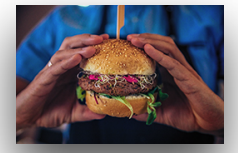
# THE JOY OF COMPASSIONATE-EATING

## *NO WE'RE NOT RADICAL VEGANS *

**Sid Galloway BS, M.DIV. & Linda Galloway BS, RN**
***Website — (SidGalloway.com)*** ***UPDATED 9-27–26***



***FOR* the animals *friends* I've known personally & taken care of over the past 70 years.**
**(My lions, tigers, bears, elephants, leopards, wolves, hyenas, raccoons, cows, pigs, chickens, ducks ……)**

**INTRODUCTION** -
Please know that Linda and I are *not* trying to *push* our *personal* lifestyle on anyone else. We simply hope to *encourage* careful consideration, conversation, and cooperation toward a better world for all thinking feeling beings (humans & *sentient*-animals). We recognize that many people around the world live in places and conditions that make it impossible to have a plant-based life. And we understand that *not* everyone in the world will embrace the same lifestyle and diet that we do.

Yet, all of us can grow in compassion and its *practical*, thoughtful application in our lives for other humans and animals. For example if you eat animals, consider getting the meat/eggs from humane ranchers & not animal-factories. Or, get the meat from hunters who practice quick kill methods. It can be more humane than dying of disease or predators. And for the six evidence-based reasons I will outline in this essay, we encourage you to consider reducing how much meat you eat, and possibly choosing fish as your only or main meat.

***In honor of Jean,***
*my sweet elephant friend I had the privilege of serving as her caregiver over 40 years ago.*

For me, it was over ***45 years ago*** when I first embraced a compassion-based, plant-powered way of living. Since then, I've researched and read hundreds of books and articles on the subject ***[Recommended Reading at the End]***.

Yes, I recognize that animals in this world, just like people, naturally suffer and die. But the question for all of us is — Are the ways that we humans *cause* animal suffering and death morally *necessary*, right, *justifiable*?

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 - **ETHICS:** | Suffering of *Humans* & *Sentient*-Animals |
| 2 - **PLEASURE**: | Better than animal-flesh, seasoned the same |
| 3- **HEALTH:** | Physical, Mental, *Relational-Cultural* |
| 4 - **ECONOMICS:** | Personal, Societal, *Global* |
| 5 - **ECOLOGY:** | Water, Land, Air, *Home* |
| 6 -**THEOLOGY:** | Compassion is the "Way" of Our Mutual Creator |

When I first wrote this essay, I was tempted to start it by initially focusing on facts about how compassionate eating is *easy*, improves *health*, increases *longevity*, provides amazingly *delicious*

food, and costs *less money*. But, the more I thought about it, I kept being convicted that starting the essay that way would minimize the *most* important reason for choosing *thoughtful* empathetic eating. That *central*, simple reason is ethical *COMPASSION* — to reduce the *SUFFERING* of both our fellow *human* beings as well as thinking, feeling *animals*. That is, to reduce our personal "suffering-footprint" in this life.

Yes, sometimes it is *necessary* to end the physical life of an animal. However, have you asked *yourself* — *When* are the times it's actually necessary? *How* should it be done so that it does *not* cause *unnecessary* fear, terror, and physical pain? Are our "modern" methods in massive animal-factories something you are willing to support? Why?

## PLEASE CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING QUOTES

---

### ***ABOUT HUMAN ETHICS***

- "**Slaughterhouse work** is **traumatizing**. **Workers** experience(**PTSD**) symptoms, especially as **dreams of** perpetrating **violence** and as emotional **numbing** and **detachment**." **[bold added]**

Rachael MacNair, PhD. *How Should Clinicians Respond to Patients Experiencing Ongoing Present Traumatic Stress of Industrial Meat Production?* **[bold added]**

- "For many **slaughterhouse workers**, however, physical injuries only scratch the surface of their suffering. A growing body of **evidence** has emerged surrounding the **intense psychological toll** that slaughterhouses have on the workers that allow them to operate. As one former slaughterhouse employee wrote for BBC, 'I didn't suffer physical injuries, but the place **affected my mind**… at **night**, my **mind would taunt me with nightmares**, replaying some of the **horrors I'd witnessed.**'" **[bold added]**

**ON LABOR. For Slaughterhouse Workers, Physical Injuries Are Only the Beginning.**
https://onlabor.org/for-slaughterhouse-workers-physical-injuries-are-only-the-beginning/

### ***ABOUT ANIMAL ETHICS***

"From life on a factory farm to death at a slaughter plant, **animals raised for meat,** eggs and dairy **suffer** immensely. And, as shocking as it may be, much of the abuse these animals endure is completely legal. There are **no federal animal welfare laws regulating the treatment** of the billions of "food animals" while they're on the farm. Further, while all 50 states have cruelty statutes, **most explicitly exempt** common farming practices, **no matter how abusive** …." **[bold added]**

**Humane Society of the United States** - https://www.humanesociety.org/

"I like pondering our **relationships with animals** …
they **tell a lot about who we are**." **[bold added]**

Marc Bekoff PhD, is a biologist, ethologist, behavioral ecologist and writer. He was a research professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at the University of Colorado Boulder. **[bold added]**

- "The **moral psychologist** Jonathan Haidt says, when push comes to shove, we are all **hypocrites**. After twenty years of studying how people think about animals, I have come to believe he is right. … the **vast majority** of us are **inconsistent, often wildly so**, in our attitudes and behavior **toward other species**. What are we to make of this?

Hal Herzog PhD. *SOME WE LOVE, SOME WE HATE, SOME WE EAT: Why It's So Hard to Think Straight About Animals*. Dr. Herzog is internationally recognized as one of the top anthrozoologists. He is a professor of psychology at Western Carolina University. **[bold added]** p. 261

- "Since I was devoted from my youth to the **protection of animal life**, it was a special **joy** to me to recognize that the **universal ethics** of reverence for life, which so often is reckoned as sentimentalistic, **is a duty which no thinking man can evade**. When will it come to pass that public opinion **no longer puts up with** popular **[pleasures] which entail mistreating animals.**" **[bold added]**

Dr. Albert Schweitzer, Four Volumes on Christianity (pp. 148-149).

## ***ABOUT PLEASURE***

An AI research summary — "When a person accustomed to a meat-rich, high-fat, high-salt diet substantially reduces those foods, the sensory and reward systems gradually adapt. As the palate becomes accustomed to less intense concentrations of fat, salt, savory compounds, and meat-associated flavors, the subtler natural sweetness, fats, acids, aromas, and other flavor compounds in plant foods become increasingly noticeable—and increasingly pleasurable."

## ***ABOUT HEALTH***

"**Collectively** the media; the meat, oil, and dairy industries; …. prominent … cookbook authors; and our own government are **not presenting accurate advice** about the **healthiest way to eat.**"

Caldwell Esselstyn MD., Director of the Heart Disease Reversal Program at the Cleveland Clinic, which is consistently ranked as one of the top hospitals in the world. **[bold added]**

## ***ABOUT ECONOMICS***

- "Oxford **research** has … revealed …, in countries such as the US, …. across Western Europe, … vegan, vegetarian, or flexitarian … could **slash your food bill** by up to **one-third**."

*Sustainable eating is cheaper and healthier - Oxford study*. **[bold added]**

https://www.ox.ac.uk/news/2021-11-11-sustainable-eating-cheaper-and-healthier-oxford-study

## ***ABOUT ECOLOGY***

- "**Factory farms** -- giant livestock farms also known as feedlots that house thousands of cows, chickens or pigs -- **produce staggering amounts of animal wastes**. As a new NRDC report shows, the way these wastes are stored and used has **profound effects on human health and the environment**." **[bold added]**

Institute for Agriculture & Trade Policy. *Pollution from Giant Livestock Farms Threatens Public Health*. **[bold added]**

## ***ABOUT THEOLOGY***

- "The fundamental **truth** is that it is **not our world**; it is God's world. We are set over it — **not** as masters— but as **stewards** … of God's **moral purpose** *[to love].* Our vocation is to **care**, to tread **softly** on this earth, remembering that it does not belong to us." **[bold added]**

Andrew Linzey PhD., a Christian. Director of the **Oxford Center for Animal Ethics**.

---

## OUR COMMON PROBLEM

Compassionate, humble, unselfish love is *universally* recognized as the highest valued human virtue. Nearly everyone agrees that compassion is the *right* response when we *see* suffering. The problem is that a lot of suffering is hidden from our direct sight. Our common problem is that we also have a natural tendency toward *inconsistency*. We all tend to turn a blind, *selective* eye to compassion in different areas of our individual lives. Selective *partiality* distorts our ability to *see* and make decisions through eyes of consistent empathy. So, I've decided to begin

this essay by discussing how our collective *partial* compassion causes *unintentional* and *unnecessary* suffering to millions of *humans*, and literally billions of sentient *animals* every day.

