

Animals Have Feelings Too

Animals think and feel. They know who their friends are and where their enemies are. They get scared and become lonely. They love and show empathy. But yet, nearly 99% of people contribute to the suffering of animals on a daily basis. Animal suffering is essentially caused because people engage in a diet that requires distress and slaughter of animals. It's not that people want to hurt animals. It's that people are uninformed. People view animals as inferior, when in fact, animals are far from that. I broke through that psychological barrier nearly two years ago and adopted a vegan lifestyle nearly immediately. Therefore, for my project, I created and managed a vegan food Instagram account (veganrunninggirl) for nearly seven months while I indirectly influenced others to adopt the lifestyle as well.

Animals are looked down upon. There is this concept in psychology called the "Meat Paradox". Basically what it comes down to is the fact that people love some animals, such as their pets, while they justify reasons for consuming others, such as pigs and cows. The views these people have are highly skewed. Animals are friends. For all intents and purposes, animals are humans.



Fish are the most victimized of all animals for the purpose of human consumption. Contrary to what many people, fish CAN detect pain. They do know what is going on. They suffer, are suffocated, are electrocuted, and are exposed to very low temperatures where they bleed to death without being stunned!

Hens normally begin their lives in hatcheries, never seeing the light of day. The male hens are normally killed shortly after birth since they cannot produce hens. Normally, they are either ground up or suffocated in foam and bags. Female hens do not have it any better. They live in tiny cages but as soon as their egg production begins to decline, they are slaughtered. (Treatment of Farm Animals)

When a cow is born, it is force removed from its mother. Because animals do experience emotions, this causes the baby cow and its mother a great deal of suffering. Cows are just like humans in that matter, and they form the typical mother/baby



relationship directly after birth. The females are used for dairy. The dairy producing years of a female cow lasts roughly five years. After the cow is done producing milk, it is immediately slaughtered. Male cows are only used for veal, and are still slaughtered at a young age. Male and female cows both live very unhappy lives. Contrary to the stereotypical cow grazing a field, most cows are never even subject to the outdoors! (Food)

Pigs are treated as if they are machines. They are not machines. They are very smart individuals, capable of becoming very ferocious in stressful situations. Unfortunately for the average farm pig, it is kept in a very packed area for the entirety of its lifespan. There, it is fed antibiotics to increase its growth. This can cause the pig to pick up a mobility disorder. Because these pigs are packed so tightly and taken care of so poorly, the loss of the “standing” ability is not uncommon. (Humane Salughter Association)

In all of these situations, the farmer only wants to increase revenue, forgetting about the mental and physical condition of the animal at stake. It's an extremely sad but common situation that animals are put in.

By creating my vegan Instagram, I was able to positively affect the lives of these animals.

I was able to inspire others to consider adopting a vegan lifestyle. Because I did not directly

come out and say "Don't eat animals. Eating animals is bad", I think I gained more followers. I did it the way I did because a person tends to ignore another person that just comes out and tells him or her that his or her lifestyle is bad. People were willing to give my account a look and they were able to see that they do not have to be stereotypical to be vegan.



There are alternatives to meat, dairy, and eggs. By posting on a regular basis, I allowed others to see just how easy it is to live a vegan lifestyle. I had people message me on a daily basis about incorporating a vegan diet! It's amazing because that alone showed me that I really was making a difference in the lives of others, allowing them to make a difference in the lives of even more people! The number of animals one vegan saves per a year is astonishing. Imagine what a planet full of them could do.

Advice for incorporating veganism into your busy life: Rather than your usual sloppy Joes, whip up some lentil sloppy joes. If you love your meat, try a veggie burger or vegan hotdog. Banana nice cream is simple, healthy, and delicious. Mix your favorite vegetables with some rice for a quick and easy dish. You can still drink milk. Just make sure it's



almond milk. Vegan eggs are actually a thing. Vegan butter is a commonality in nearly every grocery store. Grains are cheap. Load up on them. You can never eat too much fruit. Have fun with it. Eat a variety of fruits, vegetables, grains, and nuts. There are tons of resources online for adopting a vegan lifestyle. Most of all, know that what you are doing is making more of a difference than you will ever know.

Citations

Food. n.d. 26 April 2016 <<http://www.animalequality.net/food>>.

Humane Slaughter Association. n.d. 20 April 2016 <<http://www.hsa.org.uk/faqs/general#n11>>.

Treatment of Farm Animals. 2014. 26 April 2016 <<http://www.americanhumane.org/about-us/who-we-are/history/treatment-of-farm-animals.html>>.