucia Palomba has a background in economic studies at the University of Zurich. Moreover, she has also been able to deepen and develop her interest about the study of issues related to sustainability and sustainable investing. Lucia is an EFFAS certified ESG analyst - CESGA.

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