For most folks, our *inconsistency* is usually *not* because of deliberate insensitivity. Most of you would agree that the horribly abused puppies and dogs raised in inhumane conditions and slaughtered in painful terror a food "delicacy" in the far east markets is abhorrent. That is exactly what's done to sentient cows, pigs, chickens, ducks, etc., in the western world. Yet we turn a blind eye to what's happening. We avoid the photo and video evidence that easily accessible online. So, our inconsistency is due to a lack of knowledge (both unintentionally and deliberately) about the suffering our pleasure seeking lifestyles cause to the lives of other thinking-feeling beings. For years, my wife and I were ignorant of how — some of the ways we lived — negatively affected both impoverished human workers (with high rates of PTSD) and sentient animals in the factories.

> "Everyone thinks of changing humanity, but no one thinks of changing himself."
> — Leo Tolstoy

Most of us in the West grew up watching and learning from our parents as they prepared and served the Standard American Diet (S.A.D.). That was *tradition*. We accepted it without examination, so it *seemed* normal, natural, and "good". That's why so many people, when they hear about a plant-powered lifestyle, incorrectly *assume* that it must be difficult, costly, and maybe even unhealthy.

Please keep in mind that the powers-to-be in our modern world, including those who run the food industries, love your *money* far more than they love *you*. Their advertisements, *lobbied*-laws, and even much of the supposedly "nutritional" research, are controlled to manipulate people into *buying* their products. As a wise old saying goes, "The love of money is the root of all kinds of evil". So, part of our collective ignorance is due to the culturally deceptive way that power-players have played all of us.

The eye-opening reality is that our animal-dependent culture *negatively* impacts impoverished *people*, poor families, and poor communities, especially the struggling employees who work in the industrialized animal-*factories* and slaughterhouses. Men, women, and children, especially the poor, underprivileged, disadvantaged, and marginalized, are also suffering because of our societal dependence on industrialized, assembly-line animal-factories.

As the essay unfolds, I'll discuss other key reasons that should encourage all of us to move toward a more *compassionate* lifestyle. Yet, here at the beginning, I believe it is essential for us to take a serious look at the ethical issues involved. Yes, as the title alludes, THE JOY OF COMPASSIONATE EATING, includes *reducing* dependence on a *animal*-based eating patterns, and how to gradually shift toward a more *plant-powered* diet.

However, that's only one aspect. A *consistently* compassionate lifestyle that *positively* impacts many other areas of life:

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 - **ETHICS:** | Suffering of *Humans* & *Sentient*-Animals |
| 2 - **PLEASURE**: | Better than animal-flesh, seasoned the same |
| 3- **HEALTH:** | Physical, Mental, *Relational-Cultural* |
| 4 - **ECONOMICS:** | Personal, Societal, *Global* |
| 5 - **ECOLOGY:** | Water, Land, Air, *Home* |
| 6 -**THEOLOGY:** | Compassion is the "Way" of Our Mutual Creator |

Linda and I are fully aware that *some* people who've adopted a plant-based diet (those who "go vegan" or "plant-based") *sometimes* unwisely start it without finding out how to do it the right way. Some have not done their homework and so have failed to find out how truly *easy* it is to buy, prepare, and consistently eat balanced healthy diet with all the *essential* amino acids (protein), vitamins, minerals, etc.. The result is that they end up eating an unhealthy diet. Of course, please keep in mind, it's also true that most people who live mostly *carnivorous* lifestyles also *fail* to eat a genuinely healthy diet, lacking sufficient minerals, vitamins, fiber, and micronutrients provided by eating enough plant-based food. Readily available vitamin and other supplement pills are an easy and wise addition to anyones diet to ensure a full complement.

Also, we realize there are some people in certain circumstances who *cannot* adopt a totally plant-based, plant-powered diet. I'm talking about *impoverished* people who live in arid, *desert* regions, or in frigid *arctic* regions, who *cannot* depend on a plant-based diet. Also, there are many *poor* people who live in rural settings, far from many stores, who must rely on fishing and hunting to supplement their diets.

So, we simply ask for open minds and caring hearts to reexamine the evidence for your own personal growth toward becoming the most compassionate person you can. *Envision* what the world will be like as the decades and centuries unfold, as more and more people choose to self-examine with the goal of increasing their "compassion-footprint" — individually and in mutual *cooperation* with others.

"The fact that you can only do a little
is no excuse for doing nothing."
JOHN LE CARRÉ

## 1 - **ETHICS**: *Suffering of All People (Humans & Sentient-Animals)*

"A human being is a part of the whole called by us 'Universe', a part limited in time and space. [We] experience [ourselves, our] thoughts and feelings as something separated from the rest — a kind of optical delusion of our consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures …." **Einstein**

***FOR THE HUMANS*** -

Everyone grieves over the tragedy of *human-trafficking*, which traps millions of people in various forms and degrees of slavery and institutionalized poverty. Yet, most folks are *unaware* of the fact that a large percentage of these suffering human souls include people — *forced* by circumstances — to "work", to toil, in the *inhumane* industrialized animal-factories and slaughterhouses that produce the majority of animal-based "products".

Research demonstrates that these impoverished laborers suffer from PTSD *(Post Traumatic Stress Disorder)*, particularly PITS *(Perpetration-Induced Traumatic Syndrome)*, because they not only witness but are forced to inflict fear, pain, and suffering on countless innocent animals all day long, every day. These poor laborers cannot easily quit and just "get another job", because there are few alternative jobs available in the rural towns where the "meat" companies intentionally build their "animal-factories".

"Some slaughterhouse workers have discussed feeling the need to disassociate themselves from their work in order to suppress feelings of guilt when committing violent acts. Others have expressed increased feelings of aggression while working on the killing floor. These anecdotal reports from workers are borne out by academic research; slaughterhouse work has been linked to higher levels of aggression, violent dreams, anxiety, and hostility. Some researchers have categorized the psychological symptoms experienced by slaughterhouse employees as a form of trauma disorder, such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) or the more seldom-discussed Perpetration-Induced Traumatic Stress (PITS). As a whole, slaughterhouse workers experience significantly higher levels of serious psychological distress (SPD) …."

**ON LABOR. For Slaughterhouse Workers, Physical Injuries Are Only the Beginning.**
https://onlabor.org/for-slaughterhouse-workers-physical-injuries-are-only-the-beginning/

***FOR THE ANIMALS*** -

* **If you choose to eat animals**, consider getting the meat/eggs from *humane* ranchers & not animal-factories, or get meat from hunters who practice *quick* kill methods. It's more humane than dying of disease or predators.

As an individual, couple, family counselor and an animal rescuer for over 40 years, my dogs have assisted me in amazing ways — especially when counseling people who've experienced *horrible* abuse in their lives. Everyone recognizes the incredible depth of emotional intelligence in dogs — their deep capacity to experience pleasure and joy vs. or pain and suffering.

Yet, did you know that many cultures in the world eat dog "meat", and consider it a delicacy? Puppies are *abusively* bred and raised solely for slaughter. In these industrialized warehouses, *horror-houses*, of mass production, the goal is *profit* for the companies and *pleasure* for people who eat them. But here in the United States, it is illegal to raise dogs in the *abusive* conditions found in those foreign dog-factories. Ironically, we in the U.S. raise cows, pigs, and chickens in the *same* kind of horribly abusive conditions.

Some of you might now be thinking, "*But, don't laws make animal-factories and massive slaughterhouses reduce the pain that the animals feel?*". No. Our laws for dogs and cats do not apply to "factory-farm" animals. These animals are simply "food products" in an industrial production line.

> "While USDA considers the **humane treatment of animals** to be important, the USDA's regulatory authority **does not extend to farm animals used for food**, fiber, **or other agricultural** purposes" **[bold added]**
>
> https://www.nal.usda.gov/animal-health-and-welfare/animal-welfare-act

> "… philosopher Chris Diehm (who is a vegan) is optimistic. He says that when he discusses with people **inconsistencies** in how they **treat animals**, they often make an effort to change, or at least they **try to justify their behavior.** He writes, "We recognize that our relationships to animals take widely disparate, apparently **contradictory paths**: We have **cats in our houses** but cows on our plates. … I am a psychologist. I am more impressed by **our ability to ignore** even the most blatant examples of **moral inconsistency** in how we think and behave **toward animals**." **[bold added]**
>
> Dr. Hal Herzog, Psychologist. ***SOME WE LOVE, SOME WE HATE, SOME WE EAT: Why It's So Hard to Think Straight About Animals.*** (pp. 261-262).

Rigorous research now clearly reveals that the food-animals, which we in the West "raise" for meat, have the same and even greater intelligence and emotional depth as dogs and cats. I'm talking about the literally billions of cows, pigs, lambs, chickens, ducks suffering in massive inhumane warehouses.

*Worse* than even the *physical* pain they endure is the *mental* and *emotional* suffering, especially fear and terror. Dr. Temple Grandin, world-renowned expert on food-animals, has a section about this in her book, *ANIMALS IN TRANSLATION: Using the Mysteries of Autism to Decode Animal Behavior*. The section is called, "FEAR IS WORSE THAN PAIN". Dr. Grandin is autistic and her research has revealed many parallels about how autistic people and sentient animals experience the world around them. One of my sons is autistic, so I can testify personally that the depth of fear experienced by many autistic people and animals is very similar. What those of us *without* autism experience as fear, autistic folks and animals experience as *terror*.

