

HESH GOLDSTEIN, MSNUTRI
“Health Talk” Moderator, K-108 Radio
P.O. Box 240783
Honolulu, Hawaii 96824-0783
(808) 258-1177 / Fx (808) 848-8640
www.healthtalkhawaii.com
heshgoldstein@gmail.com

What is Vegan?

Veganism denotes a philosophy and way of living which seeks to exclude, as far as possible and practical, all forms of exploitation of, and cruelty to, animals for food, clothing, or any other purpose. It also promotes the development and use of animal-free alternatives for the benefit of humans, animals, and the environment.

The word “vegan” is newer and more challenging than “vegetarian”. “Vegan” includes every sentient being in its circle of concern and addresses all forms of unnecessary cruelty from an essentially ethical perspective. With a motivation of compassion rather than health or purity, “vegan” points to an ancient idea that has been articulated for many centuries, especially in the world's spiritual traditions.

“Vegan” indicates a mentality of expansive inclusiveness and is able to embrace science and virtually all religions because it is a manifestation of the yearning for universal peace, justice, wisdom and freedom.

The contemporary vegan movement is founded on loving-kindness and mindfulness of our effects on others. It is revolutionary because it transcends and renounces the violent core of the “herding culture” in which we live. It is founded on living the truth of interconnectedness and thereby minimizing the suffering we impose on animals, humans and biosystems; it frees us **all** from the slavery of becoming mere commodities.

“Vegan” signifies the birth of a new consciousness, the resurrection of intelligence and compassion, and the basic rejection of cruelty and domination. It is our only hope for the future of our species because it addresses the cause rather than being concerned merely with effects. From this new consciousness we can accomplish virtually anything. It represents the fundamental, positive, personal, and cultural transformation that we yearn for, and it requires that we change something basic – our eating habits.

It's funny how we want transformation without having to change! Yet, the fundamental transformation called for today requires the most fundamental change – a change in our relationship to food and to animals, which will cause a change in our behavior.

To some, becoming vegan looks like a superficial step. Can something so simple really change us? Yes! Given the power of childhood programming and our culture's insensitivity to violence against animals, authentically becoming a committed vegan can only be the result of a genuine spiritual breakthrough.

In the Vedic culture, the cow was considered to be one of the “mothers of mankind”. Today, the cow is viewed in terms of dollars and cents relegating our net worth to be measured in dollars as cows are sold by the pound.

The suppression of awareness required by our universal practice of commodifying, enslaving, and

killing animals for food generates the built-in mental disorder of denial that drives us toward the destruction, not only of ourselves, but of other living creatures and systems of this earth.

Because of this practice of exploiting and brutalizing animals for food has come to be regarded as normal, natural and unavoidable, it has become invisible. Eating animals is thus an unrecognized foundation of consumerism, the pseudo-religion of our modern world. Because our greatest desensitization involves eating, we inevitably become desensitized consumers devoid of compassion and caring little of how what is on our plate got there.

If it had a face or a mother don't eat it!

Aloha!