

I stopped eating meat in November of 2020 and have not looked back. I actually find it strange that I even was eating meat prior to this date; it has become such an integral part of my life that it seems like something I have been doing since I was a child. I don't really know what compelled me to decide that I was done consuming the flesh of other beings but the day I was done, I was done. I ate meat that Thanksgiving of 2020 and I remember having a hamburger sometime in January of 2021 (I only did it because I didn't want to insult my father after he had cooked burgers) but other than that, I have not eaten any meat that I am aware of. It is a strange feeling to completely change an aspect of your life such as eating meat. It was like a part of me died inside. Often when I speak to others about my vegetarianism, they will tell me that they have tried to become a vegetarian but it didn't work out for them. Truly, this is something that I have never really understood. I never saw this as some silly little fad I was trying out. It was a change of state for me. I do not believe that you can "try" to become a vegetarian or go vegan, you either are or you are not. There is no in between and there is no trial period (at least this is how I experienced it). I have become largely disgusted with meat since I stopped eating it. I do not like the smell, I do not like the taste, and I don't really even like to see it. I had heard of this phenomenon happening to other people who decided to stop eating meat but I really don't think I believed that it was a real effect until it happened to me.

I started to slowly become disgusted with the idea of eating meat. As a way to justify my actions, I originally claimed that I decided to stop because of climate change or some sort of moral justification about how factory farming is wrong. I still think that these things are very valid reasons to not eat meat but after further consideration, this doesn't explain my disgust for eating meat. I think that there is almost zero justification for factory farming if you are to consider it under any sort of moral framework. It is a factory that facilitates the death of beings plain and simple. I don't really care if cows, chickens, and pigs are "lesser" animals. I don't think that there is much of a difference between us and them other than a couple million years of evolutionary changes. I also think that it is pretty apparent that beef farming is doing not just damage to our climate but to the natural order of the world as well. We are burning forests so that we can cram as many cows as possible into a grazing field so that they can be fattened and sent to the slaughterhouse. Despite all this, I should still be allowed to eat meat from a deer hunted on like a ranch or something similar. There isn't some large death factory that is driving a hunter to shoot a deer and then harvest its meat. Yet, the idea of eating this sort of meat still seems gross to me. Personally, I have killed many animals growing up in a small town in Texas. I have even killed a cow and helped butcher chickens. Looking back on these experiences, I think that meat grosses me out so much because I know exactly where it comes from and how it is harvested. I don't think most people know what they are eating when they are eating a burger. There is a huge difference between a pile of beans and the flesh of a living/breathing/sensing animal and I think it's something that most don't seem to care to consider.

I understand that all things must die. I don't think that shooting a deer makes you a murderer but I think that consuming its flesh afterwards is a bit strange given that there is nothing that requires you do to that. Other animals kill and consume each other. This is a fact of life. Humans also killed and consumed other beings since we were apes swinging in trees. The difference between myself and these apes is that I now have a choice not to do it. After the agricultural revolution, there should be no reason for me to continue to eat meat. I am an omnivore. I am not a wolf. My body can digest other foods that don't require the death and consumption of another being so why would I continue to do it.

Maybe one day I will slowly transition to stop eating eggs and maybe even dairy as well. I cannot say when that will happen or what might cause me to change. I originally thought I would be a pescetarian but quickly realized that I didn't enjoy eating fish. If there are no alternatives for meat, I will eat fish or some sort of shellfish but I don't really enjoy doing that. It is more of a necessity than anything. I suppose I would eat meat out of necessity as well but I think that the cases in which I would have to eat meat are incredibly rare. I would feel much better about eating eggs and milk if they were coming from animals that I was raising and taking care of. My mother has always had chickens growing up and I have never seen them being treated poorly and don't really have any issue with eating eggs like that. Those eggs are also much higher quality than the eggs you buy at a store. Sometimes I do get grossed out by the eggs that I eat from the supermarket but it has yet to become so bad that I cannot eat them at all.

I try to not be annoying about being a vegetarian but I will always stand strong against any criticisms of my diet. I don't believe in telling others how they should eat but I thought that providing some of the reasons why I have stopped eating meat could inspire others to think critically about their own consumption habits.