> "We have to think about **animals' emotional lives**, not just their physical lives. **We're responsible** for slaughterhouse animals; they wouldn't even exist if it weren't for us.

So we have to do more than just take away pain.

**The single worst thing** you can do to an animal **emotionally is to make it feel afraid**. Fear is so bad for animals I think it's **worse than pain**. I always get surprised looks when say this: If you gave most people a choice between intense pain and intense fear, the'd probably pick fear.

I think that's because humans have a lot more power to control fear than animals do …. You almost have to work with animals to **see what a terrible emotion fear is for them**." **[bold added]**

Dr. Temple Grandin, **ANIMALS IN TRANSLATION: Using the Mysteries of Autism to Decode Animal Behavior**, pp. 189-190.

Remember, Linda and I are not trying to push our specific plant-powered lifestyle on you. We're simply trying to encourage all of us to become fully informed and to let compassion increasingly guide our life choices. Yes, I admit, I have been tempted to "push". So, I hope you're not like a lot of people who refuse to *intellectually* research. I'm talking about the majority of people who simply *emotionally* live lives led by their tastebuds.

Since the industries hide what they do behind locked doors, I considered including *graphically* gross photos of the terrible conditions that food-animals endure physically and emotionally in our industrialized animal-factories, but my wife, Linda, wisely convinced me that it's not necessary. But, if you're one of those folks who don't *believe* that animal-factories and slaughterhouses are as horrible as I'm saying, please, *please* research it yourself.
As you investigate carefully, you'll discover that the industrialized *meat*, *dairy*, and *egg* industries cause unimaginable, unnecessary suffering to adult animals and also their young, their "babies". Milk cows are hooked up to multiple hoses, like the entrapped humans in the Science Fiction movie *THE MATRIX*. But in the cow's case, it's not fiction. To extract from the cows' bodies the quantities of milk demanded from them, they must become pregnant by artificially forced insemination. Any *male* baby calves born to those cow are immediately *dragged* away — as the mother desperately calls out and fights the workers to save her baby. But the cows and babies always lose. The weak, *terrified* little male calves are roughly thrown into wheelbarrows, then into trucks and hauled off to slaughter. The chicken industry is worse. Over 200 million baby *male* chicks annually are thrown *alive* into electric meat grinders.

So, in light of what's happening to both impoverished human workers and to food-animals, *please* courageously *speak up* about the need to change the current system that causes so much suffering. History is replete with countless examples of how past culturally systemic horrors like legalized *slavery*, legalized *racism*, etc. were *changed* over time, starting with a minority *boldly* challenging the entrenched *traditions*.

"**Speak up** for those who cannot speak for themselves" Proverbs 31:8

More than **nine billion** farm animals were slaughtered in the United States **last year**.
– Humane Society of the United States

Approximately **25 million** farm animals are slaughtered **each day** in the United States.
– Mercy for Animals

Approximately **nine percent** — more than **850 million** — of the animals reared for food in the United States each year **never make it to the slaughterhouse** because they **have already died from stress-induced disease or injury.** – Farm Animal Rights Movement

## 2 - **PLEASURE**: *Even better than animal-flesh if seasoned right*

Funny things happen when you're plant-powered and your carnivorous friends try to be nice and offer you some plant-based food. Years ago, I walked into a staff lunch meeting at my job. The office had ordered catered meals for the meeting from a chicken sandwich place. As I entered the room, my boss looked up with an embarrassed expression and said, "*Oh Sid, I'm so sorry, but I forgot that you were plant-based and we don't have any food for you*". Before I could say, "No problem", she quickly opened her own sandwich and said, "*Here, do you want to eat my lettuce and tomato*". Comically, and erroneously, that's what a lot of folks think that plant-based people like me eat. With sincerity, they think ours is a "sad" diet. Ironically, the official "Standard American Diet" is referred to as the S.A.D. diet. To Linda and I, the S.A.D. diet really is sad because of the six categories of reasons I've covered.

As I've discussed earlier in the essay, when plant-based meals are prepared with seasonings and spices in the same way as meat meals, they are equal to and even more delicious. Remember, that the unique taste associated with "meat" meals is due to the hemoglobin in the blood of the animal. More specifically, it's the heme molecules in the hemoglobin that produce that taste. In addition to the *heme* in blood, there's also the animal *fat* with its *cholesterol*, which leads to cardiovascular disease.

It's all a matter of conditioning. Infants and toddlers usually reject meat, being repulsed by the taste of animal flesh, fat, and blood. As they get older they adapt as it's masked by lots of spices, seasonings, and sauces. Remember, the taste buds and brain become conditioned to animal products. Plus, eating them becomes associated with the added feeling of satiation pleasure that accompanies eating any type of *full* meal. Over time, the brain and body become habituated to these tastes and experiences, craving them when they are absent. It's a normal response to any kind of food that a person is conditioned to eating.

Of course at this point many people say to me, "*But I don't care if long-term it hurts "me", because I love the taste of meat*". I accept that it's a personal decision to choose the pleasure of meat flavor over one's long-term health. Yet, please remember that if you choose to eat meat and dairy that comes from *animal*-factories, instead of local *humane* farmers, is a choice to support an industry that causes *horrific* suffering to sentient animals. Please do the research,

watch the videos, and you will see that the abuse the animals endure would be criminally charged and convicted, if the same was done to your beloved dog.

So, as I've suggested, if you choose to eat animal products, please consider getting them from local farms / ranches that raise and euthanize the animals humanely. Or, get the meat from *humane* hunting, which if done with one-shot instant kill, can be more humane than some forms of natural death from disease or predators.

Finally, my wife Linda and I hope that you have heard from our hearts. We don't judge anyone for their different efforts to live compassionately. We too struggled with how to eat compassionately when we each first learned about the reality of modern meat production industries. So, we simply provide this essay as "food" for thought.

## 3 - **HEALTH**: *Physical, Mental, Relational*

***FOR YOUR PHYSICAL HEALTH***

Vegan Variety

A lot of people have heard of the Hippocratic oath that medical physicians take, which is basically a promise *to* do good and *not* to do harm. Its origin is from Hippocrates, who is considered to be the father of modern medicine. Few people know another of his wise sayings:

> "Let thy **food** be thy medicine …."
> Hippocrates **[bold added]**

And of course most folks have heard the saying, "*You are what you eat*". But, did you know that nobody "*needs*" to eat animal flesh, fat, blood, or milk in order to be healthy. Research over the last couple of decades has definitively demonstrated that by *increasing* your percentage of plant-based nutrition and *decreasing* animal products you can protect and improve your long-term health. And for those of you who are interested in becoming fully plant-powered, yes, you can easily get all the protein (all essential amino acids), all the calcium, vitamins, minerals, and micronutrients your body and brain need. With a little bit of reading you'll discover how easy it really can be.

More significantly is the fact that a diet high in animal-based products has been shown to increase your risk of cardio-vascular disease, diabetes, inflammatory issues, irritable bowel syndrome, autoimmune disorders, and cancer. Respected medical research centers, including the Mayo Clinic are recommending plant-based eating.

"Vegetarian diets continue to increase in popularity. **Reasons** for following a vegetarian diet vary but **include health benefits**. Following a vegetarian diet **may reduce the risk of heart disease**, **diabetes** and some **cancers**." **[bold added]**. **THE MAYO CLINIC**

"**Recent evidence** from large prospective US and European cohort studies and from meta-analyses of epidemiological studies indicates that the long-term consumption of increasing amounts of **red meat and particularly of processed meat is associated with an increased risk** of **total mortality**, cardiovascular disease, colorectal cancer and type 2 diabetes, in both men and women." **[bold added]**

***Health Risks Associated with Meat Consumption***: A Review of Epidemiological Studies. NIH - National Institute of Health https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/26780279/

"Genetics loads the gun, **lifestyle pulls the trigger**."
"Having the USDA design your food pyramid is like having Al Capone do your taxes."
"… the media; the meat, oil, and dairy industries; most prominent chefs and cookbook authors; and our own government **are not presenting accurate advice** about the **healthiest way to eat**."
"**Some people think plant-based diet**, whole foods diet is **extreme**. Half a million people a year will have their **chests opened up** and a vein taken from their leg and sewn onto their coronary artery. **Some people would call that extreme**." **[bold added]**

Dr. Caldwell Esselstyn MD, Director of the Heart Disease Reversal Program at the internationally renowned Cleveland Clinic.

***FOR YOUR MENTAL HEALTH***

Before mentioning the research showing the *negative* effect of animal flesh, fat, and blood on your brain and mind health, I want to initially emphasize an often overlooked mental health *benefit* from a compassionate plant-powered eating lifestyle. That benefit I'm talking about involves two factors, one inwardly *individual* and the other outwardly *other*-oriented.

The *first*, inwardly *self*-oriented, factor is that properly seasoned and prepared plant-powered meals are more *delicious* than the flesh, fat, and blood meals from animals. I know, some of you are thinking — "Nothing tastes better than bacon or a burger". I once felt the same way, decades ago. What most people don't know is that we all become conditioned over time to patterns of eating, to the habits of flavors and textures. Research in epigenetics has revealed that our tastebuds *adapt* to our eating patterns. People who are used to eating a meat-based diet have tastebuds and brains conditioned to the strong tastes of flesh, fat, and blood. Not only are they "used" to it, but the animal meat blocks, covers over, many of the delicious flavors available in properly prepared plant foods.

The good news is that when folks switch to a primarily plant-powered diet, their tastebuds and brains begin to change. The stimuli from fresh organic plant-powered foods triggers epigenetic switches in the tastebuds and brain, making it possible to experience new and deeper flavors that were previously undetected. The reason some folks who start toward a plant-powered diet and then soon quit is that they did not give their brain and tongues the time to adapt. Plus, they failed to buy and cook the best plant foods in the best way. Remember, there are hundreds of spices and sauces that in combinations can stimulate thousands of flavors. Many people have

found it easier to gradually transition to a plant-powered diet, such as starting with "Meatless-Mondays". These special days are used to tryout new plant-based recipes, and/or purchase new pre-made meals from one of the many new professionally cheffed vegan/vegetarian companies.

The *second*, outwardly *other*-oriented, factor is the mental health benefit that comes from knowing that your compassionate lifestyle is contributing to the reduction of the suffering of millions of poor people and billions of sentient animals. I realize that one person's lifestyle change has a small immediate impact. Yet, your humble life change can spread like the socially contagious yawning effect. You know what I mean. When one person in a group YAWNS, others in the group begin to yawn, flowing across the group like a wave. That is how throughout history, important societal and cultural growth toward greater collective compassion has always happened.

Now for a "taste" of the medical research on how a well balanced plant-powered diet can *reduce* a person's tendency toward mental irritability, anxiety, depression, and relational conflict.

> "For many people, **depression** poses a major obstacle to accomplishing even the simplest of tasks and can contribute to chronic diseases or exacerbate existing health problems. Luckily, **evidence suggests dietary changes can improve mood** and quality of life without the need for medication. A study published in the **British Journal of Psychiatry** analyzed the dietary patterns and risk of depression in 3,486 participants over a five-year period. Individuals **eating whole foods** reported **fewer symptoms of depression** compared to those who ate mostly processed foods. Additionally, when comparing a **vegetarian versus omnivorous** diet, **vegetarians** reported **more positive moods than meat eaters**, according to a study published in Nutrition Journal." **[bold added]**
>
> **Food and Mood: Eating Plants to Fight the Blues**. Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine. https://www.pcrm.org/good-nutrition/food-and-mood

> "**Depression** is a highly prevalent disorder which exerts a major economic impact in all European countries. The brain-gut-microbiota axis has been described as a new paradigm for advancing understanding and treatment of the disorder. There is **now over-whelming evidence** to support the fact that **gut microbes have a major impact** on central neurochemistry and behavior, **especially stress related disorders such as depression**.
> …. Over recent decades, dietary patterns in Europe and elsewhere have undergone major compositional changes, with increased intakes of red meat, high fat foods, and refined sugars.
> …. Epidemiological studies have long demonstrated that those on a **Mediterranean diet** suffer from **less depression** …. Diets rich in fruit, vegetables, grains and fish **seem protective against depression** …." **[bold added]**
>
> **Feeding melancholic microbes:** MyNewGut recommendations on diet and mood. SCIENCE DIRECT 2019. https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0261561418325433

As you continue to research, you might find *some* studies claiming that red meat reduces depression risks and that vegan/vegetarian diets increase risk of depression. However, keep in mind that such studies fail to take into account the psychological, normal effect that *any* major life change in a person's source of *pleasure* can produce a *temporary* decrease in mood. Significant life changes *initially* produce stress, *until* our bodies, brains, and minds adapt over time. If your brain, tastebuds, and body have been conditioned for years to the pleasure of

animal flesh, fat, and blood, then switching to plant sources of food pleasure is a bit of a temporary system shock. Sadly, our modern culture has trained all of us to expect *instant* self-gratification. Similar to young children, most adults today are not well practiced in the vital quality of *delayed*-gratification for the benefit of *others*. *Modern* minds hate to *wait*. Mature minds are capable of compassionate self-denial if certain pleasures cause suffering to others.

***FOR RELATIONAL / CULTURAL HEALTH*** - (= Spiritual Cooperative Community)

Choosing to increase the consistency of our compassion as individuals contributes to the spread of empathy, kindness, and collective cooperation in whole families and cultures. In contrast, the current world system seems determined to promote angry, insensitive, and often violent competition between countless groups, each considering "others" as enemies or as objects to use. The world system is clearly following an *anti*-compassion way, of violent, selfish competition, pain, fear, suffering and death — all for personal pleasure. We humans "consume" one another, in the world of "tooth and claw", but it doesn't have to be that "way".

Studies have shown a correlation between how people *learned* to treat animals and how they treat one another. Yes, I know that *correlation* does not necessarily determine *causation*, so that's not my intent in mentioning this research. My point is that children and adults learn by cultural *modeling* how to deal with feelings towards others (both people and animals).
For example, one of the first opportunities for children to learn and grow in compassion is their interaction with, and family discussion about animals – their pets, birds and squirrels in their neighborhood, on TV, in movies, online, etc. When children grow up being taught to harden, their hearts to the callous use and even abuse of animals, that learned insensitivity also affects their interaction with people.

> "Our subjective **identification with animals** in our childhood years as well as our **empathy** and nascent bonding/sense of kinship with all life are **affected by disassociation**. This can be triggered when we witness others **treating fellow creatures as objects**, and then to avert **discomfort** we disassociate possibly as a defense mechanism.
>
> Psychiatrist Robert Jay Lifton termed this "**splitting**" which he discovered was going on in the minds of many **Nazi war criminals** that he interviewed concerning their **gross acts of inhumanity** and lapses of moral judgement… Disassociating facilitates our **treating other sentient beings without empathy and as objects** and seems to come easily to a species that has killed others for food during its biological history. In the live animal physiology course I took at veterinary school nobody dared or cared to stand up and voice concern or even question the pointless waste of life sometimes bordering on **cruel vivisection**." **[bold added]**
>
> Dr. Michael W. Fox DVM. THE ANIMAL INSENSITIVITY SYNDROME (An Empathy Deficit Disorder). https://www.humiliationstudies.org/documents/FoxAnimalInsensitivitySyndrome2017.pdf

I remember, as a boy, struggling with the pain and suffering caused to animals when my father and I hunted — especially since I knew we didn't *need* to do it for food to *survive*. We did it for "fun". My father had grown up believing it was necessary, to become a man, for a boy to learn to push away feelings of empathy, compassion, and guilt over causing pain and fear to another being. It was considered weak and *unmanly* to have such feelings. But, empathy, compassion, and *mercy* actually represent some of the most courageous examples of character *strength*.

I remember a personal example of this way back when I was a caretaker of elephants and big cats at the New Orleans Zoological Gardens. My feelings of *compassion* for my 500 pound *wild* lion, Bratar, gave me the courage to protect him from horrible abuse at the cruel, bitter hands of my boss, a head-keeper. He'd first been using a powerful water hose to try and make Bratar move into a rolling transport cage, but that failed. So, the head-keeper switched to using a long heavy metal pipe pushed through Bratar's night-time den-door bars to viciously *beat and stab* Bratar. But Bratar, terrified and confused, stood his ground as the pipe beating relentlessly continued. I'd grown to know and love Bratar, feeding him and taking care of his needs every day.

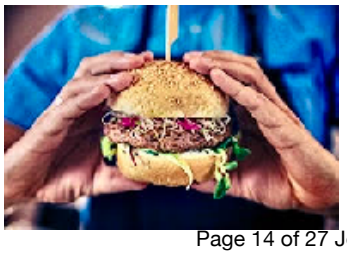
So, in that moment, my *compassion* gave me the *courage* to risk injury and help Bratar. I ran to get an older wiser animal-man, an *elephant*-caregiver. He came up with a new idea. It was for me and another young keeper to hold a homemade plywood shield and enter the back of Bratar's den, behind him. The plan was for us to walk slowly & peacefully forward toward Bratar so that he'd be gently compelled to move into the rolling transport cage. As we advanced, Bratar roared and repeatedly jumped against our wooden shield with his powerful 500 lb. body, almost knocking us over a number of times. But finally, Bratar chose to walk into the rolling cage and was then safely transported to a new area of the zoo. Courage, someone once said, is not the absence of fear. Courage is the *compassionate willingness* to do what is *right* even in the face of fear, personal injury, or even death. Courage is *love* in action!

## 4 - <u>ECONOMICS</u>: *Personal, Societal, Global*

***PERSONAL ECONOMICS***

> 'We think the fact that **vegan, vegetarian and flexitarian diets** can **save you a lot of money** is going to surprise people,' says **Dr Marco Springmann**, researcher on the Oxford Martin Programme on the Future of Food (**University of Oxford**).
> 'When **scientists** like me advocate for healthy and environmentally-friendly eating, it's often said we're sitting in our ivory towers promoting something financially out of reach for most people. This study shows it's quite the opposite. **These diets could be better for your bank balance as well as for your health and...the planet**.' **[bold added]**
>
> *Sustainable eating is cheaper and healthier - Oxford study.*
> https://www.ox.ac.uk/news/2021-11-11-sustainable-eating-cheaper-and-healthier-oxford-study

When I started a plant-powered diet 45 years ago, there was no Amazon Prime, and no companies making pre-made plant-based meals, like there are today. So, back then it was somewhat difficult, compared to today. But in the West, especially America, becoming plant-powered is *easy* and *inexpensive*. Plant-based milk (oat, almond, soy) is everywhere now.



The cheapest way and the healthiest is to simply buy whole, *unprocessed* vegetables, grains, seeds, nuts, fruit, etc., and make your own creatively spiced meals. It's easy to ensure you get

sufficient protein *(all essential amino acids)* by just combining common foods. I easily eat more protein each day than the average meat-eater. For example, combining whole grain rice or bread with beans, peas, lentils, etc. provides complete protein. You eat these all the time. Plus you can buy a number of plant ingredients that by themselves are complete proteins to add to any meal (chia seed, hemp seed, buckwheat, etc.). Using these sources with added spices and sauces you can make virtually any alternative to the animal meat meals you've been eating — stews, chilis, pizzas, burgers, tacos, protein salads, casseroles, and hundreds of others. Cooking is a fun hobby that you can eat!

If you don't like cooking, then you can now easily buy *pre-made* plant-based meals produced by many excellent companies. And, if you still want the taste of "meat", *Impossible Foods Co*. makes plant-based "meat" products and meals that taste just like it. They developed a process that manufactures the molecule found in meat *blood* (heme). Blood is what gives meat its characteristic taste. *Impossible Foods Co*.'s "heme" molecules are natural and when added to their products, you can't tell the difference. Plus, their "meat" has no artery clogging cholesterol, etc. There are many other plant-based companies today making hundreds or pre-made meals, even *without* the blood tasting heme. Yet, these bloodless products from the other companies offer delicious pre-made *(just heat them up)* alternatives to any *animal*-based meal that you've ever eaten. And, the companies professional chefs make them taste even better than the flesh, fat, and blood of animals.

> "**Eating a vegan diet** could **reduce grocery bill 16%**,. … "We knew that a vegan diet significantly **reduces your risk of conditions like heart disease**, diabetes, and obesity
> — and now we have **proof that opting for beans instead of beef** will also lead to significant **savings on your grocery bill**," said Dr. Hana Kahleova, director of clinical research at the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine...." **[bold added]**
>
> SCI-NEWS. Study: In Addition to Health Benefits, Vegan Diet Has Economic Advantages
> https://www.sci.news/othersciences/nutrition/vegan-diet-economic-advantages-12245.html

Linda and I have learned to love cooking, from scratch, using whole ingredients. It began as a hobby that became a lifestyle together. And we've learned efficient ways to prepare our meals quickly, so it doesn't take up much of our time. Now for a brief intro to the *societal* and *global* economic benefit of plant-powered human living. For the sake of space in this short essay, I'll cover these sections by letting experts speak to the issues.

### *SOCIETAL ECONOMICS*

> "Lastly, not only will a societal shift to adopting a plant-based diet have incredible implications on companies' offerings and individual and societal savings, there will be a massive amount of jobs to be filled by this new market of consumption. Veganism is the future for one's health, our environment, and certainly economics.
> **The Impact of a Plant-Based Diet on the Economy.**
> https://www.wesleyanbusinessreview.com/recents/d327ilbct3iap02b5mvamj901vlj2c

All across America there are people, especially the poor and marginalized, are living in what are called "food *deserts*", not "desserts". These food-deserts are areas where their access to healthy

and cheap food sources is severely limited. As society moves more toward a plant-based economy, it will become increasingly possible to reduce and then eliminate these food-deserts.

> "**Food deserts** can be urban or rural, and they're impacted by an area's **walkability** and public **transit** (or lack thereof), according to the 2009 report "Access to Affordable and Nutritious Food: Measuring and Understanding Food Deserts and Their Consequences.' …
> …. Many people in the **food justice** world **prefer the use of the term "food apartheid"** to "food desert." It's important to "**acknowledge why** Black, Brown and indigenous people don't have the same access to healthy foods as white and more affluent communities," says Lauren Ornelas, founder of Food Empowerment Project, a food justice organization in California.
> …. **Food security** may seem like an issue that affects only some. But ensuring access to basic healthy food for all **should be everyone's responsibility**. The more people who have access to fresh produce and vegan ingredients, the more likely they are to incorporate more plant-based meals into their lives. This improves not only the health and wellbeing of these communities but of our shared world." **[bold added]**
>
> HOW TO EAT VEGAN IN A FOOD DESERT.
> https://www.livekindly.com/how-to-eat-vegan-food-desert/

***GLOBAL ECONOMICS***

> "If we **reduced animal product consumption**, we **could produce a large food surplus worldwide**. The approximately 800 million tons of grain fed to livestock globally each year is more than **twice the amount needed to feed the 1.2 billion poorest people in the world**. The **increased efficiency** of shifting toward more plant-based diets would also enable humanity to scale back industrial agriculture and choose **more sustainable farming methods**.
>
> Dr. Colin Campbell Center for Nutritional Studies. **.** Dr. Campbell Professor Emeritus of Nutritional Biochemistry at Cornell University. https://nutritionstudies.org/reducing-global-hunger-with-whole-food-plant-based-diets/
> * See also - https://ecornell.cornell.edu/certificates/nutrition/plant-based-nutrition/

## 5 - ECOLOGY: *Water, Land, Air, Home*

I'm not going to focus on the climate effects of massive industrial-scale animal feeding operations, because there are plenty of resources available online. Instead, I want to emphasize the *personal* tragedy for individuals, families, and communities, especially the innocent poor. The first quote from a new documentary, THE SMELL OF MONEY, is about fecal waste from 1,000's of animals in feedlots poured out into the local environments of poor communities.

"The **smell of money**"—that's what **Big Pork calls** the stench of **pig waste** in the air in eastern North Carolina, where much of the world's bacon and barbecue is made. **But to Elsie Herring** and others who live near the state's **giant pig factories**, the revolting **odor** is a call to battle against generations of **injustice**. When a corporate hog farm moves in–**uninvited**–on land her grandfather had purchased after claiming **his freedom from slavery**, Elsie Herring decides to fight back.
…. An epic, nine-year legal battle ensues, and the

residents risk everything to **reclaim their rights** to clean air, pure water, and a **life free from the stench of shit**.A story about the **power of love** for one's family and community to triumph over even the largest forces of **injustice**, The Smell of Money calls upon viewers to **see the people behind what's on our plates**—and to join the fight for a better future for us all." **[bold added]**

**Documentary - THE SMELL OF MONEY**. https://www.smellofmoneydoc.com/

This second quote from the respected journal SCIENCE, addresses the same disgusting impact that the "love of money" is dumping onto thousands of innocent, powerless people. The quote is about giant pig factories, but it's the same for cow and chicken factories, some of which can "house" over 100,000 animals in a single animal-factory, producing unimaginable waste from feces and urine — surrounding and *leaking* into the local communities.

The stench of a large hog farm may seem nauseating, but a study now suggests that hog farm emissions—which include dust, irritants, allergens, hydrogen sulfide, ammonia, and hundreds of volatile organic compounds—could have a measurable impact on human health. Neighbors of such farms experience a rise in blood pressure when the farm odor is strong, researchers found.

Industrial-scale farms that raise animals for food—called concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs), in the parlance of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency—have a number of documented impacts on the environment, mostly from the massive quantities of manure they produce. That waste, which contains microbes that can make humans sick, is collected in open pits or sprayed on fields as fertilizer, risking contamination of the air, water, and soil.

But the waste is just one part of the problem—there's also the smell. Previous research in North Carolina, where the growth of hog farms has been so staggering in the last 25 years that now there are more hogs than people, found that farm odor caused stress and negative mood states in neighboring residents, according to a 2009 study in the American Journal of Public Health.

***JOURNAL SCIENCE* - Hog Farm Stink Raises Neighbors' Blood Pressure: The farm odors have a measurable effect on human health**. https://www.science.org/content/article/hog-farm-stink-raises-neighbors-blood-pressure

As you consider the suffering of people whose neighborhoods have been invaded by the *stench* and *fecal* runoff from these massive animal-factories, *please* don't forget or turn away from the *cries* of the individual animals — each with a unique *personality*. Personality means each one is person, no not a human person, but a thinking feeling person often with the tears of terror.

## 6 - <u>THEOLOGY</u>: *Compassion is the "Way" of Our Mutual Creator Who is Love*

"Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you,
how often **I have longed to gather your children** together,
**as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings**, and you were not willing."
— ***JESUS, the Good Shepherd Prophet***

*"***It gets us nowhere to diminish animal welfare** as a moral concern by changing the subject to instances of great human affliction, as if we cannot be expected **to care about both**, or as if those very afflictions are a constant preoccupation in our daily lives. Such answers are the first reflex of many people, **amounting to the non sequitur** "There is human suffering, therefore animal suffering is beneath my attention." Or, less loftily, "I have better things to think about."

**MATTHEW SCULLY -**https://www.nationalreview.com/2013/10/pro-life-pro-animal-matthew-scully/

**The Crying Cow** image from — https://www.irishexaminer.com/lifestyle/arid-20427421.html

[Matthew Scully, surprisingly, is a politically *conservative* Christian, Matthew Scully. He's a former editor at *National Review* and was also a speech writer for President George W. Bush. The book has received praise from people of all persuasions, conservative and liberals, Christians and non-Christians, including the *NYT*.]

This final section focuses on the *Christian* theology of compassion for both humans and sentient animals, and will be only an introduction. Hopefully it will encourage you, even those who are not Christians, to continuing seeking to increase the consistency of compassion in you life for all humans and sentient animals who can think and feel.

The Old Testament (OT) history is full of many dark stories about pridefully selfish, violent people and societies, plus their culturally *clouded*, psychologically *projected*, portrayals of "God" with the same violent characteristics. So it's easy to miss countless times the Holy Spirit of Agape-Love breaks through that dark history to expose, oppose, and correct the corrupted distortions — just as Jesus did (Matthew 5). *History* is a long story, a saga, about God gradually, progressively revealing the Divine reality of compassionate agape *VS.* the human tendency (temptation) to constantly twist God's revealed Way of Agape to fit their own corrupted desires and selfish ways. Selfishness is the best modern word for "sin".

The core, inner, message of the Bible — as corrected and clarified by Jesus' life and teachings — is humble, unselfish, self-sacrificing *compassion* for all others — both humans and animals Sadly however, it seems the *majority* of people and groups calling themselves "Christians" have *not*. In fact, many have lived and taught in ways that reflect the image of prideful, selfish, *cruelty* instead of living out the image and character of Jesus who was called the Christ.

"They are **not serving Christ**,
but serving their **own stomachs**."
Romans 16:28

The Good News is that all through history the Spirit of Compassionate Love has led courageously compassionate individuals to stand up, to speak out, to oppose and expose the moral failures of fellow Christians who fell so short in reflecting the image of "God is Love" (First John 4:8). Among them, two of these historical heroes, among many others, have been influential in my own understanding and growth in compassion. The first is Francis of Assisi (1226), the well known "saint" who promoted humane treatment toward animals. The second was William Wilberforce (1833), the central "force" who, *after decades of self-sacrificial struggle and suffering*, led England to finally end legalized slavery, and to institute the first laws for protection of animals — the SPCA — the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

Here, from Francis of Assisi in the form of a prayer, is a simple yet powerfully practical prescription for psychological and social harmony.

Lord, make me an instrument of your **peace**:
where there is hatred, let me sow **love**;
where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, **faith**;
where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, **light**;
where there is sadness, **joy**.
O Lord, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to **console**,
to be understood as to understand, to be loved as **to love**.
For it is in **giving** that we receive, it is in **pardoning** that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to **eternal life**. Amen.
***— Francis of Assisi***

Regarding animals, Francis expounds the psychology of cruelty, verified by modern research.

If you have **men who will exclude** any of God's **animals**
from the shelter of compassion and pity,
you will have men who **will deal likewise**
with their fellow **people**.
***— Francis of Assisi***

As a follower of Jesus' teachings about unselfish compassionate love, I'm often embarrassed, ashamed, and *grieved* over the *inconsistency* exhibited by so many "Christians", churches, and denominations when it comes to his single, *central* teaching. Even though, throughout history, there have always been followers of Jesus who sought to *consistently* live his way of humble love for both humans and sentient animals, *sadly*, the visible majority who claim his name have not been at all consistent. Many calling themselves "Christian" have supported racism, slavery, unjust wars, torture of humans, and animal vivisection. The root of that hypocrisy is the *false assumption* that the world and all the "other" things in it belong to "us", and therefore assuming that all things, including people and animals, can be used and abused to please self.

> "The fundamental **truth** … is that it is **not our world**; it is God's world. We are set over it — **not** as masters — but as **stewards** … of God's **moral purpose**. Our vocation is to **care**, to tread **softly** on this earth, remembering that it does not belong to us. For myself, I **recoil in horror** at the prospect of ever-increasing human **manipulation**, control, and **domination** of the earth. … Our species more than ever suffers from an **overdose of hubris, pride**, the perpetual sin of thinking more highly of ourselves than we should, even that we are the only species that matters before God." **[bold added]**
>
> Andrew Linzey PhD. ANIMAL GOSPEL (p. 102). Dr. Linzey is Director of the OXFORD CENTER FOR ANIMAL ETHICS. University of Oxford UK — https://www.oxfordanimalethics.com/home/

Jesus' one and only command, his singular *principle* for all those who would follow his Way, is simply to *constantly* live and give humble, unselfish, compassionate, even self-sacrificing love — for the benefit of others. The *opposite* "way" focuses on *self*, and *takes* from others to gain personal pleasure, even though knowing it directly or indirectly causes those "others" great *suffering*. That is *not* the Way of Love. Jesus called it *hypocrisy*.

> "**GOOD SHEPHERD**"
>
> ".... if I read my Bible right, then there is **Good News even for the lowly animals** — that **love and mercy** have come into the world, and we can be its agents. And when **I think of the suffering of the creature**s in our factory farms, laboratories, puppy mills, or of any animal neglected or **mistreated by man**, for me there is no more powerful question than to ask:
> **"What would the Good Shepherd think of this?**"
>
> MATTHEW SCULLY,- DOMINION: The Power of Man, the Suffering of Animals, and the Call to Mercy.

**Some of you who are Christians might be thinking,**
*"Yeah, but the command to love only applies to humans".*

**Respectfully, may I ask you to please consider more comprehensively what the Bible says:**

The **righteous** person cares for the soul [*nephesh*] of animals,
but even the kindest acts of the **wicked** are cruel.
Proverbs 12:10

Did you know that the Bible presents *history* as God VS any human who *oppresses* others?

Did you know there are *five* biblical principles that *limit* the killing of any sentient animal?

Have you personally read through the *entire* Bible? How many times? Studied it verse by verse?

What about the theological principle, "progressive revelation", which is a key to interpretation?

Have you searched and studied *all* the verses that speak about compassionate care of *animals*?

That the Bible uses the *same* OT term "nephesh" (= *soul*) for humans & for *sentient animals*?

- Nephesh (soul) means a being who can think & feel (sentient is the English term today).
- Humans are *unique* in that they can think about the *ultimate* cause/origin of the Cosmos.

## Have you considered animal compassion passages like the following examples:

**Genesis 1:26-31** *(Ideal origin pictured as peaceful plant-based co-habitation for humans and animals)?*

**Genesis 2** *(Ideal origin portrayed as humans and animals living as companions in the Garden of Eden)*
*- Gen. 2:15 in the Garden to "work and keep" it. (Hebrew is abad = **serve**; shamar = **protect/guard**)*

**Leviticus 17** *(A command for reverent memorial burial ceremonies when one needs to kill an animal to survive)*

**Sacrifices** *(In the Bible were regulated rituals to ensure humane euthanasia of animals killed for necessary food)*
*- In fact, ancient sacrificing of animals was originally started by humans, NOT by God.*

**All of the O.T. Prophets** *(They condemned any form of selfish use, abuse, and oppression for selfish gain)*
*- OT Prophets even condemned the degenerated practices of animal sacrificing to get God's favor.*

**Daniel 1:1-21** *(Chose a vegan plant-powered diet, to openly reject the cruel, pagan sacrifice methods of Babylon)*

**Jonah 4:11** *(God's compassion for thinking feeling animals is revealed as similar to God's compassion for children.)*

**2 Samuel 12** (Prophet Nathan uses a story of lamb loved as if it was a human child to confront King David's sin)

**Isaiah 11:1-13** (*Ideal future image of the lion, wolf, & leopard living at peace with the lambs and cows*)

**Romans 8** *(Ideal future when all sentient creatures will be set free from oppressive abuse and suffering)*

***JESUS* THE "*GOOD* SHEPHERD"** (Gospel of John 10:1-18)

- *Born surrounded by animals, then as adult he was at peace in the wilderness with "wild" animal companions, then later rescued abused animals from temple markets (yes that was one of his motives)*
- *Yes Jesus ate fish. Why? In that hot dry desert region, being purely plant-based was not possible.*
- *See the last few pages for the 5 principles limiting & guiding when it's necessary to kill animals.*

> "Since I was **devoted** from **my youth to the protection of animal life**, it was a special **joy** to me to recognize that the **universal ethics of reverence for life**, which so often is reckoned as sentimentalistic, **is a duty** which no thinking man can evade. **When** will it come to pass that public opinion **no longer puts up with** popular amusements [pleasures] which **entail mistreating** animals?" **[bold added]**
>
> Dr. Albert Schweitzer, MD, *Four Volumes on Christianity.* (pp. 148-149).
> - Dr. Schweitzer was a medical missionary serving the poor

Nearly every culture and worldview on earth agrees about the *highest* valued human virtue. It's humble, unselfish, compassionate love for others. In *English* we only have *one* term — "LOVE" —to express many very different and sometimes even *opposite* motivations and experiences. Such as, I *love* cookies, I *love* hiking, I *love* my dog, I *love* my wife and children.

But, in the Koine Greek language, in which the New Testament was originally written, there are *specific* words for the various things English calls "love". In NT Greek, the highest form of love is called "Agape", which is always self-giving, other-serving, self-sacrificing even to save an enemy! And, *Agape* is the term used when it says "God IS love" (First John 4:8).

The meaning of this pinnacle form of agape-love cannot be fully defined, but only *described*, or seen in its *action*. The closest modern English word for it is "compassion". Think about the literal meaning of the compound word, "com-passion". It literally means "to suffer-with". True compassion goes *beyond* empathy, which is the ability to *feel* for others, or to *feel* what others are experiencing. True compassion involves the *decision* and the *action* of physically doing whatever is possible to help others who are suffering. Compassion chooses to humble self and to actively *enter into* the suffering of others — to *be* with them, to *suffer* with them, in order to *rescue* them.

A Christ-centered reading of the Bible, seen in the light and lens of Agape-Love, shows that this highest kind of compassion should extend toward all sentient (*nephesh*) animal souls, not just household dogs and cats. Since this last section is only a brief *introduction* toward a *consistent* Christ-centered, agape-led theology of animals, I've merely provided a *few* key passages and principles for you to initially consider. Hopefully, my limited, fumbling effort has at least motivated you to sincerely seek more information on the science, philosophy, and theology of compassionate living for the blessing of sentient animals and humans.

"God **IS** love" — First John 4:8

**"But ask the animals, and they will teach you, ….**
Which of all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this?
**In God's hand is the soul [*nephesh*] of every creature** and the breath of all mankind.
The ear test words as the tongue tastes food? *[Evidence-based knowledge]*
Wisdom is found among the **aged** and long life brings understanding.
To the Creator belong wisdom and power; counsel and understanding are God's."
Job 12:7-13

### *FIVE PRINCIPLES THAT LIMIT & GUIDE THE KILLING OF ANY NEPHESH ANIMAL*

A full, comprehensive, contextual examination of the Bible shows at least five criteria to guide when and how humans can humanely end the life of a "nephesh" thinking, feeling animal.

**EUTHANASIA**: To end an animal's severe suffering. (Proverbs 12:10)

**PROTECTION**: Prevent injury or death of another human or nephesh animal. (Exo 21:18-35; 1 Sam 17:34-36)

**SURVIVAL**: Food & fur *only* if necessary to survive *(like in arctic or dry desert regions)*. (Gen. 9:1-4)

**HUMANE**: Always with the least amount of suffering — *none* if possible. (Proverbs 12:10)

**GRIEF**: Always in an attitude of sadness, reverence, even memorial for the animal. (Lev 17:10-14)

The first four principles *(Euthanasia, Protection, Survival, & Humane)* are basically self-explanatory and obvious. So to keep this from being too long, I'll not focus on those for in this essay on THE JOY OF COMPASSIONATE EATING.

However, the fifth principle, *GRIEF*, is so significant that I think it deserves a deeper look.

Many people are familiar with the practice of various cultures, like many Native "American" tribes who had ritual practices to show honor, reverence, and sad *grief* over having to cause suffering and death to an animal in order to get food, fur, leather to survive in the harsh realities of wilderness living. But, not many people, and very few Christian pastors and theologians, are aware of a similar Bible principle and practice in *Leviticus 17:13*-14. It commanded *reverent*, memorializing of the life and suffering of a nephesh animal if it had to be killed for humans to survive. This fifth principle and its practice even included the respectful burial of the animals blood, which symbolically represented the animals nephesh (soul).

> "Any … who catches **any animal for food** must **drain out the blood** and **cover it with earth**, because the **life** ***[life here is translated from the Hebrew = nephesh = soul]*** of every animal is **[*represented by]*** its blood." Leviticus 17:3

Consider the following commentaries by respected theologians showing that this OT animal compassion principle in Leviticus 17 was *in part* a command for respect and honor regarding the *nephesh* animal's living soul *who* had to suffer and die in order for humans to survive in that dry desert region and time. Remember, not only was it extremely difficult to grow sufficient plant-based sources for food, but — unlike our current Western world — they did not have any Amazon Prime or grocery stores, where they could acquire sources for a plant-powered diet as we easily can today.

**Matthew Henry on LEV. 17:13**

> The life is in the blood; it is the vehicle of the animal spirits, and God would have his people **to regard the life even of their animals**, and **not to be cruel** and hard-hearted, **not to take delight** in any thing that is **barbarous**. They must **not be a blood-thirsty people**. … to this therefore we must have a **reverent regard**, and **not use it as a common thing,**
> … Some other precepts are here given as appendages to this law, and **hedges** about it,
> … They **must cover the blood** of that which they took …, v. 13.
> They must not only **not** eat it, but **must give it a decent burial,** ….
> https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/matthew-henry-complete/leviticus/17.html

**David Guzik commentary on Lev. 17:13**

> …. **pouring out the blood** on the ground like this **honored** the blood [the **life**] of the **animal** .... https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/guzik_david/StudyGuide2017-Lev/Lev-17.cfm

**EXPOSITOR'S BIBLE COMMENTARY on Lev. 17:13**

> "And it was to be **treated with reverence**, as having **thus a certain sanctity**; when the animal was taken … **must** (Leviticus 17:13) "**pour out the blood** thereof, **and cover it with dust**";-an act by which the blood, the life, was **symbolically** returned to God who in the beginning said, {Gen 1:24} "Let the earth bring forth the living creature ….'"
> https://biblehub.com/commentaries/expositors/leviticus/17.htm

## TO SERVE & PROTECT — NOT DOMINATE & ABUSE

To bring this essay to a conclusion, it's important to *end* with the *beginning* — that is, the "Dominion Mandate". Whether you take the Genesis passages about origins literally, poetically, or figuratively, the profoundly simple *message* of *compassionate* rulership is still crystal clear.

Yes in Genesis, chapter one, the Bible *does* say that humans are to *rule-over* creation and its creatures. Many English Bibles translate it as "dominion". It's crucial to recognize that this Gen. 1:26-28 passage does *not* tell us *how* that "rulership" is to be carried out. So, sadly, the passage has been one of the most *misused* in all of the history of Christianity. It's been misused by people in power to *oppressively abuse* creation and *thinking-feeling* animals and humans.

**GENESIS 2:15 - THE HEBREW TERMS "ABAD" & "SHAMAR" = *SERVE* & *PROTECT***

Even though the Gen. 1:26-28 passage doesn't say *how* to rule, the full context of 1:29-31 with chapter 2 (especially 2:15) clearly *does* tell us *how* — compassionately *not callously*. Gen. 2:15 presents *the* most important and *necessary* OT clarifying and *qualifying* principle to properly interpret the Genesis 1 Dominion Mandate. Check out Genesis 2:15 below. In brackets are the terms from the original Hebrew.

> "The Lord God took the man and put him in the **Garden of Eden**
> **to work it** [*Hebrew = abad]* and to **take care of it**. [*Hebrew = shamar]*."

Most translations of Genesis 2:15 *don't* adequately communicate the full meaning of the original Hebrew terms — *abad* and *shamar*. English translations usually say that the job, niche, or *responsibility* of humans over creation and its creatures is to "work" and to "care for" (or keep) it. But, the Hebrew term for "work" (*abad*) literally means to *serve*, which is the *opposite* of to dominate. Next, the Hebrew term for "care for or keep it" is *shamar*, which literally means to *protect* or *guard*.

So, according to the context of Genesis 1-2, the actual and *practical* "way" humans are to "rule over" creation and its creatures is to humbly SERVE and PROTECT, *not* to dominate, oppress, and abuse for our selfish pleasures. Humbly serving and protecting certainly should *not* include causing *unnecessary* suffering and death to sentient (nephesh) animals for our personal pleasure — the sad way our modern industrialized food-animal-factories do now.

**JESUS & HIS WAY OF HUMBLE "SERVANT-RULERSHIP"**

For anyone seeking to accurately understand a truly Christian (Christ-centered) view of the Dominion Mandate, it's crucial to see and understand Jesus' pointed teaching about his "way" of rulership or leadership (kingship). His way is the *opposite* of this *broken* world's naturally cruel way. The world's way is survival-of-the-fittest, which is characterized by selfish often violent competition for personal gain. Jesus' *peaceable kingdom* way is humble, unselfish, *non*-violent, cooperative survival of the compassionate — working together toward a new *supra*-natural community.

Jesus way of love is *not weak*. It is strong, courageous love. He lived and taught *meekness*, which is the use of power in a way that's *controlled by love*, for the purpose of serving, protecting, and blessing others (see Matthew 20:20-28 below). Dr. Jonathan Walton, past President of Princeton Theological Seminary, helps put my point into focus.

> "Rather than using a **lens of love,** too many read the Bible through a **lens of power**.
> A lens of power interprets Scripture in such **a way that it justifies abusive authority** ….
> …. **A lens of love** recalibrates our **focus** back to the teachings of the gospel. Jesus' ministry was **one of love and compassion**. Jesus' ministry, like that of the Hebrew **prophets** who informed

> him, subverted authority and **questioned the status quo**. It would only be appropriate, then, for **us to interpret** the Christian faith **in this light**. It would only be fitting to interpret Scripture with **a lens of love**."
>
> Jonathan L. Walton PhD. President of Princeton Theological Seminary.
> *A LENS OF LOVE: Reading the Bible in Its World for Our World*.
> (p. 208-209). **[bold added]**

**Matthew 20:20-28 - A MEDDLING MOTHER & HER POWER-HUNGRY ADULT SONS**

The passage below tells of an event when a couple of Jesus' adult male disciples, led by their *mother*, came up to him and asked if the sons could have privileged positions of power when (as they wrongly *assumed*) he would become a world ruler. Those two disciples were assuming that if Jesus ended up being a powerful ruler, he'd rule the way the rest of the world leaders rule — by dominating and oppressing others. And those disciples wanted to rule with him *that* way. Typically, their assumption about Jesus and his way was grossly incorrect. So, Jesus strongly yet compassionately *rebuked* them and explained to them how his Way of Agape, his "kingdom" or *dominion*, was the *opposite* of the natural world system.

> "Then the **mother** of Zebedee's adult sons came to Jesus with her adult sons and,
> kneeling down, asked a favor of Jesus.
> 'What is it you want?' Jesus asked.
> She said, 'Grant that one of these two sons of mine **may rule with you** in your kingdom.'
> Jesus said to them 'You **don't understand** what you are asking. …
> Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the **rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them**, and their high officials exercise authority over them. **Not so with you. Instead**, whoever wants to become **great among you must be your servant**, … just as the Son of Man **did not come to be served**, **but to serve**, and to **give his life** as a **rescue for many**."
>
> Matthew 20:20-28

Jesus' strong *correction* of those two power hungry disciples made it crystal clear that his "way" of using power is to *serve* others just like the Genesis 2:15 abad and shamar. Please remember that *superficial* readings, interpretive assumptions, and *blindly* following traditions have led people to misuse religious scriptures to *rationalize* and justify all kinds of *cruelties* in the world. In part, it's due to the common problem of our *psychological* perceptual and conceptual *filters*, especially one called "confirmation-bias". These mental interpretive filters can cause us to *unintentionally* misinterpret evidence because our minds *automatically* tend to see and *assume* that it in some way supports our preconceived views — even if that evidence actually does *not*.

When our mental filters are not checked, they can become mind-*blinders*. So, in order to avoid or at least reduce this negative tendency, we all need to consciously, deliberately strive to look beyond our distorted biases. We all need to learn to discern by *seeing* (interpreting) through the light and lens of Christ's overarching principle of agape, compassionate love. Someone once wisely said,

> "If anyone's interpretation **doesn't fit Christ's way of love**,
> then there's something wrong about that interpretation."

**THE END . . . of this essay, but hopefully not the end of my & your ongoing growth toward increasingly consistent compassion.**

I'm tempted to keep writing and address much more relevant detail, such as the hermeneutical exegesis of Genesis 1-2 to show the profoundly beautiful *ideal* picture of the Creator's *peaceful* Garden of Eden VS the horribly ugly degenerated state that is survival of the fittest, the coolest and cruelest portrayed from Genesis 3 to the end of the Bible. And then there's the further explanation of the crucial interpretive theological principle and process throughout history of *God's* "progressive self-revelation" VS our fallible *human* "progressive misunderstanding". There are so many other passages and principles that *could* provide a more *comprehensive* discussion about the application of the Way of Agape for both humans and sentient animals.

Years ago I wrote a nearly 100 page *rough* draft essay that was focused specifically on the science, philosophy, and theological evidence showing why the *Creator*, the Compassionate Consciousness beyond the Cosmos, has the *right* to tell us *how* to treat sentient animals. Maybe in the future I'll update it and put it online with the other new essays. But for now, I'll just list below a few helpful books, organizations, and online related resources for your further search — as you seek to increase the consistency of compassion in your own lives.

## A FEW RECOMMENDED RESOURCES TO START WITH for further study and growth in compassion:

### HUMAN WORKERS PTSD IN ANIMAL-FACTORIES & SLAUGHTERHOUSES

***Article*** - SLAUGHTERING FOR A LIVING: A hermeneutic phenomenological perspective on the well-being of slaughterhouse employees. NIH. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4841092/
***Article*** - Prevalence of serious psychological distress among slaughterhouse workers. NIH. https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28506017/
***Article*** - Most meat eaters support veganism as 'ethical'. https://phys.org/news/2020-01-meat-eaters-veganism-ethical-good.html

### ANIMAL ORGANIZATIONS & VIDEOS

EMOTIONAL WORLD OF FARM ANIMALS - www.youtube.com/watch?v=524JoqSlBW0
HUMAN SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES https://www.humanesociety.org/
- HSUS Christian Video: 25 min. EATING MERCIFULLY. www.youtube.com/watch?v=L-Va6F3iQFc
OXFORD CENTER FOR ANIMAL ETHICS - https://www.oxfordanimalethics.com/home/
EVERY LIVING THING - (Link to 4 min Video) (Website - https://www.everylivingthing.com/)
MERCY FOR ANIMALS - https://mercyforanimals.org/blog/slaughterhouse-workers-have-ptsd-from-killing/
GREENPEA INSTAGRAM -
SARX - https://sarx.org.uk/what-we-believe/
FREE FROM HARM - https://freefromharm.org/
CREATURE KIND - https://www.becreaturekind.org/

### PLANT-POWERED NUTRITION & COOKING

GAME CHANGERS https://gamechangersmovie.com/
FORKS OVER KNIVES https://www.forksoverknives.com/the-film/
DR. T. COLIN CAMPBELL Center for Nutrition Studies –
DR. ESSELSTYN'S Prevent & Reverse Heart Disease Program
PHYSICIANS COMMITTEE FOR RESPONSIBLE MEDICINE –

## BOOKS

EVERY LIVING THING: How Pope Francis, Evangelicals, and Other Christian Leaders Are Inspiring All of Us to Care for Animals. HSUS.
A FAITH EMBRACING ALL CREATURES: Addressing Commonly Asked Questions About Christian Care for Animals. Marc Bekoff PhD
THE SECRET WORLD OF FARM ANIMALS. Jeffrey Masson.
EMOTIONAL LIVES OF ANIMALS: Leading Scientist Explores Animal Joy, Sorrow, Empathy & Why They Matter. Marc Bekoff PhD
WHEN ELEPHANTS WEEP: The Emotional Lives of Animals. Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson
WHY ANIMAL SUFFERING MATTERS. Dr. Andrew Linzey, Director Oxford Centre for Animal Ethics
ANIMAL THEOLOGY. Dr. Andrew Linzey, Director Oxford Centre for Animal Ethics
ANIMAL GOSPEL. Dr. Andrew Linzey, Director Oxford Centre for Animal Ethics
ANIMAL THEOLOGIANS. Dr. Andrew Linzey, Director Oxford Centre for Animal Ethics. Clair Linzey.
DOMINION: The Power of Man, the Suffering of Animals, and the Call for Mercy. Matthew Scully.
VEGANGELICAL: How Caring for Animals Can Shape Your Faith. Sarah Withrow King.
ON ANIMALS - Volumes 1 & 2. David Clough
INNER WORLD OF FARM ANIMALS: Their Amazing Intellectual, Emotional and Social Capacities. Amy Hatkoff and Jane Goodall
EATING ANIMALS. Jonathan Safran For.
DOMINION OF LOVE: Animal Rights According to the Bible. Norm Phelps.
ANIMALS IN TRANSLATION: Using the Mysteries of Autism to Decode Animal Behavior. Temple Grandin PhD
ANIMALS' AGENDA: Freedom, Compassion, and Coexistence in the Human Age. Marc Bekoff PhD
ARE WE SMART ENOUGH TO KNOW HOW SMART ANIMALS ARE? Frans de Waal PhD
MAMA'S LAST HUG: Animal Emotions and What They Tell Us About Ourselves. Frans de Waal PhD
BEYOND WORDS: What Animals Think and Feel. Carl Safina.
END OF ANIMAL FARMING: How Scientists, Entrepreneurs, and Activists, are Building an Animal Free Food-System. Jack Reese.
JUSTICE FOR ANIMALS: Our Collective Responsibility. Martha C. Nussbaum.
MERCY FOR ANIMALS: One Man's Quest To Inspire Compassion and Improve the Lives of Farm Animals. Nathan Runkle
A PLEA FOR THE ANIMALS: The Moral, Philosophical, and Evolutionary Imperative to Treat All Beings With Compassion. Matthieu Ricard PhD
SOME WE LOVE, SOME WE HATE, SOME WE EAT: Why It's So Hard to Think Straight About Animals. Hal Herzog PhD.
THE SOUL OF ALL LIVING CREATURES: What Animals Can Teach Us About Being Human. Vint Virga, DVM
THE PIG WHO SANG TO THE MOON: The Emotional World of Farm Animals. Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson
ANIMAL MACHINES: The New Factory Farming Industry. Ruth Harrison
ANIMAL KIND: Remarkable discoveries About Animals & Revolutionary New Ways to Show Them Compassion. Ingrid Newkirk.